



Naheed K. Nenshi, Mayor

December 1, 2020

Paul Battistella
Flood Free Calgary


Mr. Battistella,

Seven years after the devastating Southern Alberta floods of 2013 our communities and economy remain at risk. The City of Calgary has worked tirelessly and done everything within our power to ensure that Calgary is minimizing the risk that a flood like 2013 could have on our economy. Preventing flooding in Calgary requires infrastructure at a regional scale outside Calgary's borders and the continued participation of the Government of Alberta and the Government of Canada. In the midst of the concurrent health and economic crises brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic looking ahead to address other significant economic risks may not be top of mind, which is why I'm so grateful to have groups like Flood Free Calgary that are continuing to focus on our Calgary's long-term economic resilience. I'm writing in support of Flood Free Calgary in its intervenor status in the Natural Resources Conservation Board hearing for the Springbank Off-Stream Reservoir (SR1) in Q1 2021 and in its advocacy to Calgary business leaders to write letters in support of the project.

Once completed, SR1 will protect Calgary and its downtown from the risk of another 2013-sized flood on the Elbow River. While the COVID-19 pandemic has affected how we work and where we work, Calgary remains Canada's third largest city and our downtown home to tens of thousands of jobs. Once the pandemic is over, we must ensure that our central business district has a real chance to get back on its feet. SR1 will help keep Calgary working while ensuring businesses, old and new, are safe from disruptions caused by widespread flooding. Two successive provincial governments have reconfirmed their commitment to SR1 since it was first announced in 2014, and to date the Government of Canada and the Government of Alberta have publicly committed \$364.8 million of the current estimated \$432 million cost for the project.

With the funds committed, SR1 is also now expected go to regulatory public hearing sometime in early 2021. Flood Free Calgary and its partner organization the Calgary River Communities Action Group have submitted their intent to participate in the hearing. Both organizations have been heavily involved in SR1's progress since 2014 and are well equipped to represent the interests of businesses and Calgarians who work downtown or live along the Elbow River.

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It has taken seven years to get to this point. If SR1 is not approved or the Province is forced to reconsider other alternatives that have already been dismissed as less effective, the flood mitigation infrastructure Calgary requires could be delayed by decades. This will further impact our already challenging economic situation by leaving our city exposed. Approving SR1 will also result in the creation of hundreds of short-term jobs that will support Calgary's economic recovery.

I strongly support your work and will strongly encourage Calgary business leaders and their organizations to write letters of support to Flood Free Calgary relating to the SR1 project. Collectively our voices are important to build up the evidence case for the public benefits of the project, which will be valuable in Flood Free Calgary's role as intervenors in this final stage of the regulatory process. Showing what this project means to Calgary and its economy will help ensure SR1 moves forward without further delay.

Thank you for your leadership. Building SR1 is critical to securing our shared prosperity for decades to come.

Sincerely,



Naheed K. Nenshi
MAYOR

Let's keep protecting Calgary!