

The StarPhoenix January 17, 2012

The article, *Gallery design earns national award* (SP, Dec. 17) states that "a group continues to oppose" the controversial new gallery.

It isn't a "group," but the majority of the public that has always seemed opposed. In 2009, 60 per cent of those responding to a StarPhoenix question online were against building a new gallery. Respondents to surveys by NewsTalk Radio (78 per cent) and C95 (88 per cent) also were opposed. There continue to be critical letters to The SP regarding the proposed gallery.

After the Remai gallery concept was unveiled in 2011, 26 comments were posted on the Mendel Gallery's Facebook page, of which 20 were critical of the new gallery. A Save the Mendel website has logged 2,200 statements that express similar sentiments. These continue to be added from Saskatonians and people across Canada concerned with the perceived cultural hijacking of the Mendel legacy.

By comparison, those pushing for the gallery's relocation and renaming are small in number. They consist of a few politicians and their friends who have engineered the move to suit a certain agenda, which seems to be to fill the River Landing area with large buildings. It's a classic example of "edifice complex" - defined at jargondatabase.com as "the tendency of politicians to have large buildings and stadiums built as a concrete reminder of their 'legacy.' "

Unfortunately, it's taxpayers who will pay 80 per cent of the cost of the proposed gallery. It's no wonder there's so much opposition.

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