

## Walter, Penny

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**From:** City Council  
**Subject:** FW: Email - Communication - Peter Garden - Housing Accelerator Fund - CK 750-1

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**From:** Web NoReply <web-noreply@Saskatoon.ca>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 24, 2024 2:18 PM  
**To:** City Council <City.Council@Saskatoon.ca>  
**Subject:** Email - Communication - Peter Garden - Housing Accelerator Fund - CK 750-1

--- Replies to this email will go to [REDACTED] ---

Submitted on Monday, June 24, 2024 - 14:17

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:** Monday, June 24, 2024

**To:** His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

**Pronouns:** He/him/his

**First Name:** Peter

**Last Name:** Garden

**Phonetic spelling of first and/or last name:** [REDACTED]

**Phone Number :** [REDACTED]

**Email:** [REDACTED]

**I live outside of Saskatoon:** No

**Saskatoon Address and Ward:**

**Address:** [REDACTED] Avenue E North

**Ward:** Ward 2

**What do you wish to do ?:** Submit Comments

**What meeting do you wish to speak/submit comments ? (if known)::** Special Public Hearing Meeting of City Council

**What agenda item do you wish to comment on ?:** Housing Accelerator Fund

**Comments:**

My name is Peter Garden and I am a resident of Caswell Hill and a business owner in Saskatoon's Broadway District. I am writing to speak in favour of the changes to zoning bylaws that would allow for greater density to be added to Saskatoon's neighbourhoods including my own. I have personally watched the Broadway area densify with the building of several multi-story apartment/condo complexes being added to the Nutana neighbourhood. Before these were built, there was significant concern from some residents and business owners that these buildings would change the character of the Nutana neighbourhood. While each person has their subjective criteria as to whether this character change has occurred, I feel that the neighbourhood has not been significantly changed. Nutana still very much feels like Nutana, a vibrant, artistic and cultural hub with history and character. What has changed is that I see more people coming and going on the streets, many of whom stop in to browse books and support my and other businesses in the area. These residents are out walking their dogs, riding their bikes, and walking to Broadway to catch the bus. We see and greet each other and this increase in traffic increases the feeling of safety and of community.

Another side of me is that of a person holding a Bachelor of Social Work degree. This part of me is deeply concerned with the increase in homelessness and people living in desperate conditions over the past decade, and massively accelerated after COVID. While the causes of this increase are many, the short supply of good-quality, affordable housing is one on which many policy experts agree.

Over the past four decades, governments at every level have turned responsibility for housing over to the market. We have seen private developers follow the profit motive, largely abandoning the construction of affordable housing in favour of building more middle to high-cost housing. At the same time, a relatively unregulated market has allowed real estate speculation to drive up housing prices. Additionally, rental housing owners have seen the advantage of moving their long-term rentals to more profitable short term rentals (like Airbnbs). All of these factors have increased the cost of housing which has put pressure on renters and lower-income home-buyers alike. This overall trend has put the squeeze on the lowest income residents of our community, especially those on fixed incomes, increasing evictions and homelessness.

It will likely take years to reverse these trends in housing but policy-makers like yourselves are taking steps in the right direction by moving forward initiatives like the Housing Accelerator Fund and prioritizing that money to build affordable housing. What we can do as residents is to put our fear of change in check and look at the bigger picture of how this will benefit us all. We can address the root causes of housing precarity that leads to homelessness, addiction, and ultimately to the overall well-being and safety of our communities.

That is not to say that we should not try to preserve the character of our older neighbourhoods while meeting these goals of increasing the supply of more affordable housing, or to ask that the housing address other issues like climate change at the same time. My reading of the proposed zoning changes is that the buildings that they will allow keep these goals of character-preservation in mind, while putting more people in proximity with services like bus rapid transit, and active transportation corridors, that will make these services better used and more likely to succeed. I welcome these changes and believe that the benefits far outweigh the costs.

Thank you for your consideration.

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