

December 2, 2024

Her Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council
222 3rd Ave. N.
Saskatoon, SK S7K 0J5

Dear Mayor Block and Members of City Council,

RE: Addressing Budget Report

On behalf of the NSBA – Saskatoon's Business Association, I am writing in regards to the 2025 Preliminary Corporate Business Plan and Budget.

First of all, I would like to congratulate our new Mayor and Council after the recent municipal election. I look forward to working with you all.

The NSBA pays close attention and careful consideration to ensure our city's long-term sustainability and growth is beneficial to all. We would like to congratulate the City of Saskatoon on the City's 22nd 'AAA'/Stable credit rating. We recognize that it reconfirms Saskatoon City Council and its Administration's ongoing commitment to fiscal responsibility and transparency.

In keeping with this commitment to fiscal responsibility and transparency the NSBA would like to offer some recommendations for your consideration.

Our recommendations are as follows:

Staffing levels in specific departments: We recommend conducting a value for money audit with a goal of ensuring that staff levels and resources are audited on a regular basis. We recommend doing the audits to ensure staff levels and resources are adequate in each department. We would further recommend implementing a hiring freeze in departments that have yet to receive a value for money audit. The City of Saskatoon should also look at progressive tools, such as artificial intelligence (AI), as a means of streamlining services.

Anticipate reduced revenues due to inflation and changes in spending patterns: The NSBA believes it is time for the city to acknowledge that revenues may not return to pre-pandemic levels as anticipated, considering inflation and potential changes in spending patterns. Budgeting with this reality in mind will help avoid further financial strain.

Discontinue programs that higher levels of government should fund: It is essential to ensure that programs and services that rightly fall under the jurisdiction of higher levels of

government are adequately funded by them. We encourage you to focus on the core elements of municipal responsibility.

Again, congratulations to all and please know that we all share the same goal of a vibrant and successful Saskatoon. I encourage you to view the NSBA as an asset that is always available to provide honest feedback on shared goals and we can all succeed by working together.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we look forward to continued collaboration for the betterment of our city.

Sincerely,



Keith Moen
Executive Director