

## Walter, Penny

---

**From:** City Council  
**Subject:** FW: Email - Request to Speak - Randy Burton - Housing Accelerator Fund - CK 750-1

---

**From:** Web NoReply <web-noreply@Saskatoon.ca>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 21, 2024 5:36 PM  
**To:** City Council <City.Council@Saskatoon.ca>  
**Subject:** Email - Request to Speak - Randy Burton - Housing Accelerator Fund - CK 750-1

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

Submitted on Friday, June 21, 2024 - 17:29

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:** Friday, June 21, 2024

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

**Pronouns:** He/him/his

**First Name:** Randy

**Last Name:** Burton

**Phone Number :** [REDACTED]

**Email:** [REDACTED]

**I live outside of Saskatoon:** No

**Saskatoon Address and Ward:**

**Address:** [REDACTED] Fifth Ave. N

**Ward:** Ward 1

**What do you wish to do ?:** Request to Speak

**If speaking will you be attending in person or remotely:** In person

**What meeting do you wish to speak/submit comments ? (if known)::** Housing Accelerator Fund, June 27

**What agenda item do you wish to comment on?: 4.1.4**

**Comments:**

I have concerns about the Housing Accelerator Fund program, particularly with regard to four story buildings within the proposed transit corridor and the consequent impact on parking availability. I would like to present my arguments.

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

## **More Apartments, Less Parking**

Your worship, members of council, and city administrators:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak to you. I live in City Park on Fifth Avenue North in the [REDACTED]-block area designated to accommodate four story apartment buildings as part of proposed land use changes under the federal Housing Accelerator Fund.

I have a number of concerns about this.

Firstly, I notice that only the north west corner of City Park north of Queen Street has been singled out as a good place to host four-story apartments. So if you live on Third, Fourth or Fifth Avenues between Duke and Duchess streets, you can look forward to greater congestion and more pressure on parking.

But if you live just a block away on Sixth Avenue, you will see no change. Likewise, there is no change for you if you live on Eighth, Ninth or Tenth Avenues.

I understand this is because we fall within an 800 metre radius from a proposed Bus Rapid Transit station. But to think my house falls within that circle while my neighbour across the alley does not looks extremely arbitrary to me.

More importantly though, this whole exercise is going to mean significant change for all of City Park, and not for the better.

Parking is already a significant issue, and this policy, along with other city wide changes council has approved is a recipe for problems, in my view.

Right now, we have a parking pass system for City Park which has proven fairly effective in preserving resident's ability to park on the street.

More apartment buildings will mean more pressure on that system and more competition for available spaces, even for permit holders.

Here's why I think so.

The city's background material describing the Housing Accelerator Fund talks about filling in the so-called "missing middle" in housing stock between single family dwellings and large apartment buildings.

My little three block area is already home to 12 small apartment blocks, each with two stories and a basement.

Each of these buildings has about 12 apartments for a total of about 144 units in a three block area.

I would argue that the middle is not missing at all in my area of City Park.

In fact, we have more "middle" than any other area north of Queen Street.

So what do these proposals mean for me and my neighbours?

Four-story buildings will be about twice the size of what we currently have, so each would have maybe 24 units.

If we were to have just one of those buildings on each block, it would mean another 72 apartments in our little neighbourhood. That could mean up to another 150 cars parked in a three-block radius.

Your officials point out that an apartment would require a 50 foot lot. So two houses on 25 foot lots would have to come out, unless a 50 foot lot came available.

Until now, infill development has meant subdividing a 50 foot lot to create room for two houses. This policy means that in future, we are less likely to get two new houses on a 50 foot lot and more likely to get a 24 unit apartment building.

That's one thing. But what's also happening is that the city is now moving to eliminate minimum parking requirements for developers.

Instead we are moving to what the planners like to call "open option parking." That is, it will be up to the developers to decide how much parking is needed for their projects.

No question about it, this will mean a future with a lot less available parking in City Park and other areas like it.

I understand the desire is to promote “walkability” and to promote the use of public transit.

But this implies that people will somehow be able to live without a car.

That might be true for people who never leave the city.

For the rest of us, it’s nothing more than a fiction.

We live on the Prairies. There is no viable inter city public transit other than the airlines.

The province killed the only real bus company we had. And there is no train to anywhere that is remotely convenient.

People are going to continue to need cars, and they are still going to need some place to park them.

These changes to land use and to city wide parking policy may be intended to encourage people to take the bus, but they are coming at a time when people are increasingly afraid to use public transit.

I don’t think I need to tell you how many violent incidents there have been on our city buses in the last six months.

According to the Amalgamated Transit Union leadership, we have reached the point where even the bus drivers are afraid to take the bus.

I think embarking on a Bus Rapid Transit system without also ensuring rider and driver safety is a project doomed to failure.

At the same time, increasing housing density in City Park while eliminating parking requirements is going to do two things.

One is that it's going to lead to further congestion on the streets, thereby making it a less attractive neighbourhood to live in.

The second is that it's going to lead to more conflict between residents as they compete for an increasingly scarce resource – that is, a parking space.

I read in city documents that removing parking requirements is not expected to increase parking pressure.

Perhaps someone can explain that to me. How is it that more cars and less parking does not add up to more pressure?

Given all of this, the results of the city's recent survey on eliminating minimum parking requirements should come as no surprise.

There were only a handful of respondents to the survey, probably because no one knew about it.

But amongst the precious few who filled out the survey, the vast majority are opposed to eliminating parking requirements, for the very reasons I've outlined.

I think people are trying to tell you something.

You need to take another look at these issues.

And please, revisit the map that singles out my little three-block neighbourhood in City Park for four story developments.

Again, thank you for your time.