
Development of the Swale – Response to Northeast Swale Watchers’ 12 Points

Recommendation

1. That the information be received; and
2. That copies of this report be forwarded to the Standing Policy Committee on Planning, Development and Community Services and the Saskatoon Environmental Advisory Committee for information.

Topic and Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide information regarding the Northeast Swale Watchers’ “Twelve Main Points for City-Responsible Protection of the Swale,” identifying how the points are being addressed by the City of Saskatoon and other agencies.

Report Highlights

1. The City of Saskatoon’s (City) plans, policies, and practices currently address the majority of the “Twelve Main Points for City-Responsible Protection of the Swale” (Twelve Points).
2. A forthcoming report will address long-term protection of the Northeast Swale (Swale).
3. The points related to the regional planning process (Saskatoon North Partnership for Growth) and Dark Sky compliance are partially addressed through existing and/or forthcoming plans or practices.
4. Discussions and studies, led by the Provincial Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure, regarding the general location of the Saskatoon Freeway (formerly Perimeter Highway) have concluded with the current location crossing the Swale determined to be “valid.”

Strategic Goals

Existing and proposed measures to protect and enhance the Swale demonstrate the Strategic Goals of Environmental Leadership and Sustainable Growth.

Background

During its April 11, 2016 meeting, the Standing Policy Committee on Environment, Utilities and Corporate Services (Committee) received a submission from the Northeast Swale Watchers, entitled “Twelve Main Points for City-Responsible Protection of the Swale.” The Committee resolved:

- “1. That the information be received; and
2. That the Administration report back to the Standing Policy Committee on Environment, Utilities and Corporate Services in response to the 12 recommendations put forward by the Northeast Swale Watchers.”

Report

The Administration has reviewed the Twelve Points and has prepared a detailed response that describes if and how each point is being addressed and the agency or agencies responsible (see Attachment 1).

The majority of the Twelve Points are currently addressed through existing plans, policies, and/or practices. Those that are not fully addressed fall into three categories:

1. In-progress:
 - a) long-term legal protection for the Swale (point 9) – The Administration is preparing a follow-up report to its October 26, 2015 report to City Council for endorsement of the Northeast Swale Master Plan that will address long-term legal protection of the Swale. It is important to note that there are already a number of legal and practical “layers” of protection in place on the Swale.
2. Partially addressed:
 - a) impose Dark Sky lighting standards (point 3) - The lighting design for the North Commuter Parkway Project will ensure Dark Sky considerations are addressed appropriately. For residential neighbourhood street lighting, Saskatoon Light & Power used a standard fixture, which met Dark Sky requirements when adopted in 2014. However, Dark Sky requirements were updated in November 2015, and the City’s standard fixtures are no longer fully compliant. In addition, the Administration will be exploring the potential for Zoning Bylaw No. 8770 amendments that would provide incentives for environmentally sustainable development. The incentives to be investigated may include measures to encourage, though not require, the use of appropriate lighting on residential properties. Regulations mandating Dark Sky compliant lighting on private property are not being considered.
 - b) coordinate with the Saskatoon North Partnership for Growth (P4G) (point 12) – As a partner in the process, the City will continue to work towards a regional land use plan that supports the City’s Strategic Goals, including Sustainable Growth and Environmental Leadership. Ultimately, the P4G process will determine the extent to which environmental protection policies are adopted within the regional plan.
3. No action possible/recommended:
 - a) relocation of the Saskatoon Freeway (formerly Perimeter Highway) beyond the Swale (point 2) - Planning for the Saskatoon Freeway is a responsibility of the Provincial Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure. The City and the Meewasin Valley Authority participated in a 2014 study to validate the general location of the freeway, which determined that the current location through the Swale is “valid.” While minor adjustments in the alignment of the freeway may be necessary during the detailed design,

the Administration does not support re-opening discussions on its general location; nor has the Provincial Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure indicated that this is being considered.

Other Considerations/Implications

There are no policy, financial, environmental, privacy, or CPTED implications or considerations. No options to the recommendation were considered.

Due Date for Follow-up and/or Project Completion

No follow-up is required.

Public Notice

Public notice pursuant to Section 3 of Public Notice Policy No. C01-021, is not required.

Attachment

1. Twelve Main Points for City-Responsible Protection of the Swale: Specific Responses

Report Approval

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