
From: Web NoReply
Sent: Sunday, March 3, 2024 7:12 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Email - Communication - Curt McCoshen - Saskatoon Freeway Planning Study – Phase 2 Endorsement Request - CK 6003-1
Attachments: SwaleWatchersLetterFinal Version .pdf
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Categories: FILED

--- Replies to this email will go to saskatoonclimatehub@gmail.com ---

Submitted on Sunday, March 3, 2024 - 19:09

Submitted by user: [REDACTED]

Submitted values are:

I have read and understand the above statements.: Yes

I do not want my comments placed on a public agenda. They will be shared with members of Council through their online repository.: No

I only want my comments shared with the Mayor or my Ward Councillor.: No

Date: Sunday, March 03, 2024

To: His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

First Name: Curt

Last Name: McCoshen

Email: saskatoonclimatehub@gmail.com

I live outside of Saskatoon: No

Saskatoon Address and Ward:

Address: [REDACTED] Beechmont Cres

Ward: Not Sure

Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable): Saskatoon Climate Hub

What do you wish to do ?: Submit Comments

What meeting do you wish to speak/submit comments ? (if known):: PUBLIC AGENDA STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION Tuesday, March 05, 2024 at 2:00 P.m.

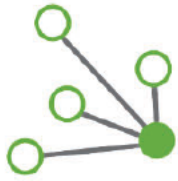
What agenda item do you wish to comment on ?: 7.2.1 Saskatoon Freeway Planning Study – Phase 2
Endorsement Request

Comments:

Please see the attached letter.

Attachments:

Will you be submitting a video to be vetted prior to council meeting?: No



SASKATOON CLIMATE HUB

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Feb. 27, 2024

Dear Mayor Clark and City Council,

Our group, the Saskatoon Climate Hub, are writing to you to express our concern and strong disapproval of the Phase 2 proposal to construct a eight to ten lane freeway around Saskatoon through both the Northeast and Small Swale.

The Saskatchewan government first considered a perimeter freeway around Saskatoon in 1999, but the actual study began in 2019 when the Department of Highways consulted with their stakeholders. Now, only five years later, so much has changed in our understanding of such projects yet the plans to continue with a shortsighted, urban sprawl, car-centric commuter freeway have not. In 2019, the estimated cost of this divided highway was approximately \$2 billion. These plans now include yet another bridge; thus the \$2 billion estimated price tag will not be sufficient. For comparison, the Regina Bypass, a 60-kilometer route around the Saskatchewan capital which opened in 2019, took four years to build at a cost of just under \$1.9 billion, a project which included less infrastructure than is proposed for the Saskatoon Freeway. In addition, some truckers and residents already avoid using our expanded infrastructure such as the Chief Mistawasis Bridge due to this route's lower speed limit and concerns about the gradient. Building expensive new infrastructure with the same issues will mean it will also be underutilized.

The economic cost has always been a consideration, if not the ultimate concern, in political projects, however we must recognize the many other ways that a four-lane (minimum) highway, complete with 16 interchanges, five railway overpasses, at least two flyovers and one major river crossing (now, perhaps, two) will affect both us and our children. Aside from economic cost, the freeway will ensure the loss of an important carbon sink (each acre of grassland in the Swale holds the equivalent of the energy use of five households) and disruption to a sensitive and ecologically important home for wildlife. The Swale also has been under pressure from developers with acquisitive eyes for many years. Even the proposed new roadway and bridge aren't sufficient. The pressure to build and expand urban sprawl for our vehicles must have limits if we are to meet our climate and environmental goals as a city. We must do more than talk about the ever-greater demands of our car culture, even while we are changing quickly to more transit options and on-demand services. By following through with Phase 2 the City and Council are wilfully accepting the consequences of locking expensive



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infrastructure that will increase emissions, push us away from our climate goals and signal a future that accepts unabated fossil fuel use, ecosystem destruction and continued urban sprawl and car centric transport. We urge the City of Saskatoon to act in accordance with the idea that not all costs to build additional roadways are simply economic, that the climatic and environmental costs are serious and primary as well.

The City of Saskatoon is already behind on its climate commitments, and approval of a billion-dollar freeway development that encourages and reinforces the impacts and causes of climate change runs directly against the City of Saskatoon's Low Emissions Community Plan and the goals of sustainability and net-zero emissions by 2050. In addition, the City already faces financial limitations regarding their climate projects and plans. The \$2 billion or more that is estimated for this project can effectively be used to fund ambitious projects within the city's climate budget that will promote the well being of the community and allow the City to achieve the goals they have set for the present and into the future.

Despite the alarm of climate scientists, and an increasing number of citizens, the provincial government continues to behave as if it were still 1999. The City has plans to be net-zero by 2050 therefore we urge City Council to behave as if the future is now and to not support the proposed continued freeway development.

Sincerely,

Claire Card and Curt McCoshen on behalf of the Saskatoon Climate Hub