

April 14, 2021

Saskatoon City Council
222 3rd Ave North
Saskatoon, SK
S7K 0J5

Re: Support for Proposed Joint-Use Facility & Downtown Entertainment District

Your Worship and Members of City Council,

Thank you and City Administration for continuing the work of planning for a joint-use arena and convention centre facility, and entertainment district, in Saskatoon's downtown. The economic benefits of such a facility and district for our city and region would be significant, including new jobs, private and public investment, support for our visitor economy, and opportunities for local restaurants, hoteliers and suppliers to grow.

However, time is of the essence.

We know that both TCU Place and SaskTel Centre are reaching their end-of-useful-life with aging infrastructure that can no longer meet the expectations of visitors, promoters and guests. Day by day, these facilities are aging in place, unable to compete effectively for large-scale conventions, conferences and concerts that are going to facilities in neighbouring cities.

We know that senior levels of government will be looking to provide significant infrastructure funding for large-scale projects to create jobs and spur economic recovery as Saskatchewan and Canada emerge from the pandemic. With infrastructure dollars flowing to projects and communities across the country, competition will be fierce. Projects that are clearly defined, with a strong and compelling case for investment, will be most successful.

Finally, we have learned that it takes time to identify the right development sequence to support the evolution of a successful district and construction of anchor facilities. We know, for example, that the construction of condos, a public plaza, hotel, retail space and office space in Edmonton's Ice District was staged in a specific way to support the development and success of Rogers Place.

For these reasons, we urge you to move aggressively on identifying and selecting a downtown site, developing a functional plan for the joint-use facility, and mapping out the district's development timeline to support the construction of the project. Drawing on best practices, and the experiences of comparable North American markets, we can accelerate our own efforts to put our city back on the map and provide incredible experiences and opportunities for businesses and residents who call Saskatoon home.

We would welcome the opportunity to facilitate your consultations with businesses on these matters, including conversations around the financing tools and options investigated by City Administration.

We appreciate the scale and importance of this project to the future of Saskatoon. Know that we stand ready to work with you, and other stakeholders, to help drive the planning process and bring a new joint-use facility and entertainment district to fruition. As Saskatoon's voice for business, we are a powerful network of businesses, organizations and community-minded leaders who want the best for their city.

Sincerely,



Jason Aebig
CEO