

Janzen, Heather

From: City Council
Subject: FW: Email - Request to Speak - Lee Mayta - Blake Tait - Denounce 1 Million March for Children - CK 100-26

From: Web NoReply <web-noreply@saskatoon.ca>
Sent: Monday, March 24, 2025 4:45 PM
To: City Council <City.Council@saskatoon.ca>
Subject: Email - Request to Speak - Lee Mayta - Blake Tait - Denounce 1 Million March for Children - CK 100-26

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

Submitted on Monday, March 24, 2025 - 16:44

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, March 24, 2025

To: Her Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

Pronouns: He/him/his

First Name: Lee

Last Name: Mayta

Phonetic spelling of first and/or last name: Lee May-TAH

Phone Number : [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

I live outside of Saskatoon: No

Saskatoon Address and Ward:

Address: [REDACTED] Ave I S

Ward: Not Sure

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):: Regular Business Meeting on Wednesday March 26, 2025

What agenda item do you wish to comment on ?: 8.5.1. Blake Tait - Denounce 1 Million March for Children GPC2023-1103

Comments:

Hi there,

My name is Lee Mayta. I am a new resident to the city of Saskatoon, having moved here in Fall of 2024. I am here to speak and share my experience with Saskatoon and the barriers I have faced as a queer trans man in this city. I am an active community member, serving as an Executive Board Member of Gender Queer Coffee Club, as well as a facilitator of Lost Boys, a group for trans men and transmasculine individuals looking to seek community and connection through events and skill sharing.

As you discuss the possibility of declaring Saskatoon a sanctuary/safe city for LGBTQ+ people, I urge you to reflect on the reality that our city is not yet a safe place for many queer and trans residents. Listen to our stories. Hear what we have to say, and please include us in the conversation as we hopefully move forward into a new era of safety and security for our community.

I have gone through the administrative reports including the City of Saskatoon Recent Initiatives Overview, and can acknowledge there has been progress made in some areas, primarily through the recreation sector. Despite this progress, discrimination, harassment and barriers to basic needs like housing, healthcare, and public safety are still widespread. Many of us continue to face eviction, job loss and public hostility simply for existing as who we are.

In the Administrative Report, in the Discussion/Analysis portion, it states, "It is unknown what it means to be a 2SLGBTQQAI+ Sanctuary City in Canada at this time. It could be argued that such a declaration would be purely symbolic in nature, but as there is limited information available in this area, the long-term implications are unknown at this time." A sanctuary city designation should not be just a symbolic gesture. It must be backed by real policies and protections that make Saskatoon truly safe and inclusive for all queer and transgender people.

The safety I have found in Saskatoon has come entirely from within the queer and trans community itself. Spaces like Gender Queer Coffee Club, Lost Boys, Sapphic Saturdays, drag events and other grassroots initiatives have been essential in creating a sense of belonging and security. Not only that, but the people within them are at the ground level supporting each other. I have received direct support in the form of temporary housing for my child and I when I unexpectedly lost mine as a result of transphobia. I have had my community share the food from their cupboards and fridges, provided rides for my daughter to get to and from school and they have held me emotionally through this time. These spaces, and the people in them, are built by us, and for, and more groups/organizations are forming all of the time. We aren't going anywhere. But we need more support.

We need tangible action from allies, not just sharing social media posts, stickers on the side of city vehicles and workshops for city employees. These are good starting points, but true progress means listening to LGBTQ+ voices, addressing systemic issues, and ensuring that our community is actively included in decision making processes.

If Saskatoon is to be declared a sanctuary city, or even a safe city, it must be worthy of that title. That means enforcing anti-discrimination protections in housing and employment, investing in community led initiatives that directly support queer and trans residents. It means prioritizing our safety in public spaces and creating policies that reflect the real needs of those most impacted by transphobia and homophobia. A sanctuary city should be a place where LGBTQ+ people don't just survive, and a lot of us are barely doing that. We should be able to thrive without fear of exclusion, instability and violence.

I urge the City Council and our mayor to take meaningful steps toward making Saskatoon a city that truly supports all residents. I don't want this city to just be safe for my community, but for all of the marginalized groups that live here. Listen to us. Include us. Take action that extends beyond words. My hope is that Saskatoon will genuinely earn the title of a sanctuary city, a place where queer and trans people can feel safe, valued and at home.

Thank you for your time,

Lee Mayta

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