

# Swystun tries to broaden public's perception of her Mayoral hopeful says she's not one-issue candidate; Atchison proud of record

BY DAVID HUTTON, THE STARPHOENIX OCTOBER 16, 2009



Lenore Swystun

**Photograph by:** Richard Marjan, The StarPhoenix, The StarPhoenix

Mayor Don Atchison stood up for his record of developing the city as the "people's mayor," while his main challenger, former councillor Lenore Swystun, did her best to convince the crowd at a downtown business luncheon Thursday that she's not who they think she is.

"(A lot of people) look at me and they see the volunteer service I've done and they put me right in a box," Swystun said at the mayoralty forum at a downtown hotel hosted by the North Saskatoon Business Association and the chamber of commerce.

"(They think) that I'm there for heritage buildings, that I'm there just to think about what's old. Well, I'm here to let you know that they're wrong. That's not who I am and that's not what I do for a living."

Atchison stuck to the message he's repeated throughout the campaign: Saskatoon has a strong credit rating and sound government and has attracted high numbers of workers and businesses since he took office.

Any tax increases have been roughly one per cent above inflation, which the city should "be proud of" given its extraordinary growth.

"People are looking in the business world for certainty," Atchison said.

Swystun volleyed back that the city's taxes have shot up 22 per cent in the last six years, including deficit budgets the past three years.

"We've gone from a pay-as-you-go philosophy to borrowing into our future," she said.

Atchison and Swystun were joined by fellow mayoral candidates shop steward Johnny Melenchuk, busker Steve Lawrance and former Realtor Roger Chernoff.

Melenchuk, a stabbing victim, called for sweeping changes to the police department's complaint process.

Lawrance entertained the crowd with an out-of-tune song about spending and a call to audit every city employee.

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Comments: **Businessman**

October 16, 2009

I fear the tax bills that will follow Don Atchison's rampant spending spree. During one of the biggest boom periods in Saskatoon's history, Mayor Atchison has left the city with a huge debt and numerous poorly planned legacy projects. Ms. Swystun's Masters degree in City Planning, her long track record of civic involvement and volunteerism, and her pledge to maintain fiscal transparency at City Hall suggest she is a much better choice for Mayor than the incumbent.

#### ADVANCE POLL INFORMATION

Some advance polls open on Saturday, Oct. 17, and continue for a week.

Polls are open at City Hall, Committee Room E, from Monday, Oct. 19, to Friday, Oct. 23, from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The University of Saskatchewan has polls open starting Monday, Oct. 19, in Place Riel from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Starting on Saturday, Oct. 17, voters can cast a ballot at Midtown Plaza, The Mall at Lawson Heights, Confederation Mall, Market Mall and The Centre at Circle and Eighth. The mall polls are open on Saturday, Oct. 17, and Saturday, Oct. 23, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Wednesday, Thursday and Friday of next week from 1 p.m. to 8 p.m.

To be eligible to vote, people have to be a Canadian citizen, 18 years of age or older, have resided in Saskatoon for at least three months and have lived in Saskatchewan for six months. To cast a ballot for Catholic school board trustees, voters have to be Catholic.

The city is offering a free bus ride to the advance polling stations and on election day. Free ride coupons are available in the voters' guide or on the city's website at [www.saskatoon.ca](http://www.saskatoon.ca).

# The politics of city election campaigns

BY JOHN GORMLEY, SPECIAL TO THE STARPHOENIX OCTOBER 16, 2009

I may have been wrong about Saskatoon's civic election campaign. What I thought was going to happen hasn't.

After the defeat two years ago of a 16-year-old NDP provincial government, I thought history would repeat itself with the NDP ready to take on City Hall.

The last time the New Democrats, Sask-atchewan's natural governing party, were tossed from office in the early 1980s, it wasn't long before at least three ex-MLAs and other NDP faithful ended up on Saskatoon city council.

Shut out from running the province, the next-best thing for NDPers was to dominate the second-largest government in Saskatchewan, Saskatoon City Hall.

It was a handy place from which to heap plenty of criticism on the provincial government by passing resolutions, making impossible demands and irritating a government the NDP loathed.

I'd expected a replay this time. Although Saskatoon civic politics doesn't have a party system, on certain issues such as development and growth it's often easy to see political voting trends.

Consistently, the so-called Gang of Four -- ex-NDP MLAs Pat Lorje and Bob Pringle, left-wing activist Charlie Clark and Darren Hill -- are predictable on issues such as riverbank development, housing and zoning.

Depending on the issues, there are voting alliances of every combination among city councillors. But with 11 votes on council, and six required for a majority, if only two additional left-wing politicians emerge, decision-making in this city will dramatically change.

Aside from the mayoralty race where community activist Lenore Swystun is engaged in a rematch with Mayor Don Atchison, there doesn't seem to be an organized slate of left wing, or so-called progressives, vying for City Hall.

The most notable voice of the left -- and running a strong campaign -- is Sean Shaw, former president of the Saskatoon Wanuskewin federal NDP and well-known left-wing blogger "Sean in Saskatchewan," who is challenging longtime Ward 4 Coun. Myles Heidt.

Although taking pains to shed his high-profile NDP image, including scrapping his blog before announcing his candidacy, Shaw is highly organized with campaign workers from several west-side NDP MLAs. This will be a race to watch.

Party politics do not typically matter much in civic elections. While voters may support particular parties provincially or federally, they will often vote for council candidates based on voting record, campaign platform, individual performance and the ability to get results at City Hall.

Some city councillors, in contrast to the Gang of Four, have decidedly more right-wing voting patterns. One is the longest-serving member on council and "wise father to all" (my description, not his): Ward 8's Glenn Penner, who was a Liberal MLA in the mid-1970s.

But, with a fierce independent streak, Penner is by no means a predictable vote on many issues.

As for races to watch, a close one may be Darren Hill's Ward 1, where the rookie councillor is being challenged by Carol Reynolds.

There's been a partisan edge with Hill sending letters to NDP supporters decrying the "conservative bulldozer" Reynolds, who worked on the federal campaign of Conservative MP Kelly Block, and linking Reynolds to certain high-profile Saskatchewan Party and Conservative politicians -- as if that's supposed to be a bad thing.

Hill has also been under fire for enclosing city-paid business cards in his campaign fundraising letters. His explanation is that someone on his campaign team must have inserted his business cards without permission.

Most embarrassing use of new media was seen with Ward 10 incumbent Bev Dubois, who Twittered that she was pleased to have her daughter and a friend with her at a candidates' forum she never attended. When this was noted by her tech-savvy opponent Mark Horseman, Dubois clarified that she'd mistyped and meant to say the young women were there "for her," not "with her."

The biggest challenge in this campaign will be overcoming voter apathy. With voter turnout in the last civic election a paltry 37 per cent -- an improvement from the embarrassing 26 per cent of 2000, but still below the recent high watermark of 52 per cent in the 2003 campaign -- this one is set to be on the low side.

This time, with fewer burning issues and candidates prepared to step forward, it's all about what the political insiders call GOTV, the "get out the vote" factor.

You can do your part by informing yourself, meeting the candidates and voting.

Gormley can be heard Monday to Friday at 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on NewsTalk 650

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# Atchison, Swystun spar over planning

BY DAVID HUTTON, THE STARPHOENIX OCTOBER 15, 2009



Candidates at the first mayoral debate, from left: Mayor Don Atchison, Roger Chernoff, Steve Lawrance and Lenore Swystun

**Photograph by:** Greg Pender, The StarPhoenix

Former city councillor Lenore Swystun sought to turn the first official debate with Mayor Don Atchison into a feisty assault on the mayor's record on planning, telling a crowd Wednesday that the decision-making process at City Hall is flawed and needs more citizen representation.

"Smart growth isn't about doing more and more and more, it's about achieving intelligence in the way that we plan our city," she told the crowd of around 50 students at the University of Saskatchewan.

Atchison trumpeted the city's record on everything from funding new student residences to bike paths, transit and "balanced growth throughout the city."

He turned the question of city spending back to his main opponent in his opening remarks.

"I find it quite amusing when people talk about spending on projects 'cause they think they can do a better job of it," he said. "I'm always curious to know what people would leave behind. Would you leave housing behind? Would you leave transit behind? What would you leave behind?"

The hour-long debate generated several moments of interest and humour. Atchison and Swystun were joined by two lesser-known candidates for mayor, busker Steve Lawrance and former Realtor Roger Chernoff.

Lawrance called for the city to abolish council and go back to a system of Athenian democracy, where all decisions are voted on by referendum, while Chernoff, a car collision victim still seeking compensation, said governments "are failing citizens."

At one point, Lawrance said he could build the downtown bus mall "over the weekend."

"Just give me a couple of skilled CAT operators," he said.

While Swystun questioned the decision to move the Mendel Art Gallery to River Landing as abrupt and secretive, Atchison said it was necessary because donations to renovate the current building were slow in coming and securing money from the federal government had stalled.

After the forum, Swystun vowed to "open the books" on the budget and plan further ahead on the impact of city finances when major projects come on stream.

Atchison said he would change the city's operating budget process from a one-year outlook to a three-year cycle.

"I don't think (one-year planning) has hurt us, but I don't think it has helped us as well," he said.

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### Your Comments

Julia H

October 16, 2009 - 1:14 PM

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I notice that the poster 'Margery' is quite unaware of the PROGRESS this province made under the NDP what with MEDICARE, rural electrification, CO-OP's, Lowest Auto Insyrance, Lowest Utilities etc etc etc .... If Sweystun is 'Like' the NDP then for G8d's sake lets get her elected!

Victor

October 16, 2009 - 10:52 AM

[Flag this as Inappropriate](#)

One hundred and fifty seven million dollars in debt! Repeated deficit budgets! Total depletion of the reserve account! Atchison may claim to have developed River Landing but all I see is an empty lot. Don Atchison is not an asset to the City of Saskatoon. The stupid fiscal choices that have been on his watch will be a burden to be carried by Saskatoon taxpayers for years to come.

Observant Citizen

October 15, 2009 - 11:33 PM

[Flag this as Inappropriate](#)

Atchison states that it was necessary to move the Mendel Art Gallery to River Landing "because donations to renovate the current building were slow in coming and securing money from the federal government had stalled." He doesn't mention how the city blocked the Mendel Art Gallery in 2005 from receiving the special centennial funding (Canada Celebrates Saskatchewan initiative) administered by Western Diversification Canada, funding that was intended to contribute to the cultural, recreational and heritage legacy of Saskatoon and Saskatchewan. He also doesn't mention how in 2006 the city blocked the Mendel from receiving infrastructure funding from the province of Saskatchewan the first time it applied for such funding, and how the province stated that the funding was intended for the Mendel Art Gallery but the city chose to direct it elsewhere. The reality of the situation is that the mayor was the one doing all of the stalling. In fact, he directed the board and director of the Gallery in 2007 not to pursue federal funding for the Mendel Art Gallery, stating that the city would look after this task. Obviously, the mayor didn't deliver the federal funding for the Mendel Art Gallery because his focus was strictly on River Landing, and yet, he seems to want to blame the federal government for not supporting the Mendel project. He doesn't mention that the Mendel Art Gallery was and is eligible for federal funding through the Building Canada fund, but the city has elected to direct this funding to the development of River Landing and not to the Mendel Art Gallery. What is crystal clear is that the mayor has never been an advocate for the Mendel Art Gallery, and the fact that he sees no problem with diminishing Fred Mendel's legacy and stripping the gallery of the Mendel name only confirms the very truth of this statement.

Comments  
Done with Atch

October 15, 2009 - 1:32 PM

Of course getting federal money to the Mendel had stalled - Under Atchison, the city interfered with federal funding priority lists. It's very well-documented on local blogs.

This man is out of control, drunk on spending public dollars.

I'm done Atch's disrespectful, big-spending gong-show. I'm voting Swystun.

tax payer

October 15, 2009 - 11:40 AM

Maybe if the city stopped wasting money on the FANCY RIVER LANDING, and put more thought and effort into the affordable housing, and city transportation. The last time that they 'updated' the bus system, it made a change of a one block walk to the bus to a 7 block walk. Did they really think anything thru? Or did they say, "Yup, sounds fancy, I'll take it!"

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## Time for innovative leadership

**BY GERRY KLEIN, THE STARPHOENIX**OCTOBER 15, 2009

At a recent gathering where senior civic, university and community leaders had the opportunity to meet renowned educator Sir Ken Robinson, members of the group were asked to rate themselves on their creativity.

On a scale where 10 represented the most creative, the only one in the group who considered himself a 10 was Mayor Don Atchison.

His was an interesting assessment, considering his chief rival for the office, Lenore Swystun, intimated to me that her impression was that Atchison is old school, while she is running for council primarily because she believes Saskatoon requires a person in its top office who could be as innovative as her.

We are in the midst of a civic election and, given that both are well enough known, I leave it to Saskatoon people to make up their own minds as to these candidates' relative creativity. But one thing these candidates at least have latched on to is the growing understanding that, for all the talk of good times, Saskatoon faces some significant challenges that require innovative responses.

This was made clear to me during another conversation I had with two of the top bureaucrats at City Hall and the University of Saskatchewan. City Manager Murray Totland and Richard Florizone, the U of- vice-president of finance, were meeting to discuss how Saskatoon could tap into the creative capital of a broader array of its citizens in order to address some of the challenges and create special opportunities for the future.

Totland is determined to make Saskatoon emblematic of successful municipal governance. Florizone, who in a previous life helped Toronto develop a plan to tap into its innovative side, is also convinced this city has the potential to be a model for economic and social development.

Few are so intimately acquainted as they are with the enormity of the challenge and how high are the stakes in creating a city that will be a model of growth.

Growth brings with it great opportunities, but it also comes with a cost.

A few years ago, I talked about the difficulties of growth with Saskatoon's former finance director, Bruce Richards. He pointed out that for every dollar of growth in assessment, the cost of running the city to accommodate the extended serves and infrastructure was about \$2. Add to that the reasonable proposal that one-third of annual assessment growth should be used on capital investment (that is, of the extra money the city rakes in by taxing new residents and businesses, a

third should go to pay for roads, bridges, water, sewer and other infrastructure) and each extra dollar from assessment growth costs the city about \$3.

Richards was convinced Saskatoon needs greater latitude in raising revenue. For example, many American cities can charge income taxes and/or sales taxes, as well as having access to property taxes.

While changing the way the city raises revenue is something that must be done by another level of government, the current system not only threatens the future viability of the city but it puts at risk Saskatchewan's economic health. There can be little doubt that Saskatoon will play an increasingly important role in diversifying the provincial economy away from its strong reliance on resources.

If the city is unable to grow at a sustainable rate, that will strangle the economic well-being of the entire province. And allowing satellite communities to grow without attaching an up-front cost to such development will mean that, somehow, the citizens of Saskatoon and Saskatchewan will have to pay to stretch the infrastructure to the outlying communities.

This isn't a cheap proposition.

Richards noted that a tax levied on money earned within Saskatoon would, at least in some measure, make those who are stretching the need for infrastructure cover those costs. And in troubled economic times, it also would allow Saskatoon to collect money from those who have less difficulty paying it, rather than attaching a bill to the artificial value of property.

The property tax system in Saskatchewan is made even more unfair as reassessment is mandated only every four years -- a time span that can see a massive shift in property values. Because that shift often is so big, the city typically reduces its tax levy per mill rather than allow revenues to increase at the same pace as assessed value.

This means its ability to pay for growth is even more hindered, Richards suggested.

Which brings me to another prominent Saskatoon resident (who doubtless would rather not be identified by an ink-stained wretch), who told me recently that, if he were king, the two things he would do would be to rescind the two-point cut in the GST and return that money to the treasury to help cover the growing deficit. And he would eliminate the provincial level of government and turn the taxing and spending authority over to local governments, which are more responsive to need.

I doubt that the world has cooled enough for Canada to get rid of its provinces, but unless some pretty creative solutions to some pretty serious challenges are found, we all will be in trouble. It's

good to know the two top mayoralty candidates and two top bureaucrats at the U of- and City Hall are on the case.

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## City eyes recycling plan: mayor

BY DAVID HUTTON, THE STARPHOENIX OCTOBER 13, 2009



The City of Saskatoon is studying a "unique" subsidy program for Saskatoon Curbside Recycling, a private firm, and SARCAN Recycling and Cosmo Industries, Mayor Don Atchison said.

A city-run blue-box curbside recycling program would be too costly for taxpayers and would harm the local recycling industry, Mayor Don Atchison says.

Instead, the city is studying a "unique" subsidy program for Saskatoon Curbside Recycling, a private firm, and SARCAN Recycling and Cosmo Industries, Atchison said.

"We're probably going to have to look at some sort of subsidization of the curbside recycling," Atchison said in a weekend interview.

"But those things are all in the works right now."

A city-run curbside recycling program is part of the campaign platforms of several civic candidates and incumbents, with calls for aggressive strategies to divert more trash from a landfill that officials say is within two decades of its expiry date.

It's also expected to be an issue that's debated by the next city council, with city administration currently studying options.

Mayoral challenger Lenore Swystun said the city has put off implementing a curbside recycling program for too long. There have been pilot projects, she said, but city council has "lacked the will" to implement a wider program.

A curbside recycling program is part of Swystun's wider environmental platform that calls for more energy retrofits for homes and businesses, a food charter and a stronger composting program, among other planks.

Saskatoon and Regina are the only major North American cities without a blue-box program, Swystun said.

"People of my generation, and frankly people who have travelled, go 'I couldn't believe when I moved to Saskatoon that we don't have (curbside recycling),' " she said.

"Let's stop talking and do it."

Based on Calgary's recent switch from depots to curbside recycling, a blue-box program would cost around \$8 per home per month, around half of what the private company, Saskatoon Curbside Recycling, which services more than 5,500 homes, charges currently, said Sean Shaw, a candidate in Ward 4.

The lack of a blue-box program is one of the main reasons Saskatoon produces the same amount of garbage, by weight, as Hamilton, Ont., which is roughly double the city's size, said Shaw.

"Right now, the depot system doesn't work," Shaw said. "It's a barrier for a lot of people to recycle and it's much easier for people right now to just throw it in the garbage."

Atchison said the numbers from other similar sized Canadian cities put the cost between \$12 and \$30 per month depending on what is collected and how materials are sorted.

The tax increase would be a hard hit to struggling seniors, Atchison said.

And any government-run blue-box program would be detrimental to local recycling businesses, he said.

"Quite frankly, I can't believe people would want to put the people at Cosmo Industries and SARCAN, who provide valuable services, out on the street," Atchison said.

"The idea that anyone thinks curbside recycling is going to be free because the city runs it is not right."

The logic that Saskatoon should implement a blue-box program because other cities have one is flawed, Atchison said. The city should chart its own unique recycling route, he said.

"I guess some people want to have \$144 minimum (tax) increase (per year). . . . These are huge numbers and if we can deliver a service that everyone can believe in, why can't we do that?"

Atchison defended the record on waste diversion and the environment, pointing to spikes in transit use, biodiesel buses, initiatives to recycle building materials from demolition projects into asphalt and speeding up the construction of the cycling path network.

The building materials program, along with the green bin program for leaves and grass clippings, has already increased the life expectancy of the landfill, which Atchison said has a lifespan currently of 25 years.

"We're de-accelerating (its expected closing date)."

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## COMMENTS

Joanne

October 16, 2009 - 11:44 AM

Since we've started recycling with SCR 3 years ago, our garbage could be picked up once a month. About 75% of our waste goes to recycling. We're a family of four. The \$ cost is one thing to consider. The other is "human cost". Landfill waste can contribute to environmental pollution and health problems. Health problems then have an effect on our health system and our quality of life. The fact that Saskatoon citizens are needing to argue for this is embarrassing. This should be a non-issue.

td

October 15, 2009 - 8:05 PM

How is recycling any good?

You drive a car to the drop off bins.

Before you tree huugers types told me not to use a car. Now you say go to recycle bins. Make up your mind.

I will not pay to have some body pick up recycles.

I'll just put them in the garbage and save money and gas

George

October 15, 2009 - 9:35 AM

The lack of a Blue Box program in Saskatoon is embarrassing - and using the threat of hurting the folks who work at SARCAN as an excuse is offside, there's no reason those folks can't work at a central sorting facility.

There is a LOT of recyclable material that goes into the trash because of the extra difficulty involved in driving your recyclables to different locations around town. The fact that there's a private company doing their own curbside program should be a big hint to our civic politicians - people want this.

Where are the priorities?

October 15, 2009 - 1:08 AM

The current recycling system poses an economic barrier for some people. For example, no one in my household has a car. We don't have a viable way to transport bins of materials to depots. So last year we signed up for the curbside program, but it's still a struggle for us to afford the fees. Why do we have to pay to recycle, but garbage is collected for free?

WHAT

October 14, 2009 - 9:12 PM

in regards to the comment by experienced how can you compare Lloydminster TEN years ago to Saskatoon today. Sarcana has diverted BILLIONS of pounds of product from the landfills in its past 20 years. Maybe people should do a little research into sarcana before making any judgements. Thank you.

Gald to be gone

October 14, 2009 - 6:32 PM

Stories like this make me so glad to have moved away from Saskatoon last year.

Saskatoon is twenty years behind the rest of the country and no signs of catching up.

I expected to hear Atcheson justify not having recycling as promoting the local ski hill development industry. What a farce!

Dan

October 14, 2009 - 4:32 PM

this is what we should do... give everyone 3 roll out carts. One for trash that we have now, one for grass etc (some of us pay to have a green cart now) and a blue cart that recyclables are put into and sorted at a central facility by Sarcen employees that way no one loses their jobs there.

Monty

October 14, 2009 - 3:53 PM

It is still unsightly, I do not want to see garbage on the front curbs. I like the idea of bins located around the city. Drop off your recycles, then go shopping. Best example is the green bin behind the grocery store on Main and Broadway. Before you shove something else down my mouth like River Landing, give me some options. Recycling is a good thing, but also keep in mind the company that does this produces materials they sell. So why does the recycle company get to double dip? Maybe if these goods were as valuable as we are lead to believe then the recycle company should pay us for our garbage. Last, we all ready have taxes imposed on us at point of purchase to cover the garbage cost from deposits to flat out garbage tax like the new one on computers. Why is this money not re directed back to recycling pick up? Governments are fast to take money from us and we are fast to forget about it untill the day we wake up broke. It isn't that an extra \$12 will kill me, but I have lived here for all my life and have just made enough to

get by. That \$12 should be going into an RRSP or it will be your children paying for me as an old timer.

More Typical Atch

October 14, 2009 - 2:20 PM

Don Atchison is short-sighted and interested in Business at the expense of the quality of life of the citizens of Saskatoon, both present and future. It's just more of the same, and very disappointing to hear that this mayor has not apparently learned during his tenure at City Hall.

He has money for subsidizing WalMart stores, for business development issues, for new art galleries to fit in with his pet "pave paradise" project, etc. etc! But we can't have - gasp! - recycling! He wants Saskatoon to be a "world leader", but we are one of only 2 cities in all of Canada without a Blue Box Program. He is a suit who wants to play with Big Business, but not with the people. (Remember the neck ties required to visit his office?!) There are many ways to develop a viable Blue Box program in Saskatoon, working with Sarcen in creative ways. The mayor really doesn't "get" what's important to Saskatonians - in any number of areas. Let's just jettison him on voting day & vote in someone who has a clue. Lenore Swynstun seems to be a good choice I think.

David

October 14, 2009 - 11:57 AM

I lived in Edmonton for seven years prior to moving back to Saskatchewan, and after having such an amazing recycling sytem there I was stunned at how backwards the so-called recycling system is in Saskatoon. The program in Edmonton is world class and delegations from all over the world regularly travel to Edmonton to observe their recycling program. I get a kick out of people commenting on how they have to 'sort' their recyclables for the curbside program here, in Edmonton you just threw everything in a blue bag, the contents were sorted at the Cloverbar recycling centre. And if you were too lazy to recycle it didn't matter as all the garbage was sorted and recyclables were removed from the garbage stream. Edmonton already diverts 85% of their garbage from the landfill and is aiming for 100% diversion right about the time Saskatoon's landfill will be full to overflowing. If 'Atch' wants to see how real recycling program works he should take the short drive out to Edmonton, they would love to show him how it's done.

BC97

October 14, 2009 - 11:53 AM

But we can spend how much for some fancy lights down by the river?

Silly

October 14, 2009 - 8:49 AM

Very silly. The requirements for the existing curbside recycling are outrageous. At the very least we need some better drop off points for our recycling, for all sorts of materials, including metal and oil. Also, with these new garbage cans, the city would like everything to be in garbage bags. Hmmmmm. I thought the plastic was a bad thing. Maybe they are selling the bags as well.

Reality Check

October 14, 2009 - 8:44 AM

Please people - before you start blindly defending something - do a little research. It costs more to recycle plastic (environmental costs especially) than it does to make new. The only thing that is really worth recycling is aluminum. Sarcas does a great job with their recycling program and to think you want to take this away from them??? Shame on all of you. And NO - I do not want another Tax increase. Just a little here and just a little there is becoming way to much. My pay increases (nil) don't even come close to covering all the increases. Haven't you noticed that since we are becoming greener with our energy consumption - now there are increases on our bills because we aren't using enough energy and the CEO's aren't getting their over-pay. Let's all start being a little more rational - as my son would say - be a goat - not a sheep...don't follow blindly.

Was stunned when I moved here

October 13, 2009 - 11:48 PM

I moved from Winnipeg a few years ago. When I asked about the recycling, I was stunned to find that I had to drive my garbage to some bins to separate them myself. I hate to admit it, but since no one can see me, I will. I no longer recycle and just put it all in the trash.

BTW, Winnipeg even has recycling for apartment buildings in these big large green bins that you put your recycling in, that's beside the regular garbage cans.

Let's all live in a place where they make it easy to do the right thing!

Another recycler

October 13, 2009 - 10:01 PM

We have been recycling with SCR for 2 years and we don't throw away much garbage. The city garbage trucks come weekly to collect our garbage in the summer and our bin is close to empty. Could the city not save costs by picking up garbage every second week and recycling in between?? Same number of trips by my house but picking up different things. Taxes should not have to go up that much.