

**From:** [Louise Jones](#)  
**To:** [City Council](#)  
**Subject:** Form submission from: Write a Letter to Council  
**Date:** Saturday, March 09, 2019 9:03:48 AM

---

Submitted on Saturday, March 9, 2019 - 09:03  
Submitted by anonymous user: 216.197.221.167  
Submitted values are:

Date: Saturday, March 09, 2019  
To: His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council  
First Name: Louise  
Last Name: Jones  
Email: [REDACTED]  
Address: [REDACTED] 111th Street  
City: Saskatoon  
Province: Saskatchewan  
Postal Code: [REDACTED]  
Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable): Northeast Swale Watchers  
Subject: Northeast Swale Stakeholder Working Group  
Meeting (if known): Planning and Community Development  
Comments: As Chair of the Northeast Swale Watchers, I have participated in the development of the Stakeholder Group and in all the meetings. I have some comments to offer on the strengths and weaknesses of this model in dealing with the issues examined by the Group.  
Attachments:

The results of this submission may be viewed at:  
<https://www.saskatoon.ca/node/398/submission/289954>

Presentation to Standing Committee on Planning, Development and Community Services,  
March 11, 2019

Councillors, Mayor Clark, thank you for the opportunity to present to this committee.

I am here as the chair of the Swale Watchers. As you know, the Swale Watchers represents the views and expertise of Saskatoon's conservation community as it focuses on protecting the Northeast Swales.

The Stakeholder Working Group was created to address serious concerns raised by the Swale Watchers in a document called Twelve Points for City Responsible Management of the Swale. The issues we raised in this assessment and in a subsequent Project Update had not been fully addressed by the Northeast Swale Guidelines. The Working Group was convened to deal with these remaining "sticky issues" by providing a forum where people with differing perspectives could work together to find solutions to shared problems.

This is an excellent concept. I would like to thank Councillor Gersher for initiating this process. Thanks also to Tyson McShane for taking leadership in turning the concept into reality.

I feel I have to point out that the Stakeholder Group would not have been needed if the City had had an integrated plan with a Project Leader from the beginning. This would have ensured that the decisions concerning protecting the Swale were coordinated. Hopefully, the City has learned from the shortcomings resulting from the lack of an integrated management approach.

The role of the Stakeholder Group is to provide verifiable evidence to help Council make evidence-based decisions. While the decision-making model works, it is important for Council in making its decisions to take into account the amount of consultation that has gone into the recommendations. According to the report, Planning staff have invested some 300 hours into the Stakeholder process, and Swale watchers have matched them hour for hour, volunteering our time, our insights and expertise.

The Stakeholder Group has had a measure of success in dealing with some of the specific deficiencies identified in the Twelve Points. Those successes, some of them still pending, are outlined in Administration's Report. But even with the good work of the Stakeholders, there remain a number of outstanding issues that have not been adequately addressed. While the Swale Watchers remain committed to the on-going consultative work of the Stakeholder Group, there are some key decisions that Council must make. Chief among them is the long-term legal protection of the entire Swale within City limits, including immediately adjacent natural grasslands and the Small Swale. Various recommendations for means of long-term permanent protection have been suggested over the years, but development of the area continues.

One option is for Council to reconsider the boundaries of the proposed University Heights 3 subdivision and to donate the expanded Swale Conservation Zone to Meewasin to protect it as a land trust. We are hopeful that the Natural Area Screening process for UH3, and the forthcoming Natural Areas Guidelines and Green Strategy will provide Council with the information and policy framework needed to make sound, forward-looking decisions. As more and more people are coming to recognize the Swales are vibrant and amazing. We want to help you keep them alive.

Allowing the Province to build a Freeway through the Swale does not constitute protection. Swale Watchers remain committed to a different route for the proposed Saskatoon Freeway.

Louise Jones, Chair  
Northeast Swale Watchers