

October 5, 2026

Standing Policy Committee on Transportation
City Hall 222 3rd Avenue North
Saskatoon, SK
S7K 0J5

Re: Connecting Millar Avenue – Business Community Concerns and Proposed Alternative

Dear Chair and Members of the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation,

On behalf of the North Saskatoon Business Association (NSBA) – Saskatoon's Business Association, I am writing regarding the proposed transportation and active transportation improvements along Millar Avenue, including the Connecting Millar Avenue project from 43rd Street to Marquis Drive.

The NSBA has previously expressed general support for investments that improve transportation safety, accessibility, efficiency, and connectivity throughout Saskatoon. We continue to support those objectives. Following further engagement with businesses along the Millar Avenue corridor, we believe the proposed solution should be reconsidered to ensure that the scale of the infrastructure is proportionate to the problem being addressed.

Since the original proposals were brought forward, the NSBA has spoken directly with approximately 35 businesses along Millar Avenue to better understand how the proposed changes could affect their operations. The feedback has been mixed. Some businesses support the proposed improvements, while others have significant concerns or oppose aspects of the design. However, there has been a remarkably consistent theme throughout our conversations: Most businesses believe the current proposal is overbuilt for the problem it is intended to solve.

Businesses understand the need to improve pedestrian safety and accessibility along Millar Avenue. They recognize that portions of the corridor lack adequate pedestrian infrastructure and that employees, customers, and other users should have a safe way to move through the area. The concern is whether the proposed solution needs to be as extensive as currently contemplated.

Millar Avenue is an important industrial and commercial corridor with a high concentration of employment uses. It also serves businesses that rely heavily on trucks, deliveries, customer vehicles and efficient access to their properties.

Another consistent concern raised with the NSBA has been the consultation process. Businesses have told us that property owners have received information about the proposed changes, but

that the businesses actually operating within those properties have not always been directly engaged. That distinction is important.

The business operating at a location is often the party that understands the day-to-day implications of a transportation change: where trucks enter, how deliveries are made, where employees park, how customers access the business and what movements are required by the business. Meaningful consultation therefore needs to include the businesses themselves, not solely the owners of the properties in which they operate.

Based on our discussions with approximately 35 businesses, the NSBA believes the City should begin by establishing a safe pedestrian connection on one side of Millar Avenue, rather than implementing extensive active transportation infrastructure on both sides of the corridor. In particular, the east side of Millar Avenue has consistently been identified by several businesses as the preferred side for a sidewalk. We believe this approach deserves serious consideration.

This would address the immediate safety concern while providing the City with an opportunity to evaluate how pedestrians actually use the corridor. If additional crossings or infrastructure are subsequently demonstrated to be necessary, they could be added based on actual usage and identified safety needs. This approach would also reduce the potential disruption to businesses and preserve the operational characteristics that make Millar Avenue an important industrial and commercial corridor.

The NSBA wants to emphasize that this is not an argument against active transportation or pedestrian safety.

We believe there is an opportunity to develop a solution that improves pedestrian safety and accessibility while recognizing the realities of an industrial and commercial corridor.

The goal should not be to build the most infrastructure possible. It should be to build the right infrastructure for Millar Avenue.

The NSBA looks forward to continuing to work collaboratively with the City, Administration, Committee members and the businesses along Millar Avenue to achieve that outcome.

Sincerely,



Keith Moen
Executive Director, NSBA