

# FAQ's for the Willows Neighbourhood Concept Plan Amendment

\*Updates to the FAQ are indicated in red.

## Amendment Process & Timeline:

### **Why are public engagement activities not being held in-person?**

Due to COVID-19, the City of Saskatoon is conducting all engagement activities virtually at this time. This may include tools such as online meetings, email, telephone, and mail.

### **When was the Willows Neighbourhood Concept Plan originally approved?**

The Willows Neighbourhood Concept Plan was originally approved in 2003 as two phases. At that time the Official Community Plan was amended to include this new land use form which acknowledged the unique needs of a golf course community. This included providing for larger lot sizes typically seen in golf course communities, a direct control zoning district to ensure predictable development form and land use, and a requirement that residential units were developed as part of a larger bare land condominium plan.

### **Why was the first consultation with the public in January of 2021?**

Consultation by the City of Saskatoon is undertaken when proposals have evolved, based on the technical reviews of the proposal, into a more completed application, one that encompasses all the requirements needed for an application and where it can be demonstrated that there are no technical requirements that would impede the possibility of the proposal.

### **How can I provide feedback and how will I know my concerns will be heard?**

The City is committed to creating a healthy and sustainable community through public engagement, that is based on authentic, open and fair processes that are accessible and responsive to residents' concerns and interests. The public engagement process is on-going.

Questions regarding the process, or feedback specific to the application should be submitted on the online form on the Engage Page found here: [Contact Us](#)

Questions or comments about the vision for the area, including changes to the golf course, should be directed to Dream at [bzurevinski@dream.ca](mailto:bzurevinski@dream.ca).

Feedback being provided currently and throughout the process will be evaluated and concerns will be identified. All information gathered during this process will be used to form Administration's recommendation on the proposal and to determine if changes will be required.

The City of Saskatoon is committed to the interest of the greater public good and engaging with the public during the decision-making process. Proposals can be adjusted and are flexible throughout the review process to be responsive to residents' concerns and interests.

Notification will be provided when the application is proceeding to the Municipal Planning Commission and subsequently to City Council for consideration. Instructions on how to provide comments to Council will be provided at that time.

**What is the timeline for consultation and next steps?**

After the public consultation portion of the application is complete (on-going and undetermined date), Administration will prepare a report outlining their recommendation for City Council. The report will be presented to the Municipal Planning Commission and then subsequently to City Council, where a public hearing will be held and opportunity to provide feedback to City Council will be available. The timeline for these meetings has not been established and will be based on the results of the on-going public consultation process.

A second online public meeting has been scheduled for June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021 at 7:00 pm.

**If approved, when will the changes and development occur?**

A specific time frame for build-out has not been determined because the application remains in the review stages. If the amendment is approved by City Council, the applicant has identified a development phasing strategy that is subject to change once detailed design begins and discussions regarding specific servicing details commence.

**Can Dream request to make changes to the approved Willows Concept Plan?**

Under the Planning and Development Act (PDA), a Council may consider amending a planning bylaw on the basis of a report from its Administration or upon request from a third party, such as the applicant Dream. Under the authority of the PDA, it is fairly common for an applicant to seek an amendment to either the Zoning Bylaw, Official Community Plan, or both, to accommodate their development proposal if the existing policies and / or regulations do not align. Changes to regulations and policies must be carefully considered by City Council, to determine if they are in greater alignment with the City's vision and goals, or not.

Subsequent applications to the Willows Neighbourhood Concept Plan would be reviewed on their own merit and would follow the same process as is currently being undertaken.

**Given the amount of information available about the proposed spa / hotel in the media and online, has the City already approved Dream Developments' proposal?**

The proposed Nordic spa and hotel is considered by the City of Saskatoon to be conceptual only at this time and has not been approved.

When an applicant puts forward a proposal, they are, of course, free to share it publicly at their own risk. However, this does not reflect City approval and does not bind the City to a future approval. We will be continuing with public engagement on the overall package of amendments in order to provide City Council with the appropriate recommendation in due course.

**Is the market study a public document? Who is doing the market study, when will residents be involved in the study, and will it be made available to residents?**

The Official Community Plan specifically requires that, in golf course communities, a market demand study and market projection be submitted to and accepted by Administration. The market study has been submitted and is now posted on the Engage Page. In addition to the Market Study, the applicant also submitted a Hotel and Spa Location and Commercial Feasibility Analysis, which can also be found on the Engage Page.

The market study was prepared by Urbanics Consultants Ltd. and the feasibility study was prepared by Wallace Insights.

## Zoning

**Will the zoning change within the Willows neighbourhood?**

The entirety of the Willows neighbourhood is regulated by a special zoning district called DCD4 (Direct Control District 4). This zoning district cannot be compared to any other zoning district within Saskatoon as it was developed specifically for the Willows.

The Direct Control Zoning District can be reviewed in Section 13.4 of the Zoning Bylaw No. 8770 located on the City of Saskatoon's website and on our Engage Page. Direct Control Districts allows for unique development proposals. The Willow's zoning district DCD4 was originally developed in conjunction with the Willows Neighbourhood Concept Plan in 2003.

The NCP amendment application does not include a rezoning of the Willows neighbourhood. The amendment is proposing changes to the regulations contained within the DCD4 Zoning District. The proposed changes include:

- Reducing the minimum site width for one-unit dwellings (from 18 m to 15 m site width minimum);
- Reducing the minimum site area for one-unit dwellings (from 600 To 525 square metres);
- Adding development standards to accommodate proposed commercial development located within the proposed neighbourhood node;
- Adding development standards for a hotel and accessory uses, including additional landscaping regulations; and,
- Re-zoning the north development area (not originally part of the Willows NCP) to DCD4 in order to become part of the Willows Neighbourhood Concept Plan Area.

Feedback from the public consultation process will help shape the elements of the zoning amendment to the DCD4.

**Within the proposal, what does commercial and mixed-use commercial mean?**

The current DCD4 (zoning district) permits commercial development, specifically, accessory to the golf course, sufficient to serve the convenience needs of the golf course community. These uses must be accessory and related to the clubhouse and golf course operation. This includes, but is not limited to, restaurants, lounges, pro shop, tennis courts, swimming pools, retail and retail services limited to 929

m<sup>2</sup> of gross floor area, personal service trades, medical clinics, banquet facilities convention and catering facilities, administration and sales offices.

The original submission identified an area to the north and the northwest of the clubhouse for commercial and mixed-use commercial development. In the revised proposal, half of the mixed-use development site has been replaced by a commercial site (proposed hotel), and the other half has been replaced with a neighbourhood node development site.

Neighbourhood nodes are intended to integrate commercial uses into a neighbourhood setting in way that helps create social spaces, vibrancy, and street life while enhancing social gathering opportunities. The neighbourhood node development site may still include medium density residential development in addition to the proposed commercial uses.

The revised proposal includes restrictions on the size of commercial uses within the neighbourhood node including:

- total floor area for all commercial units combined would be restricted to a maximum of 929m<sup>2</sup> (10,000ft<sup>2</sup>) within the neighbourhood node; and,
- individual commercial units would be restricted to a maximum of 278m<sup>2</sup> (3000ft<sup>2</sup>).

#### **How are architectural details for housing and other finishes such as fencing be regulated?**

The Planning & Development Act is limited in how a municipality can regulate aesthetics as they relate to materials and exterior finishes. The City of Saskatoon's Zoning Bylaw does not regulate fence type or material, but rather fence height and location. The Developer of Phase 1 of the Willows controlled architectural features through sales agreements.

#### **How many storeys will the hotel / spa be?**

Details regarding the design of the spa can be directed to [bzurevinski@dream.ca](mailto:bzurevinski@dream.ca). We would note that any plans/renderings of a hotel and spa would be considered by Administration as conceptual only, as regulations must still be prepared (subsequent to the concept plan amendments) and any development must then conform to those regulations.

The applicant is proposing a maximum height of 15 metres for the hotel. For comparison, existing medium density multiple unit development located at the Willows is restricted to 15 metres in height.

#### **How are the impacted views, created by the hotel / spa, being addressed in the proposed amendment?**

The impacts of the proposed development are being considered in Administration's on-going review. The developer has also noted that they will explore additional screening options such as trees, berms, and increasing the setback of the proposed development within the parcel.

The original submission identified the hotel site on the east side of Cartwright Street. In the revised proposal the hotel is proposed to be situated on the west side of Cartwright Street, north of the club house. Enhanced landscaping regulations are proposed for the hotel site.

#### **Can the City provide a guarantee of who the owner / operator of the spa / hotel will be, or can any business / hotel chain take over the site if the business fails or closes?**

The City of Saskatoon cannot regulate ownership, but rather land use and intensity of land use. The DCD4 allows for significant control over the scale and types of uses that are permitted within that area. The proposed hotel site has been re-located to the west side of Cartwright Street.

**How will the City ensure that the proposed commercial development will be complementary to the Willows neighbourhood?** Within the DCD4, the commercial uses will be required to be of a scale appropriate to and complementary to the golf course community. The basis of a direct control zoning district is that particular control over the use and development of land and buildings within a specific area can be exercised. Provisions will be considered within the DCD4 in order to address this requirement.

In addition to the development standards noted above, the revised proposal includes a clear list of uses that will be permitted within the neighbourhood node, which will be restricted to a combined total gross floor area of 929 square metres, with no use exceeding 279 square metres. Proposed uses are as follows:

- retail stores, bakeries, restaurants, photography studios, pharmacies, personal service trades, small animal grooming, art galleries, offices and office buildings, and, medical clinics.

**There have been suggestions regarding capping the number of 45-foot sites within the neighbourhood. What are the proposed amendments to the Zoning District?**

The zoning amendments are currently being drafted. Feedback from the public consultation and the continued review of the application will shape the amendments put forth in Administration's recommendation. Once the draft amendments are completed, additional public consultation will occur.

The revised proposal proposes a 15 metre minimum site width for one-unit dwellings (50 feet).

## Open Areas and Green Space

**How will this proposed development affect natural areas and the existing tree canopy?**

Prior to the approved 2003 concept plan a natural area screening and biological study were required, a natural screening study was required again as part of the current amendment application, this study was completed in 2018, and is now available on the engage page. No ecologically sensitive areas were identified in these studies.

Retention of existing trees has been identified as a priority for residents of the Willows neighbourhood. The City of Saskatoon does not regulate the number of trees outside of any required landscaping strips, however, the revised proposal does include provision for additional landscaping requirements within the DCD4. Additional landscaping strips on the commercial and neighbourhood node land sites are included in the draft DCD4 regulations.

The revised proposal moved the location of the hotel with the intention of preserving the existing tree canopy located adjacent to the red barn.

**How will the application impact the golf course?**

The proposal by Dream provides for a change in the golf course from its current 27 holes to 18 holes. Administration reviews the parcel subdivided for the land use of a golf course; however, we do not

regulate the layout or number of holes within that parcel. Administration regulates the infrastructure, site servicing, and development standards as outlined in the Zoning Bylaw. The golf course layout remains at the discretion of the property owner.

**What was the requirement for Municipal Reserve previously and what will the proposed requirement be if the changes are approved?**

The approved concept plan (2003) did not dedicate lands as Municipal Reserve (MR). As an alternative, and in line with bare land condominiums, the Developer paid cash in lieu and park space was developed as private common area. The payment in lieu for Phase 1 development was collected during the subdivision phase, and the dollar amount was calculated based on the lands subdivided as residential condominiums.

The proposed amendment would dedicate almost the entirety of the required 10% of the land in Phase 2 as Municipal Reserve in the form of parks and open space. The residual of the 10% will be deferred to a future subdivision.

**Can the City require a performance bond to guarantee that the golf course will remain as part of the Willows Neighbourhood?**

No, the City cannot require a performance bond to guarantee that the golf course will remain as part of the Willows Neighbourhood. The policy requirement for the approval of the Neighbourhood Concept Plan is a golf course.

## Density

**What is the actual increase in the number of residents?**

The increase in density is due to a change in the design of Phase 2 and the inclusion of additional lands in the boundary of the neighbourhood, called the north development area, consisting of 7.4 ha of land located on the north end of the Willows neighbourhood.

The existing NCP was approved for an estimated population of 1,557 residents and the proposed amendment to the design would increase the population to an estimated 2,137, resulting in an additional 580 residents. The inclusion of the north development area will add an additional 420 residents bringing the total estimated population to 2,557, resulting in an additional 1000 residents in total.

**How does the residential density of the Willows compare to the residential density of Stonebridge?**

Neighbourhood	Est. Population per Acre	Revised Est. Pop. Per Acre	Dwelling Units per Acre	Revised Dwelling Units per Acre
Approved Willows	3.3	3.3	1.3	1.3
Proposed Willows	5.2	5.0	2.1	2.2
Existing Stonebridge	12.1	12.1	5.3	5.3

The revised proposal included updated estimates for the number of dwelling units as a result of land use changes. This in turn impacted the estimated population based on the estimated number of people per household for each revised land use.

## Transportation

**Has a Transportation Impact Assessment (TIA) been undertaken as part of the review process on the proposed changes to the Willows Neighbourhood Concept Plan? And if so, what identified changes would be required?**

Yes, a Transportation Impact Assessment (TIA) was prepared for Dream Developments by Stantec Consulting Ltd., in August 2017, **with an update provided in 2021**. The following was recommended in the City's technical review of the TIA:

- Speed reduction on Highway 219 is supported by the City of Saskatoon, however, this road is under the Ministry of Highways jurisdiction and their approval / agreement to reduce the speed limit is required as a condition of approval.
- An agreement with the Rural Municipality and the Ministry of Highways is required for installation of two traffic signals, to be installed at the start of development:
  - o Lorne Avenue and Cartwright Street; and
  - o Clarence Avenue and Cartwright Street.
- A sidewalk must be provided on the west side of Cartwright Street between Cartwright Terrace and the roundabout.
- **The revised proposal also includes a left turn in, on the southern Lorne Ave access in addition to the previous right-out. The City is supportive of this change as this was identified as a key concern for residence.**

**Did the traffic study include noise impacts?**

No, this is not a requirement of a traffic impact assessment. For more information regarding traffic noise see the provided link to the City's Traffic Noise Page: <https://www.saskatoon.ca/moving-around/driving-roadways/managing-traffic/traffic-noise>.

**What is the expected vehicular traffic?**

Cartwright Street is a collector roadway; typical daily traffic on a residential collector street is generally less than 5,000 vehicles/day. A link to the City's Design and Development Standards Manual can be found here: [https://www.saskatoon.ca/sites/default/files/documents/transportation-utilities/construction-design/new-neighbourhood-design/8\\_transportation\\_system.pdf](https://www.saskatoon.ca/sites/default/files/documents/transportation-utilities/construction-design/new-neighbourhood-design/8_transportation_system.pdf)

Based on the developer's TIA, at full build-out, and the 20-year planning horizon, the east leg of Cartwright Street near Clarence Ave can expect approximately 5,000 vehicles/day, and the west leg near Lorne Ave can expect approximately 4,000 vehicles/day.

**How will the City's ongoing Traffic Review of the Willows neighbourhood be impacted?**

**The Neighbourhood Traffic Review has completed their review of traffic concerns for the existing neighbourhood. The Transportation Division used feedback received from residents along with traffic**

data and field observations to develop a Draft Neighbourhood Traffic Plan. Recommendations were presented to Council and include:

## The Willows Neighbourhood Traffic Review

Table ES-1: The Willows Neighbourhood Recommended Improvements

Item	Location	Recommended Improvement	Justification
1	Cartwright Street	Speed Display Board facing both eastbound and westbound between Lorne Avenue and split in road.	Reduce Speed
		Forward speed date to Saskatoon Police to consider for enforcement.	
2	Cartwright Street and Cartwright Terrace	Median island on south leg of intersection.	Reduce Speed
3	Cartwright Street	Sidewalk to be installed as per the Sidewalk Infill Program.	Improve Pedestrian Safety
4	Cartwright Street and 501 Cartwright Street	Standard Crosswalk on west side.	Improve Pedestrian Safety

### Was construction traffic considered as part of the TIA?

No, this is not a requirement of a TIA, all new developments experience construction traffic which does not represent typical traffic loads expected for that area. While we appreciate that construction traffic has an impact on residents, it is recognized that it is relatively short-lived and is typically addressed by the builder/developer throughout the construction period.

### Will the City construct an overpass at Lorne Ave over the train tracks, in order to address cutting through traffic?

There are no plans for a grade separation at the Lorne Avenue and CNR crossing at this time; however, this grade separation has been identified as a future impact of later phases of development in the RM of Corman Park. Traffic accommodation during construction will be addressed at the time the grade separation is proposed for construction.

### Will there be city sidewalks? How wide will the sidewalks be?

New public right of ways will be required to meet current City standards from the City of Saskatoon's Design and Development Standards Manual. Sidewalks along collector roads are to be a minimum of 1.8 metres (or wider in high pedestrian traffic areas). The following is a breakdown of what will be required:

- Access Roads B and C as collectors - parking, and sidewalks on both sides.
- Access Road A as a collector - no parking, and sidewalks on both sides.
- A sidewalk must be provided on the west side of Cartwright Street between Cartwright Terrace and the roundabout.

A link the City's Design and Development Standards Manual can be found here:



[https://www.saskatoon.ca/sites/default/files/documents/transportation-utilities/construction-design/new-neighbourhood-design/8\\_transportation\\_system.pdf](https://www.saskatoon.ca/sites/default/files/documents/transportation-utilities/construction-design/new-neighbourhood-design/8_transportation_system.pdf)

#### **Will the new proposal consider transit as an addition to the Willows neighbourhood?**

Due to the low-density nature of the Willows neighbourhood transit was not considered part of the original application. Due to nature of the proposal and the continued low-density nature of the neighbourhood, transit will not be considered as part of the amendment application.

### **Fee-Simple and Condominium Questions**

#### **What is the difference between fee simple and condominium ownership?**

Ownership of property occurs in three ways: fee simple (dwelling and plot of land is owned); bare land condominium (dwelling and plot of land is owned, and ownership may also include a portion of common property such as roads, parks, and other infrastructure); and building condominium (dwelling is owned, and ownership also includes a portion of the common property). In the case of building condominiums or sites (bare land), a condo fee is collected to upkeep and maintain the condominium's common property and infrastructure.

#### **Why was Phase 1 of the Willows required to be developed as condominiums?**

The original development of the Willows was proposed as a unique product, a golf course community, providing a lower density style of development. At the time of the first phase of the Willows development, this style of development was an unknown in the region and it was felt that this style might post an undue financial risk to the City for increased costs of services. Due to the unique nature of the area (proposed at 1.2 dwellings per acre in 2003), the City supported the application with a requirement that it be developed as condominiums.

#### **Why is fee simple, and not the original requirement of condominium ownership, being considered for Phase 2 of the Willows?**

The Developer, Dream, is proposing to develop Phase 2 as fee simple lots. As part of the application by Dream, the City has evaluated the costs of servicing for the proposed area (Phase 2 only) in comparison to expected tax revenues. The proposed densities and land use plan, for Phase 2, would not be significantly different than any other areas of the city, and it has been determined that there would be no undue financial risk to the City for increased costs of services.

#### **Are taxes calculated differently between condo versus fee simple lots?**

All residential regardless of if the property is a condo, multi, single, fee simple, etc, is taxed using the same residential tax rate. The difference each property pays individually is based on the assessment of the particular property. The property tax paid by each property is determined by multiplying the property's taxable assessment by the tax rate. However, despite being taxed at the same rate, residential condominiums and single-family residential properties are assessed differently.

In determining a property's assessed value, residential condominiums are compared to other similar residential condominiums and single-family residential properties are compared to other single family

residential properties in the City of Saskatoon. If sales show fee simple properties sell for higher values, then condominiums, they will be assessed higher and therefore pay higher property tax.

Condominiums are only taxed once, the same as all residential property within the City of Saskatoon.

### **What is the cost to convert bare land condominiums to fee simple and who would pay for this?**

The cost to explore the possibility of converting existing bare land condo sites into fee simple lots is variable. It is not possible to provide an estimate as the cost will be based on a myriad of factors including landowners' costs for professional services (legal, planning, engineering, surveying, etc.) undertaken in investigating the possibility of terminating the condominium plan. Application fees as set out in the City of Saskatoon's Fee Bylaw would be in addition to this. The fee for a major amendment to a Neighbourhood Concept Plan in 2021 is \$20,400.

Landowners would be responsible for all costs and fees in investigating the possibility to convert their bare land condominiums to fee simple.

### **How will Phase 2 affect my property value?**

The market data used for the current assessment model for low rise condominiums shows that condos adjacent to commercial or on high traffic property have no adjustment to the assessment. The market data used for the City's revaluation cycle also has no positive adjustment for having a view of green space.

## **Pre-development Permits**

### **Has Dream started to develop the land in alignment with the proposed concept plan amendment without approval?**

Dream applied for a pre-development permit under Section 5.45 of the Zoning Bylaw and was approved. The permit was for the following types of activities: earthworks (topsoil stripping, site grading, topsoil stripping), tree removal, and irrigation relocation. This may also include the construction of temporary roadways. Approval for pre-development is a standard procedure which does not bind the City Administration or City Council for any approvals related to the proposed amendments to The Willows Concept Plan amendment and amendments to the Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw. The developer assumes all responsibility for the costs related to site adjustments, should any changes be required, or the proposal denied.

The City has not received a building permit application for a spa /hotel in the Willows. To further clarify the process, if administration did receive such an application, it would immediately be put on hold until Council had deliberated on the proposed concept plan amendment, and any subsequent amendments to the direct control district.

### **What happens if the proposed amendments don't get approved? How will Dream address the existing pre-development work that has taken place?**

If City Council denies the proposed amendments, the approved concept plan from 2003 will remain in place. Development of this plan may begin at any time. Should the development not proceed, the City's

Property Nuisance and Abatement Bylaw will apply following the expiration of the Pre-Development Approval.