

This is a request to appear before City Council on December 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019. I will be discussing the redevelopment of the Regent Par III Golf Course. My name is: STEPHAN REPKA My address is: [REDACTED] My phone number is [REDACTED]

**The following is a written summary of what I will be presenting:**

**My name is Stephan Repka I am here tonight to oppose the redevelopment of the Regent Par III Golf Course into a recreation hub. It is important that none the trees on the land not be destroyed.**

I am a hunter and a conservationist. As a conservationist, the golf course land is important to me for many reasons.

The Regent Par III Golf Course is one of the oldest urban forests in the city of Regina. It is a valuable asset not just to Coronation Park but to the rest of the City and beyond that as part of a global picture. It is a great resource in this City to combat climate change.

It is nearly 12 acres of land consisting of hundreds of trees and shrubs that are decades old and it has been home to generations of various birds and small creatures. It also plays an important role in protecting us from climate change.

Urban forests historically provide ecological diversity and are an important habitat for a variety of flora, birds, small mammals and other wildlife. The urban forest also serves as a stopover point for migratory birds. Preserving this network of habitats and migration systems assists in promoting a natural form of pest control in the City.

Removal of trees on the golf course land would interfere in this important ecosystem, would displace or potentially kill the wildlife that currently lives there, displace migratory birds and would contribute to climate change.

the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change found that CO<sub>2</sub> makes up 74% of greenhouse gas emissions. As the Canadian group Park People the conservation non-profit American Forests both reminds us, healthy forests are our most efficient, inexpensive, and natural systems to combat, control and moderate climate change. Both natural and urban forests play an essential role in reducing the main contributor to climate change – CO<sub>2</sub>.

An average sized tree can store hundreds of pounds of CO2 over its lifetime.

Urban forests contribute to maintaining clean air, producing oxygen, intercepting airborne particulates, reducing smog, and enhancing a community's respiratory health.

In addition to all of this, from a human perspective it's important to understand what people in the golf course area are going through. Child poverty in the area is 65%. It is also a very high crime neighbourhood. Research shows that children who live in disadvantaged neighbourhoods have more depression more anxiety and are 4 times more likely to attempt or commit suicide.

Urban forests and trees have been shown to minimize anxiety and depression and decrease suicidal behaviour. Urban forests improve psychological well-being, social well-being, and the improve the social structure of our communities.

In short, recent research suggests that urban forests are beneficial to our physical and mental health as well as creating better community cohesion, and improved quality of life

Recent research also confirms that urban forests provide ecosystem services critical to human wellbeing, they provide habitat for wildlife and they promote biodiversity. The challenge for the City of Regina is to strategically expand urban forests and provide people especially the disadvantaged or vulnerable, urban forests that are shown to promote healthier, happier, and more enriched lives.

Greta Thunberg is a 16 year old Swedish environmental activist whom I'm sure you have heard of. She has gained international recognition for her environmental work and become very prominent on the world stage. She is a very wise young woman who has gained an international following because of her courage and her ability to not back down on important issues related to climate.

Greta has sent out a call to action to people around the world to come forward and become activist to address climate change and demand that leaders at all levels of government take responsibility for their actions and be accountable to us for the things they are doing.

Grerta says there is no time left to beg leaders to care for our future because for way too long people in power have gotten away with not doing anything at all to fight the climate and ecological crisis. She says it's time to get angry and then transform that anger into action and to stand together for what's important to the environment and never give up.

We are angry that Regina City Council is tonight considering ignoring 1,600 citizens who live in Coronation and North Central and who have signed survey documents demanding that the City leave the urban forest alone.

We are angry that City Council wants to spend 3 million taxpayer dollars that the city can't afford to destroy trees on the golf course land

We are angry that the City up to this point seems oblivious to the contribution the urban forest on the golf course has to climate change and that the planning people at city hall somehow think it's a great idea to rip out 60 year old trees to put in a field, washrooms and a toboggan hill

Tonight we want City Council to be accountable on all levels for protecting the trees in the urban forest on the golf course. Tonight we are saying do the right thing, do what the people have told you they want.

I object to removing any trees on the golf course land in order to build a recreation hub or anything else. Removal of any trees on this land is wrong and I am very aware that many other people also object.

Shame on you if you approve spending hard earned tax dollars for a project that is clearly more harmful than good.