

ISSUE IN FOCUS



Celebrating 100 Years

SASKATCHEWAN
CHAMBER of COMMERCE

Flood Plain Zoning and Enforcement

Background:

Impacts from flooding include physical damage to personal and public property, but also to the safety and well-being of Saskatchewan residents, including health impacts from molds and mental health issues from the severe stresses associated with personal losses. These impacts come at a significant cost to businesses, residents, and governments. The costs include emergency measures undertaken by government, insurance claim costs, government disaster aid, and reconstruction costs. They also include the increased or denied insurance costs, and the forfeit of destroyed capital investment.

Issue:

Floods are one of nature's most destructive forces. Managing development to effectively minimize flood risk to life, property and infrastructure is a major objective of land use planning. The provincial government and every municipality should actively enforce the regulatory and legislative supports already in place to avoid development on lands that are susceptible to flood damage. Lands near water bodies are primary environmental assets and must be protected for their own sake. Controlling development in these locations will have the further benefit of reducing the cost of helping families and businesses ravaged by flood events.

Recommendations:

1. That the Government of Saskatchewan continue to support AQMS and continue to actively implement it.
2. That municipalities be asked to confirm the restriction of development per SPIR within the F500 floodplains, in areas such as drainage-ways, lakes, rivers, and streams. This includes SPIR reflection into official community plans, district plans, and zoning and subdivision by-laws. This needs to be strongly enforced,

resisting any pressures especially in drier years when such land may seem suitable for development.

3. That municipalities be asked to confirm the requirement for F500 flood-plain delineation and flood-proofing requirements for planning documents and development proposal documents for approvals of new development within and adjacent to the F500 flood-plains, per the provincial Planning Handbook for the SPIR.
4. That the provincial government stand firm on the SPIR restrictions against development within the F500 floodplains in approving municipal planning documents and require notice thereof on titles.
5. That no government disaster assistance funds be available to those that develop within the F500 floodplains.
6. That provincial government rules require that the cost of insurance for development within the F500 floodplains be borne wholly by such insurance purchasers.
7. That the provincial government and municipalities work together to develop a long term (perhaps 25 year) programs to flood-proof and/or relocate existing developments out of the F500 flood-plains.
8. With the Saskatchewan Water Security Agency's pilot project inventory of 20 communities to be surveyed, modeled and mapped by March 31, 2020, we strongly endorse that both levels of government continue funding for flood reduction programs for those communities identified as at-risk. According to SWSA, over 100 communities around creeks have been identified for potential flood mapping.

History:

Adopted Policy Resolution 2014

Adopted Policy Resolution 2017

Letter to Minister of Highways & Infrastructure 2020

Letter to Federal Minister of Environment 2020