

# CITY OF SASKATOON

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To: Geoff Meinert, P.Eng.  
Senior Project Manager  
Design Branch  
Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure

Date: February 6, 2023

From: Jay Magus, P.Eng.  
Director of Transportation  
City of Saskatoon

**Re: Saskatoon Freeway Phase 2 Draft Report  
City Comments provided to Technical Working Groups**

The City of Saskatoon (City) participates on several Technical Working Groups (TWGs) as part of the Saskatoon Freeway project. Staff assigned to the various TWGs have completed a review of the Saskatoon Freeway Phase 2 Draft Report, the comments are attached.

**Stakeholder Engagement & Communications** (City staff on TWG – Colleen McKee)

Section 3.1.2 - Approach and Tactics - Northeast Swale Watchers are listed as participating in an “unofficial capacity”, but without explanation of how that differs from the others listed. I suggest if not defining how that’s different then we’d remove that language. I see later in section 3.2.2 some description is included here, which is sufficient if not mentioned above.

Colleen McKee  
Communications and Marketing Manager

**Structural, Geotechnical and Pavements** (City Staff on TWG – Todd Grabowski)

No comments.

**Transportation Planning and Utilities** (City staff on TWG – Nisar Khan, Derek Button and David LeBoutillier)

Transportation Planning

Section 5.8 - Active Transportation - States that no formal active transportation infrastructure is recommended along:

- Zimmerman Road,
- 8<sup>th</sup> Street,

- Blackley Road,
- Central Avenue.

This does not align with the City's Transportation Master Plan guiding principle which states "all new and retrofit bridges and interchanges on arterial and lower classification streets are designed and built to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle use on both sides." Suggest this section is revised.

Section 9.1.1 - Central Avenue - City recommends Central Avenue as:

- Urban four-lane cross-section arterial with at minimum 3.0m multi-use pathways on both sides.
- The appropriate Active Transportation (AT) crossings should be incorporated on all interchange ramps.

Section 9.1.2 - Highway 41/Blackley Road – City recommends Blackley Road as:

- Urban four-lane cross-section collector with at minimum 3.0m multi-use pathways on both sides.
- The appropriate AT crossings should be incorporated on all interchange ramps.

Section 9.1.4 - 8<sup>th</sup> Street – City recommends 8<sup>th</sup> Street as:

- Urban six-lane cross-section with at minimum 3.0m multi-use pathways on both sides.
- The appropriate AT crossings should be incorporated on all interchange ramps.

Section 9.1.6 - Zimmerman Road – The realignment of Patience Lake Road shown in Figure 9.8 presents a design restraint

- This proposal will require an additional at-grade railway crossing near an existing at-grade railway crossing (within approximately 500m).
- The City is not confident that the railway will support this new crossing.
- The City has indicated a grade separation at Zimmerman Road may be considered in the future; no timing has been proposed.

Section 9.1.6 - Zimmerman Road – This location will be impacted by the South East Concept Plan

- The number of lanes shown on Zimmerman Road should be confirmed.

Section 9.1.1 - Sound – Requires incorporation of a sound mitigation strategy in the recommended plan.

- Perhaps this Section number is a typo?
- Restrict the 65 dB contour to within the project right-of-way.

Section 9.5 - Access Management Plan. Requires more detail, similar to Phase 1

Dave LeBoutillier  
Engineering Manager  
Transportation

## Utilities

Saskatoon Light & Power has no comments regarding this report.

Derek Button  
Engineering Manager  
Saskatoon Light & Power

Geometric and Drainage (City staff on TWG – David LeBoutillier, Nisar Khan)

## Geometric

No objections or concerns with the phase 2 report.

Jay Magus  
Director  
Transportation

## Drainage

- The City of Saskatoon has recently completed a Green Network Phase 2 Study that could provide additional drainage information to consider for this phase of the SFFPS. The study is available upon request.
- The Northeast swale high water level (HWL) has been updated in the recent City of Saskatoon Green Network Study. The Northeast swale (NES) HWL at the proposed freeway crossing location is approximately 497.6m which needs to be considered for the freeway planning and design. The City of Saskatoon also has close to a decade of water monitoring for the NES that is available upon request.
- There is a major flow path along HWY 41 realignment that needs to be considered in freeway planning and design work. It is worthwhile to investigate potential flooding impacts of the freeway or freeway post-development flow impacts on this major flow path.
- All stormwater management infrastructure needs to be designed for a 1:100-year storm event, as per City of Saskatoon standards.
- The draft report recommends existing dense vegetation and flexible concrete blocks for riverbank erosion protection; however, we have dense vegetation on the riverbank in the city and still incur erosion from relatively minor outfalls. It is recommended to consider more vigorous riverbank erosion protection at the detailed design stage.
- It is assumed that the Ministry of Highways will be the future operator/maintainer of the freeway and associated drainage infrastructure.

M. Nisar Khan  
Senior Design Engineer  
Saskatoon Water

**Environmental and Heritage** (City staff on TWG - Twyla Yobb, Kellie Grant)

Environmental

Comments are based on the following documents:

- SFFPS Phase 2 Functional Design Report (draft) dated October 24, 2022
- SFFPS Phase 2 Biological Assessment dated October 5, 2022

The Environmental and Regulatory Review presented with the Phase I report included information relevant to all phases of the project. The Phase 2 Biological Assessment includes information relevant to Phase 2, focusing primarily on the area between the Northeast Swale and the South Saskatchewan River.

In general, we support both the general and Phase 2 specific environmental recommendations that are included in this Phase 2 report.

Mitigation measures for final design and construction - The province's project team has taken measures to identify environmental concerns and reduce impacts through the functional planning process. However, there will invariably be impacts to environmentally sensitive features with construction of the freeway. Longer term monitoring of features like the marl bog, swales, sharp-tail grouse lek, and wildlife corridors, along with functional assessments of potentially impacted wetlands, is encouraged so that mitigation measures can be appropriately incorporated into final design and construction.

Study area and timelines - Studies were initially completed for the project area covered by the Freeway Concept 1 alignment. When additional alignments were proposed, more studies were done, focusing primarily on the area between the Northeast Swale and the South Saskatchewan River because these areas were likely of the greatest environmental significance. As noted in the Biological Assessment, other smaller areas that were not assessed as part of Phase 2 may still have regulatory and environmental significance.

It should be noted that environmental conditions change over time, and that the information presented as part of the functional planning process may become outdated depending on the timing of the next stages of the project. Additional environmental assessments that cover the entire project area, and that are scheduled in advance of next project stages, are strongly encouraged.

Twyla Yobb  
Environmental Protection Manager  
Sustainability Department

## Heritage

As per Section 10.1.1.4 Heritage Resources: The potential for heritage resources to be identified is to be expected near Wanuskewin Heritage Park, locations within the Small Swale and in other areas along the proposed route. Heritage Resource Impact Assessments will be required as the project progresses.

Kellie Grant  
Senior Planner  
Planning and Development Department

## **Internal Planning and Development – Tyson McShane**

Figure 4.9 - The base map used is the Grasswood Concept Plan, which was never approved by the City of Saskatoon. The P4G Land Use map, or if it's approved the Southeast Concept Plan, should be used as the base map for this figure. It appears Figure 4.10 was updated to use numbers from the Southeast Concept Plan.

Tyson McShane  
Long Range Planning Manager  
Planning and Development Department

CC: TWG members, Tyson McShane, GPLT members, and File