

11/29/19

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to you today regarding the Regent Par 3 Golf Course redevelopment plan, taking the liberty as a community member with a valid concern and expressing my beliefs.

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Areej Fatima, and I am a Grade 11 student attending Thom Collegiate. As you already know, Thom Collegiate is a public school located within the Coronation Park Community district. Correspondingly, the Regent Par 3 Golf Course is also located in the same district. This golf course contains some of Regina's oldest remaining trees, maturing well over 50 to 60 years. The City wants to redevelop the land which the golf course currently occupies to include "a large sports field, and other amenities that would necessitate the removal of well over 100 of the mature trees possibly even more than 200." Cutting down such a large number of trees is only slated to cause immense environmental damage. Regent Par 3 is one of the oldest urban forests in Regina, but it has countless of other qualities as well. Urban forests help to filter air and water, control stormwater, conserve energy, and provide animal habitat and shade. Large urban trees are exceptional filters for urban pollutants such as greenhouse gases, evidently a large factor of concern in the health of our environment today. These trees improve the quality of the air we breathe and it does not make any sense to cut them down, especially considering the reactions of the community members. A recent survey was done to determine the opinions of other Coronation Park Community members, on whether there should be any residential development on the Regent Par 3 Golf Course. The results revealed that 76% of residents voted "no" and a mere 5% voted "yes". Shouldn't the City Council listen to the voices of the residents who will be directly impacted by this redevelopment? They are the ones who will have to live through whatever changes are made, whether beneficial or detrimental. It is common knowledge that the Coronation Park Community is not the most well-off area in Regina, and the residents would benefit from saving money in any way. A little research reveals that trees properly placed around buildings can reduce air conditioning needs by 30%, and save energy

used for heating by 20-50%. This results in a great amount of expense saved by these residents. Children raised in low-income areas are at a higher risk for mental and physical health problems, developmental delays, behaviour disorders, and are more likely to live in poverty as adults. This urban forest can help avoid that.

But, this doesn't have to be the end of the redevelopment plan. There are so many ways that we, as a community, can work our way through it and benefit both the Council, and the residents. One suggestion is to have the plan take place elsewhere, for example, less than 100 feet to the north at the ACT Ball Diamond field or ½ a block east at the Pony Park Ball Diamond field, or even across from Gladys McDonald School. There are already so many ball diamonds in Regina, even more in high poverty neighbourhoods compared to wealthy neighbourhoods. In Coronation alone, there are 16 ball diamonds. It wouldn't hurt to change one of these to a sports field, especially compared to cutting down a whole urban forest. Another solution would be to redevelop around these trees and avoid cutting down something that adds values and many benefits. Some potential recreational changes includes a fenced off-leash dog park, a disc-golf course, and a seasonal washroom facility. Every single one of these options could be built without the need to cut down the trees, in fact, they may even benefit from the aesthetic.

The goal for the City Council should be to benefit the residents as much as possible, and revoking or even changing this redevelopment plan could be the first step to a brighter future for the city of Regina. Cities have an international duty to conserve and protect urban forests. Why should Regina be an exception?

Sincerely,



Areej Fatima