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Election Spending Limits

The election spending limits in Saskatoon have gotten way out of hand. The City of Regina recently increased their mayoral campaign spending limit to just under \$74,000. In contrast, Saskatoon increased theirs to just under \$278,000 – a substantial difference not accounted for by our slight population increase over Regina. Winnipeg has 2.5 times our population, but its mayor campaign spending limit is still below ours! This is a real problem for democracy. It comes down to the people with the most money monopolizing all of the advertising and the election narrative, while people with good ideas are shut out.

We need to reduce our spending limits for the Mayor and Councillor to a proportionate amount equal to Regina. If Saskatoon's population is 300,000 and Regina's is 245,000, then our limit should be decreased until we hit that proportionate amount. So maybe ours is \$90,000 for a Mayor while Regina's is \$74,000, for example. This would allow more people with good ideas to come forward. It will also ensure that good ideas are the main effort of a campaign and not just big advertising. Excessive vague advertising is not always a good way to get real platform information.

Candidates become lazy because they use money to fill in for content they don't have or don't wish to generate. We need somewhere in between. We need enough advertising to give someone a reasonable voice and an incentive to actually be innovative and work hard to get that vote and that voice. One of my first tasks as Mayor will be to work with my Councillors to get our limits in line with Regina right off the bat because if Regina can do it, Saskatoon can, too.

The other component of election spending limits is contribution limits themselves. Right now, excessive contributions may be garnered from only a select few sources, which gives someone with their purchasing power an unfair advantage. I want to level that playing field a bit more. I propose that we cap private or corporate donations to a maximum of \$500 so that Councillors and Mayor candidates have to fund their campaigns from a broader prospect of taxpayers or put more of their own money into their own campaigns. Too often, I see where the candidate has not even contributed to their campaign. I look at it as if they don't believe in themselves, they shouldn't be taking money from other people for the same action. I want to stop affluence equals influence.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ulv_cUv2sZY

Election Term Limits

Our problem with our current City Council is that we become stagnant. We have people who tend to just go along to get along, and that is a real problem when they're supposed to be representing the rights of the taxpayers of our city, whether that be residential or commercial taxpayers.

We need new blood every once in a while to be injected into City Council to ensure that innovative new ideas are coming to the forefront and that past partisanship is dissolved. Our current Council has a way of voting as a block so that we end up with a lot of 6-5 votes over and over and over again on similar things.

I propose changing our election term limits so Councillors may be elected for a maximum of two terms and the Mayor may be elected for a maximum of two terms. If a Councillor is very successful, they could be a Councillor twice and a Mayor twice and then that's the end of their service to the City. This will ensure that people with newer ideas can start fresh.

Also, people with a more stringent eye on how the Administration operates can get into the Council and start asking the tough questions. I believe that the newest of Councillors asked the most honest of questions, and I think over time, Councillors tend to give in to too many requests from Administration without technically scrutinizing those requests.

Suppose these election term limits are adjusted in conjunction with the spending limits. In that case, it should open up representation from all walks of life within Saskatoon instead of the more wealthy who have the latitude to run for such things instead of working at a day-to-day job.

The last thing I would like is to change the limit for signatures for the candidate form for Mayor to increase from 25 to 50 signatures. It's a reasonable change for someone seeking the top office of the City but still within reasonable reach for someone less connected but with some community support to start. If a person cannot garner 50 signatures with all the time allowed to gather them, then they logically do not appear to have a foundation of support to attempt to seek the highest office.

The best way to reduce an excessive amount of Mayor candidates is to start off with the requirement for basic popularity in the beginning.

Montgomery Access 24/7

The Montgomery area of Saskatoon has a perennial problem with getting legitimate access to our city. Repeated design changes to the road network have not alleviated this problem, and the extra density brought to Montgomery has exasperated it. The City currently has three design options proposed to try to give different access into and out of Montgomery, but those three fail to give 24-hour a-day, seven-day-a-week access.

Besides being a basic safety issue, it is plainly unfair that one of the older subdivisions of the city still struggles with this basic access. I was asked to find a different way, and I spent time and talked to design professionals about a concept I had to take Dundonald Avenue South under the rail lines and connect out at first to the service road by the Civic Operations Centre. A later expansion could create a constant flow of traffic in and out of Valley Road so that people coming in from Circle Drive and exiting to Circle Drive would be able to do so without traffic lights and in non-stop fashion regardless of rail activities.

At the open house in February, the City still maintained they only had three options and residents who were aware of my other option were not happy with the City over this. However, since this date, numerous residents have written to the City, and now the City has allowed the possibility of a fourth design option, which I envisioned.

I went to the City Council and presented this option with the full animation so that the Administration would be clear on its intent and possibility. And I am happy to say that the City is now officially considering four options for egress and ingress into Montgomery, including my option.

This option builds on a construction method that has only recently been used in Saskatoon but has been extensively used in other jurisdictions, including Edmonton. This should open up the appetite of the Administration to consider this further.

The key is to use this new construction method called secant piling to shore walls and create structural members required for the infrastructure. I look forward to questioning the Administration on their review of this into the future and it is a priority of mine to push hard so that Montgomery finally gets 24 / 7 access.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ddx3U0ujvxE>

Rail Removal

Rail in Saskatoon is a constant issue.

While rail is our collective history, it is also our collective future. Rail is the backbone that moves our commodities across our country. The problem is that our city has changed how it interacts with rail, and it has overgrown rail operations on both the East and the West. The largest problems are due to disruptions in traffic flows throughout the day and night due to ever-expanding train lengths.

The City has not done a good job of investigating options for this and has relied on one of two ideas. Either we leave things as they are, or we move rail outside the city to the south, where we buy up large swaths of land to create a rail easement and make the rail companies share one rail line.

Of course, the going south idea never really had merit. The rail companies do not have to move. They are not legally required to change how they operate; they are entitled to stay exactly where they are. So, coming up with that situation that only benefits some of City Administration while greatly disadvantaging both rail companies was far-fetched and was a complete waste of time from the start.

During the last election, I made a comment about tunnelling under the city. My background in underground mine design told me that Saskatchewan already had rail cars underground at a mine site, which most reporters were unaware of. While I didn't claim it was a solution, I proposed that at least the City Administration should have looked at the option of tunnel boring under the city to create 24-hour access for rail and unimpeded access for people driving on the surface simultaneously.

The benefit of tunnel boring would be that rail companies might have the option of moving the rail yards further out of the city to a new point where they would start from an exit, and that could free up all of the lands currently held by rail within the city, recovering the rail yards for infill development at a later stage. It would also give rail the ability not to have to maintain any crossings within the city and would give them an unlimited amount of time to move trains through the day and night, and those trains could be even longer than the 1-mile-long trains that we see now.

Mining professionals estimated that tunnel boring under the city would cost similar to buying up land for a complete new easement with overpasses around the south of the city. But it isn't cheap.

Since the last election, I have focused on finding other alternatives that might benefit our city, and I have struck a concept that has been widely viewed and has been given great promise by design professionals and rail professionals alike. It uses a method called secant piling and, in a sense, we would create a tunnel right below the rail line while they continue to operate so the trains would not stop, doing construction right at the edge at the surface. This is also within the existing rail easement already controlled by the rail lines, so purchasing land and landowner rights wouldn't be an issue.

My concept is to start at the Warman Street crossing and to remove that crossing and all the crossings down to just about 11th Street. In the end, the train would be below the surface, there'd be no rail crossings at the surface, and we could drive across the top and, possibly, even build buildings over top of where the rail would be. This also has application in places like Preston, where the rail line comes

through near the University by Innovation Place, as well as the crossing proposed now for 8th Street on the edge of the city and further south. I put forward a detailed animation on this concept, and I have not heard a word from City Administration – or any other candidate, for that matter – about rail. I believe rail is critical to the success of our city, both in terms of its need and removing its impact directly from the core of our city. I do not understand how we can discuss a new arena while glazing over the fact that we have not even discussed rail.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6k4OzGCLEMI>

Project Expediter

There's work to be done



PROJECT EXPEDITER

When proposing large commercial projects, developers need to determine the viability quickly. Delays cost time and money and ultimately drive business away. A single point of contact to help reach a decision point is more efficient for both the developer and Administration.

I support the creation of this position within the City of Saskatoon.

CARY TARASOFF
FOR MAYOR

I worked in various realms, including mining, commercial, residential, recreational, and institutional projects. One project I was involved in included trying to locate a new proposed commercial building in Arizona.

I called the jurisdiction and explained what we were looking for, and I asked what information I could find to help determine whether this was feasible. I received a call back from someone who I would call a Project Expediter. This person was paid by the municipality, so they did not work for me or the contractor I worked for, but their goal was to facilitate information so that we could make the best-informed decision in the shortest amount of time.

All requests for information went through this person, who then went to the individual departments in the Administration to gather anything we felt was needed. If a department of the Administration wrote me with information directly, this would also be copied to the Project Expediter so they were always kept in the loop.

You could say that their efforts on these larger projects expedited the process of determining viability and getting the project to a decision point. However, it would not be fair to say that this person or this process somehow was in place to circumvent any regulation or process within the Administration. In other words, the queue for any given thing was the same and the project administrator didn't let anyone jump the queue. However, gathering information at one point of origin dramatically expedites the process, and I can state that firsthand. I would like to see our city have such a position for commercial projects in excess of \$2 million.

The other function of this service is to monitor the efficiency of data handling within the municipality's administration. Basically, it is to monitor the actual process underway from within. Having one point of contact for all departments would benefit Saskatoon and outside business interests.

Push-to-Call Washrooms

Our city has a big issue around public washrooms, with no end in sight.

Endless amounts of money are being spent and, in some cases, wasted trying to find simple options. My take on this complexity is that we go back to the simplest of solutions. We take all our exterior public civic washrooms and install exterior video cameras with a central call station and electric door strikes on every stall door. This applies to the single-use washrooms only.

What would happen is that if someone wants to use a washroom that is not open during regular hours, they would push the call button, look up to the camera, and ask to use the washroom. But they could also be calling for assistance or some other need not related to the washroom.

A commissioner, somewhere in a room full of monitors, receives the alert, responds, and directs the person to a given door where they buzz them into the washroom. The person has 30 minutes, after which a loud alarm will go off, making it uncomfortable to remain longer.

This will allow access to washrooms when no security person is directly on-site or outside of normal hours if deemed necessary. It also provides a record of who last used the washroom, and if damage occurs, there will be a record of who caused the damage.

Two other commissioners would float around between all the sites throughout the day, as they currently do. They can check on the washroom's cleanliness and deal with issues as they arise. We currently have push-to-call functionality on apartments and some commercial buildings. Many gas stations require people to ask for a key to be able to access the washroom.

It is not a stretch to ask that people interact in this manner. This identifies who is making the request and informs them by doing so that there is a record that they made that request. There is nothing wrong with making people accountable for their own actions. I do not believe that people should be allowed to continue to make willful damage to civic property without accountability. There are reasonable public norms that can be adhered to even in this situation.

Transit Safety

There are a couple of different ways that Transit operators are not safe in Saskatoon: the first is for their physical well-being and the second is environmental.

To address the first issue facing bus drivers, the City Administration implemented a plastic shield around them. This is somewhat effective but causes another substantial issue for drivers: excessive heat. Since many buses do not have functioning air conditioners, putting a bus driver in a plastic box with little airflow behind a large glass windshield is excessively dangerous for the driver's health.

It has been reported to me that drivers have spent their day in temperatures exceeding 36 to 42 C with high humidity. This is dangerous for anyone, but it is exceptionally dangerous for someone operating a motor vehicle in a stressful environment.

Saskatoon emergency measures have even dictated that people with any health concerns should limit their exposure to temperatures above 26°C for a prolonged period of time. Yet, they have not acted for the substantially higher temperature range that bus drivers often find themselves in.

Why is there a double standard?

When it comes to Transit, our City has consistently failed to do the simplest of things to provide better service and to take better care of the staff providing it. After I presented an animation showing the extent of outages across the city a number of years ago, the City Council voted for an audit to be done.

Unfortunately for the City Administration, this audit proved that the Administration was not being honest about the three reasons used for why good service could not be provided (the overall age of our fleet, accessibility or availability of parts for that fleet, and the temperature in which our buses were operating at the time). The auditor directly proved all three false.

In the end, that manager went to a higher-paid job in the City of Edmonton, and we have cycled through two more managers since with no real improvement. The much more senior management was not affected by this, even though they should have been fully accountable for what went on.

As mayor, it will be my goal to finally ask the tough questions of the City Administration and demand full answers for a change.

It's perplexing that our City is now embarking on a Bus Rapid Transit system while we have been unable to operate a legitimate basic transit system. It's hard to envision these same people managing a more complex operation when they have not been proven to be effective with an existing simpler system.

The other part is that bus drivers should have the ability to refuse service to habitually abusive people. I hear that the driver comes into question instead of the constantly aggressive occupant threatening the driver and other riders. That will stop with me. Riding the bus is a privilege, not a right. People need to act accordingly!

Lift Assist

The number one issue that firefighters tell me about, which could save a vast amount of money for taxpayers: lift assistance.

Currently, if someone falls down and can't get back to their feet, they tend to call the fire department instead of Medavie Ambulance. They do this because it is free to call the fire department, where the ambulance company would charge them for the same call.

What ended up happening over 1700 times last year is that a full fire crew would roll out to an address to come in and assist someone to their feet, only to leave again. There are many addresses where these fire crews have responded multiple times to provide this assistance. This is a massive cost for a very small service in the end.

The service is needed to help people age in place and maintain quality of life, but it shouldn't come at such an extensive cost to our city's taxpayers. I propose we create two two-person teams, one on the east and one on the west. Each team would be equipped with a small SUV, and they would respond to lift assist calls as they come in.

This team will not have to be as heavily trained as our front-line firefighters but they will provide a service which helps the readiness of our existing fire crews for any given situation. This single action could save an enormous amount of money each year in our fire budget.

This program would help reduce the impact of cost on taxpayers throughout our city while reducing the wear and tear on our most valuable fire assets – the fire trucks themselves. The less we needlessly drive these heavy vehicles around the city, the better. Lower operating costs and more longevity will be the result.

Warrant Squad

One of four recommendations from the Saskatchewan coroner's inquest into the death of Myles Sanderson was that the Saskatoon Police Service consider establishing a dedicated team tasked with arresting individuals who are subject to outstanding warrants.

This need for a warrant squad has been known for years before this inquest, yet the previous Police Chief never requested the necessary funding to allow for this in the police budget.

So now, the current Police Chief does not have the financial support to implement a dedicated warrant squad, but I would like to change that as soon as possible.

A warrant squad of 2 to 4 people would spend their days seeking out the ten most violent wanted criminals that are known to be within our city. Every time the most violent people are removed from our streets, this has a positive effect on overall public safety but also on those marginalized people that they prey on.

If we are actively pursuing these violent criminals, these individuals will have less ability to operate and this will help to limit their impact even before they are found and arrested. There has been too much effort to divest the Saskatoon Police Service away from Peel's Principles of Policing.

I am very happy to see that the current police leadership is pushing back against these core beliefs. It would be a core belief of mine that we require a warrant squad immediately to start affecting positive change within our city. Recently, the Prince Albert Police Service executed a vast network of arrests using a warrant squad. While our own city continues to work hard to clean up our streets, adding this type of operation will further strengthen our ability to root out and remove criminals from our midst.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tj88vW88iTQ&t=91s>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ulv_cUv2sZY

Alternate Response Officers

The ARO program has not been implemented as most would have expected. When AROs were promised to Fairhaven, somehow they ended up downtown, walking the streets there to make people feel safer.

By their own words, AROs have told me directly that they are heavily engaged in the downtown core. They know every business owner by name and are a public face of the police there. However, they are limited in their abilities: they only work daytime hours, have limited capability, and often have to call in a full police officer to handle things they find on the street. I have also been told that this ARO program has been a great recruiting method for our Police Service (and many other outside police agencies that poach our AROs while we are paying to employ and train them).

So, this program is meant to be a revolving door to work up and assess potential officers for the general service. With that in mind, I want the ARO employment period to be set at a maximum of 5 years, with no extensions. At the 5-year mark, an ARO will make 80% of a regular constable for 10% of the risk and 30% of the workload, all while only working day shifts. Regular constables work 12-hour shifts through the day or night. There is no situation where I believe that any ARO is worth 80% of the salary of a full officer. If we are headed that way, then those AROs who reach five years better prove they are qualified and ready to be a full officer or else they should be removed from the program to open up space for other worthy candidates; otherwise, the ARO program will be bloated with overpaid Commissionaire's!

Retiring Police Service Dogs

I try to follow what is happening in our SPS K9 Division because I want to ensure that our use of these dogs is sensible for public and officer safety.

It is very important that these Police Service dogs are protected as best possible. I feel that a Police Service dog has earned a good retirement in a carefully selected forever home. Because of the dog's service and training, it is obvious that this home should be best suited for the designated handler to ensure the dog is managed properly into the future.

Recently, I was informed that a nominal fee is charged to transfer the retiring dog to its former partner/handler; however, there is no further support.

I feel that two things need to change. First, SPS should cover the future medical bills for these working dogs through the retirement period. Second, the person in charge of that dog for retirement should receive a \$500 yearly stipend to help offset some of the extra costs that these dogs can require for specialty foods. These dogs eagerly give their working lives to Saskatoon, so the City can respect that contribution and service through the retirement period as well!

DEED Saskatoon

The Downtown Event and Entertainment District (DEED) has not been handled well since its inception. Remember how they claimed it would not effect your property taxes? Well, that is a straight out lie, and Charlie Clark was forced to acknowledge that on Evan Bray 29 Sept @ 9am. In fact, for 30 years, the entire TIF (Tax Incremental Financing) Zone will not fairly contribute to the growth of the city nor will it honestly contribute the actual amount required to provide their own required enhanced services over this huge area (nearly the entire downtown core now!).

Then remember that your taxes have continued to rise for the past 5 years all while City Administration was taking profit from the Land Branch and buying up various over priced properties around this DEED area. So your taxes have been artificially raised and will never be reduced from here, and the money used was your money that should have been used to lower taxes throughout!

Beyond all this, the process to “select” this current location was flawed from the start.

Great effort was put into swaying people to the decision others wanted to focus on. For example, the DEED Project Manager stated that moving the City Yards would cost over \$200 million. Then, after the other site was chosen, the City Manager openly told the City Council that it would cost over \$100 million to move them and that this money would be spent regardless of where the DEED location was selected.

There are a number of existing development plans that conflict with the goals of the DEED, yet all are moving ahead independently of each other, but they all conflict with each other.


Everything is being dealt with as an individual silo of concern. Propose the highest density use in Saskatoon’s history for a tight downtown area and then ignore that other plans are going ahead to remove many lanes of street access in all directions, which will dramatically affect the ability of this facility to operate successfully. Then, do all this without addressing the largest traffic issue in the Saskatoon core, which is the rail lines that cross nearby and completely cut off access to the venue many times a day.

We should never have had a DEED discussion without first having a basic plan for rail in our city. Instead, so many want to ignore the elephant in the room to focus on just one thing.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xkxCoHw5Ty4>

Modular Shelters

There's work to be done



MODULAR SHELTERS
MUST BE PLANNED
The City should provide the land and develop a plan for the Province to build high quality modular shelters that can be sited in the north end. Give people a dignified place to get proper assistance and get their lives back on track. **This is my plan and this will be our future.**

Photo ROC Modular, Inc.

CARY TARASOFF
FOR MAYOR

Saskatoon can no longer afford to keep making the same mistakes regarding homeless shelters. We also have to also understand that many people we deem as “homeless” are actually “unhousable”. What that means is that you can’t simply provide an apartment or suite to a large number of these persons and expect anything less than a disaster to follow. In their current addictions or mental health state, these people cannot safely live in traditional housing in a residential area of our city. We spend money endlessly on poorly conceived band-aid solutions which do not offer any real hope of success. Then we go even further to break our own planning bylaws for public safety to allow a massive shelter to go into the residential area of Fairhaven and then we are surprised that violence and community despair have followed closely behind? Enough of this right now.

We work with the Province so any money spent going forward will be for a longer term solution which provides safety for existing residential and commercial areas while giving the added supports actually needed by these people in need. To create a modular shelter system in the north light industrial area in a similar fashion to the newly opened operation in Red Deer. There was never any case that the Fairhaven Shelter or the proposed Sutherland Shelter was close to “services”. The same will be true for the light industrial location but I propose that we work to push that services come to that location, if not already sited there in the initial design and build. And the design and build will be modular in nature. Moveable and reconfigurable as needed over time. No more buying random properties not suited to the task (even after expensive renovations). While this is the Province’s to fund and operate, the City can help with the lease of civic land for this purchase. The Land Branch has been spending years and nearly 60 million dollars to buy up taxpayer funded purchases for a proposed future DEED site, so creating and offering our own land for this purpose should be much easier. If over time, this location needs to move, then the Province takes apart the structural units and moves them where they wish while removing the screw piles along the way. We then take our vacant site and sell it to a business interest like we would normally do regardless. The land remains the City of Saskatoon’s.

Looking at the background, public outcry pushed the Province to close the Lighthouse. Then the STC opened an Emergency Temporary Shelter on First Avenue in a City owned structure. That failed. So the STC found a location for sale in Fairhaven. The province purchased the site and the STC took their Emergency Shelter Beds and Programs from downtown and they combined that with the remaining Emergency Shelter Beds from the Lighthouse and all this was pushed into the Fairhaven location. The same land use, with the same basic services (according to the STC Chief himself), was situated at the new location within the safety buffer required for a residential area from such a land use. That would have been obviously illegal so the City Administration just called it by a different land use name instead of what it really was. The Province played along, even to the point that they ignored the legally required licensing for this new proposed land use "Special Care Home". Of course, now nearly two years later, the failure is impossible to hide. There have been at least two murders and hundreds of violent events since this operation moved in.

In summary, the City should provide the land and develop a plan for the Province to build high quality modular shelters that can be sited in the north end. Give people a dignified place to get proper assistance and get their lives back on track, where existing residential communities are not at risk. It's time for a change in thinking!

Election Signs

I am not your typical candidate.

My campaign is based on who I am and what I believe in.

I will not be distributing lawn signs. They are a wasteful use of resources that end up in the landfill after the election. I will not have t-shirts printed for my campaign for the same reasons.

Remember back in the day (yes, I'm that old) when you would put a sign on your window when you wanted milk delivered?

If you want to support me, please print the sign below and place it in your window. It is an 8.5" x 11" page that will help spread my message.


Thank you.

[Open PDF file](#)



Ghost Bikes

There's work to be done



GHOST BIKES

Ghost bikes are cannibalised bikes made from an array of stolen parts. They tend to not have brakes of any kind and their serial numbers have been filed off. This is the preferred transportation method for drug gang criminals in our city and we can do something to cut-off their mobility to commit any crime.

I have a plan to deal with this.

CARY TARASOFF
FOR MAYOR

Ghost Bikes are also known as Suicide Bikes or Franken Bikes. These bicycles are put together from an array of often stolen bicycle parts. They disassemble stolen bikes to reassemble them into an unrecognizable configuration. A frame from this bike, handlebars from here, a seat from over there, perhaps wheels from a fourth. They file the serial numbers off the bike frames, and Voila! A perfect transportation device that can't be tracked. However, cable brakes are sometimes specific to a particular bicycle, handlebar, and tire configuration. So, they just skip the brakes completely. These brakeless bicycles roam our city as a favourite method of transport by drug gang criminals. They run into pedestrians and cars without accountability.

We stop all this now. Bicycles require brakes to run on our streets. No brakes means the bike is seized by police on sight. No bike on our streets should be without a serial number. If an old bicycle frame has an illegible serial number, the owner can file a registration for free with the City Police. They will receive a permanent serial number sticker that must then be shown on the bicycle. All bicycles found by police without legitimate serial numbers will be immediately seized.

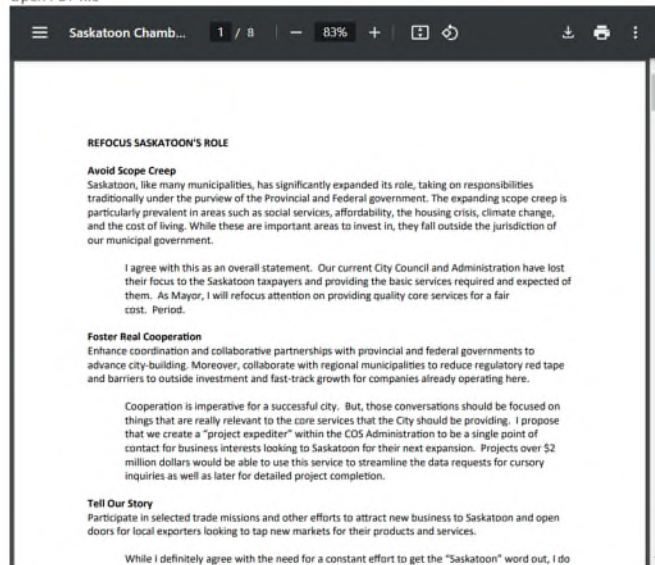
The illegal black market in stolen bicycles will no longer be allowed to operate freely. Drug gang criminals on foot are less able to operate around our city. It is time we take our city back. It's a small step but a meaningful one. A vote for Cary will be for a real change at City Hall!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z-OV_BZRKk4

YXE Election Pledge

The Greater Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce wants Saskatoon civic candidates to sign their “YXE Election Pledge”. I will not. While I may agree with some, I don’t agree with all of their goals. I respond to each of them in the document below. If you have any questions or comments about my position, please let me know.

Open PDF file



Plastic Rocks

Remember when this story hit the news in 2022?

City seeking public art for Saskatoon landfill expansion



By Ryan Kessler • Global News

Posted April 1, 2022 4:22 pm • Updated April 1, 2022 4:24 pm • 1 min read



The City of Saskatoon is seeking public art to promote sustainability at the Recovery Park landfill expansion with a price tag of up to \$275,000. Slavo Kutas / Global News

<https://globalnews.ca/news/8729476/city-seeking-public-art-for-saskatoon-landfill-expansion/>

Days later, City Administration changed the scope of the public art from a single art installation to three separate art installations. So what is the status now?

According to the Public Art Advisory Committee, plastic was shipped to Calgary to create three rocks. Their locations will be at the Material Recovery Centre (landfill), the Forestry Farm and Diefenbaker Park ([November 2023 document](#)). At their June meeting, it was noted “The transportation of the artwork from Calgary may pose a challenge.”



This whole situation could have been avoided if City Administration had not made an arbitrary determination that public art was required for this project. According to [Policy C10-025 – Public Art](#), how does this even fall into any of these designated civic capital projects:

- New libraries, community centres, and recreation and sport facilities;
- Major street rehabilitation/streetscape improvements;
- New bridges, bridge replacements, and interchanges; and
- New public spaces such as village squares developed by Saskatoon Land Division.

City Administration is not being properly overseen. Too many times there are “determinations” or “interpretations” that go against bylaws or policies. **They must be held to account. I will ensure that.**

New Central Library Needs Funds

Remember over a year ago, when the Library was surprised to discover that their monument was way more expensive to build than their cost consultants thought? (And don't forget, when the City approved borrowing \$67.5M for the project, Cynthia Block had supported a higher borrowing limit of \$76.3M.)

Saskatoon

Saskatoon Central Library opening pushed back after construction bids 'substantially higher' than budget

Construction work was supposed to start this fall on new library; opening now likely pushed back to late 2027



Liam O'Connor · CBC News · Posted: Sep 15, 2023 4:40 PM CST | Last Updated: September 15, 2023



This design for the new central Saskatoon Public Library branch was released last year. The library will now likely not open until late 2027, after being delayed due to construction bids that came in above the library's budget. (Saskatoon Public Library)

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatoon/central-library-not-opening-until-2027-1.6968700>

The Director of Libraries & CEO [Report](#) in the September agenda indicated the following for the New Central Library update: “We will have a project update in October 2024 that will include the budget and schedule and updated renderings of the building following the redesign.”

While we anxiously await this update, it looks like the Library is trying almost everything to raise money, including a 16-page document called “Beyond Books”, laying out a business case for support.

Shop & Support

All proceeds support learning and discovery at your public library.

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Socks | Adult
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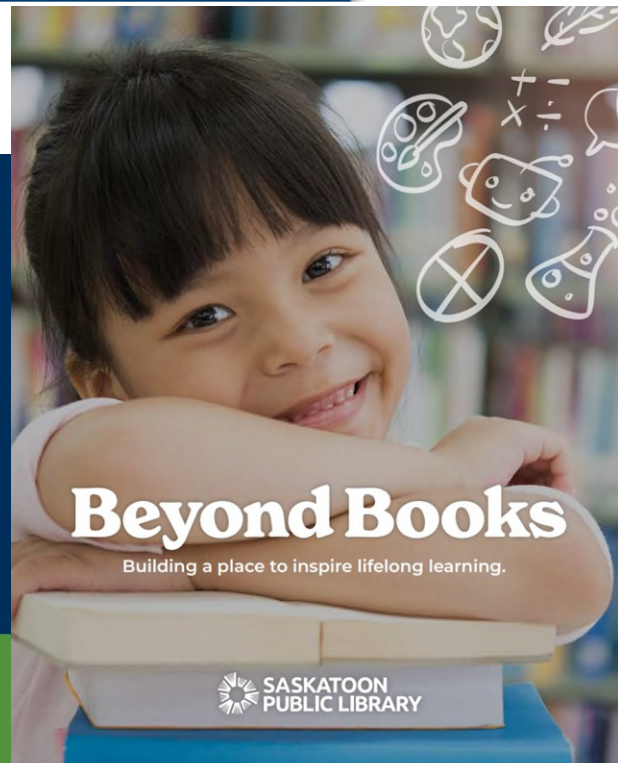
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<https://saskatoonlibrary.ca/about/shop/>

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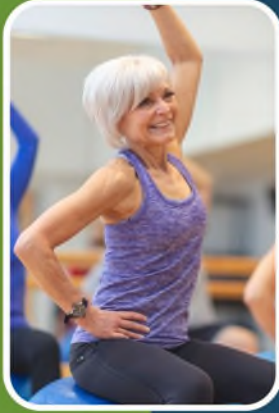
<https://www.rafflebox.ca/raffle/spl>

<https://www.facebook.com/stoonlibrary/posts/pfbid02Cwwt98mkXDSeaz6KhNEbUvnXJeLE54SFtbrHv2Cn9b3bJ2eZ6hZqgunmkkWKZkgsI>

https://beyondbooks.ca/isl/uploads/2024/05/8066_NCL_Case_for_support_May_2024.pdf

Senior's Rate for Leisure Centres

There's work to be done



SENIOR'S RATE FOR ACTIVITIES

Just like Golf Course fees and monthly Transit fares, there should be a separate rate for seniors (65+) at all leisure centres, outdoor pools and the Terry Fox Track. The growing senior population would benefit by reducing any cost barrier to access activities.

I support a senior's admission rate to access leisure activities.

CARY TARASOFF

FOR MAYOR

The City's Golf Courses have a senior's rate for 65+. Saskatoon Transit also has a senior's rate for monthly and annual passes. There is no such senior rate for access to leisure centres, outdoor pools or the Terry Fox Track. This is a missed opportunity.

According to the City's Housing Needs Assessment report last year, the senior's population is expected to grow at a more rapid rate than the rest of the population over the coming years. Opportunities for seniors to stay active is important. I support reducing the cost for this access.

All Things Transit

Over the last 4 years, since the 2020 election, I have shared numerous posts and videos about Saskatoon Transit. As the City Auditor pointed out, Transit is an “essential service.” However, the current Council and Administration do not take actions to support it. As Mayor, transit will be a priority for me. The following videos are examples of my support.

I presented this video about the transit issues over the winter to the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation on March 7, 2022. As a result of this presentation, an audit was called for and conducted into Investigation of Service Disruptions in Saskatoon Transit (here are links to the [Audit Report](#) and [Administration’s Response](#)).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6rHfH2xQlq0>

When the Auditor’s Report came to Council to November 2022, I presented my comments in Chambers.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6YjJRMedt8>

I presented this video about my **1st Avenue Bus Rapid Transit Concerns with Proposed Arena** to the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation on June 3, 2023. Administration’s response was that the routes and the station locations around the proposed arena all work. They are looking at the post-event volume wanting to get on queued-up buses, providing operational staff to direct people and helping them manage all the traffic (bus, vehicular and pedestrian). Despite Administration’s assurance that the proposed BRT plan will serve the district very well, my video shows otherwise. Of note, at the September 2024 meeting between the Bus Riders of Saskatoon group and Saskatoon Transit, the minutes state *“Plans for the stations on College Drive are likely to end up public in the new year, while stations on 1st Avenue will be delayed as more design work is done through 2025.”*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o5FvMbVSVQY>

It came to my attention in January 2023 that there was a lack of transit ticket vendors in the Confed Mall area. Councillor Kirton raised the question at the February 2023 SPC-Transportation meeting. I posted this video in August 2024, indicating that there had been no progress made. Council Kirton asked about it again in September 2024 and was advised that a pilot project for a ticket vendor at the Cosmo Civic Centre would start November 1st. Of note, at the August 2024 meeting between the Bus Riders of Saskatoon group and Saskatoon Transit, the minutes state *“A BRS member asks about the lack of ticket vendors in the southwest corner of the city. The Transit Director has spoken with leisure centres to try and get them to sell bus passes. Transit reports some pushback from leisure centres.”*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dq9uYWeOwOI>

In July 2024, I shared a video when I became aware of a significant safety concern for our bus drivers, operating their buses in extreme heat with no air conditioning.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Em2YUJJ3c8Y>

CBC Questionnaire

CBC Saskatoon Morning has distributed a questionnaire to the mayoral candidates. Here are my responses.

[Open PDF file](#)

Candidate Questi... 1 / 4 | 81% + | [Icons]

Candidate Questionnaire from CBC

What will be your top three priorities as mayor? Why these three? (300 words max)

Stop the DEED.
Reign in out-of-control spending.
Work with the Province to find a path to purpose built long-term shelters removed from residential and commercial areas of our city.

Police budgets go up year after year but Saskatoon still has some of the highest crime rates in the country. What is your plan for addressing crime? (200 words max)


The previous Police Chief lost focus for public safety. Our new Chief is back on track and we need to do all we can to give the reasonable tools to Police to improve public safety. The large movement to populate the City Police with ARO's is a back door way to defund actual fully capable Police Constables. While ARO's have a selected use and benefit, what we need are fully trained and capable officers with better direction from the Police Leadership. A Mayor has no direct input in the Police Service, however, the Mayor can support important initiatives that Police require when it is clear these will benefit the city as a whole.

Do you have a target for tax hikes during your term and how would you achieve that target? (200 words max)

Currently, there is a mostly unquantified amount of deferred expenditures that will hit our civic budgets over the next years. Out of control spending will now come to roost in our budget and we will have to deal with the mess that previous Councils have created. My absolute hope is to make changes so these added costs will not end up in higher taxes as a start. The ultimate goal is to lean out our civic operations without losing on the ground services and that these savings will help lower our tax implications. Stalling or stopping poorly conceived projects will also be a good source of savings where possible. I can not make any promises as no one on this side of the insurance machine will fully

Spay and Neuter Funding

There's work to be done



Spay and Neuter Funding

Every year a number of pet charities in Saskatoon deal with the landslide of kittens and puppies discarded in our city.

While they work hard to find new loving homes, we also need to address the cause of this and the obligation on the part of the City to help fund it.

I propose that the City of Saskatoon financially assist these charities dealing with abandoned animals with spay and neuter costs to help better control this situation on our streets

CARY TARASOFF
FOR MAYOR

Every year, local pet charities spend a significant portion of their fundraising to pay for Spay and Neuter for the animals in their care. These costs are not rolled into the final adoption cost either as this would preclude the animals from being affordable for adoption in many cases. The City of Saskatoon does not contribute to this effort even though this is a civic service as I see things. I would propose that we change that and that in an annual manner, we contribute something meaningful to this purpose so that more of the fundraising for these charities can actually go to the care of the animals. We have a landslide of unwanted puppies and kittens each year in our city. Doing what we reasonably can as a good civic government will help us slow down that flow and it will help ensure the best quality of care for the animals in our city and the most sustainable financial support for the charities who give their lives to that kindness every day.

Shopping Carts

There's work to be done



SHOPPING CARTS

Saskatoon is inundated with abandoned shopping carts.

These carts are very expensive items of business and were unlawfully removed from the business location that owns them.


I want the City of Saskatoon to create a two-person team with a small lift truck to respond to calls around the city to regularly collect these carts when located. At no charge to the business, we will return them and show we care about the success of their business.

CARY TARASOFF
FOR MAYOR

Ever drive around the city and notice abandoned shopping carts? Perhaps a significant distance from wherever they originated from even? Sometimes a gaggle of them over here, and another along the rail tracks over there. How can companies afford to find and bring them back to use at that business? With rampant street issues driving this further and faster than ever before, I believe the City of Saskatoon can do a small thing to help those businesses on the front lines of the social issues on our streets. We could have the civic grounds department dedicate a two-person team and a lift truck to respond to calls when received, to go gather these abandoned carts and to drop them off at the business they belong to. As a good municipal government gesture, supporting business being financially hit through this activity, we clean up our streets and also show business that we are going to start caring about their hardships. Only abandoned shopping carts will be picked up and a general phone number for this will be up on the City of Saskatoon home page to help people report them when seen.

Ageism at City Hall

There's work to be done



AGEISM AT CITY HALL?

The City of Saskatoon does not equally value the contributions of senior citizens in our civic operations.

Where seniors are actively employed by our City for important support roles, some have found that their life insurance coverage is suddenly terminated because of their age so they have no coverage if they are accidentally killed on the job.


If they provide our city with valid employment service, then City Administration should ensure they are given equal coverage for life insurance as well.

CARY TARASOFF FOR MAYOR

I was very upset to find out recently that some employees at the City of Saskatoon have had their Life Insurance coverage dropped because of their age. Apparently, if you are 71 years old or older, while you may be perfectly fine to work for our City, you somehow suddenly are not worthy of having the same life insurance coverage as every other employee who is younger than you. A City Hall that brags about their “inclusion” efforts for everyone, seems to have ignored senior citizens in that consideration. I propose that the City should offer the same basic coverage to employees, regardless of their age. At a time when we need experienced people to help with our civic services, it seems contrary to go to such an effort to exclude some at the same time!

Rail Solution

There's work to be done



**TIRED OF RAIL
CUTTING OFF
OUR CITY?**

The other candidates are going back to a campaign message from Rob Norris on moving the rail south of the city to a shared line.

That is a fool's attempt to dissuade you from the issue and CN and CP are smart enough to know that it will limit their ability to operate properly.

Let's start new discussions with rail from a Mayor who actually understands the issue and can offer new innovative solutions to see what works best for our city and our critical rail industry alike.

CARY TARASOFF
FOR MAYOR

How many decades does Saskatoon have to go through before someone finds a real longer term plan for rail within the City limits? I have spent a significant amount of my own time to find a never before considered concept of how rail can be dealt with over time. This plan has been lightly vetted by many types of senior professional engineers and rail experts alike. To date, no professional has been able to state unequivocally that this concept is not viable or at least possible. This may not be the final answer, but it has already opened doors to frank discussions and new thoughts on the issue. Rail is the backbone of our city and our province. We need to work with rail to find a way for their operations to function and expand in the future while freeing up our city streets from the constant impacts that passing trains create. Trying to force the major rail companies to share one rail line south of the city will be hugely expensive and detrimental for the long term operations of both rail companies. This latest concept of mine may open up incentives for everyone involved and allow people to talk as friendly neighbors instead as adversaries.