

*From the StarPhoenix, January 4, 2012*

Our mayor and city councillors are missing something important in how they devise and implement policy that affects citizens.

They consider themselves privileged by virtue of getting elected. They are chasing big bucks and big projects, which aren't necessarily a priority for most citizens. In doing so, council has lost touch with the citizenry at a time when Saskatoon is Canada's fastest growing city.

Saskatoon's basic infrastructure is getting worse by the day. Residents want dramatically improved services, such as snow removal that includes clearing residential streets. They also want streets without potholes that have made driving hazardous for the vehicles as well as their occupants. These are basic services for which residents pay taxes. To put it in terms that our strongly pro-business mayor and council understand, taxpayers want a return on their dollars.

Council isn't working in the interests of everybody. In pursuing big projects, council's energy has shifted to "wants" rather than "needs." Many of these multimillion-dollar projects impose a heavier tax burden on citizens. The mayor and council don't take criticism in stride and are easily offended, construing as miscreants those who question their decisions. Many of the decision - for example, moving of Mendel Art Gallery to South Downtown - are arrogant and almost senseless.

The mayor, elected on a platform of not raising taxes, has done the opposite, with taxes rising every year he's been in office. Council has to learn to work in the interests of all the citizens - men, women, children, youth, seniors, immigrants, refugees and First Nations people. Until it does, the mayor and councillors will keep losing the respect of citizens.

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