

SDLC Questionnaire for City Council Candidates
Randy Donauer (Ward 5)

1. Road and sidewalk repair and maintenance has seen a large injection of financial resources, but we need to keep moving forward to enhance those public services. Police and Fire continually receive increases to their budgets. The next public services that require an injection of cash are those that directly affect the quality of life of our residents. I think our next focus should be to invest in parks, playgrounds, irrigation, indoor play centres, leisure centres, sports fields, and sport facilities. These are all public services that can largely be accessed by anyone of any demographic, so we need to enhance them, and enhance access to these services. We need to upgrade old playgrounds to make them safer for our kids. Core public services will be paid for by property tax, and through distribution of all other sources of income, such as transfers from other levels of government, land sales, assessment growth, etc.

2. It does not always make economic sense to privatize public services. Some jobs are better done by city crews. Where it is more fiscally responsible for our crews to do the work, we must let them. Where it is more fiscally responsible to contract out newly added services, we should do that.

3. Various employees have brought sincere concerns to me about the well-being of our city, and our corporation. I have championed some of these concerns and, in some cases, significant improvement was made at City Hall, and to the employees work experience. As a result, I introduced an Inquiry this term for the creation of a “Whistle Blower Policy” to allow, encourage, reward, and protect employees for coming forward when they see something that is inappropriate. Adequate safeguards must be put in place to ensure that any person coming forward has no fear of retribution. I am also a firm believer in annual employee engagement surveys, where employees can anonymously grade and comment on City Hall, their employment experience, their work environment, and the level of engagement with and by management. I’ve spoken to a number of employees who would welcome this, so I will be championing anonymous employee engagement surveys in the next term, with results being reported to Council. It may look ugly at first, but it will give us a base to work from so we can set improvement targets for our relationship with our employees. Then we can hold management accountable to improve in this area.

4. Housing is predominantly a provincial and federal issue. However, in the absence of an adequate national strategy the City of Saskatoon cannot abdicate our responsibility to

our residents. Our affordable housing program has been called one of the best in Canada, with hundreds of new affordable units being constructed in the past 5 years. We need to continue providing incentives for construction of affordable housing, and continue the agreements with the Credit Union to facilitate the purchase of new affordable homes.

5. The role of the city in economic development is to create an environment where jobs can be created, and the economy will grow. We need to eliminate bureaucracy and red tape at City Hall so that investment is encouraged, and our city will continue to grow.
6. There are two ways we can move our city towards low carbon, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. First, we need to green up our buildings, equipment and vehicles. We need to use renewable forms of energy whenever feasible, as a corporation, and ensure that our assets are as energy efficient as possible, based on renewable energy as much as we can. Second, we need to provide incentives for our residents to do the same in their own lives. Saskatoon is in a unique position to do this, as we own utilities, such as waste management and the landfill, recovery park, water, waste water, and Saskatoon Light and Power. Each of those utilities has the abilities to provide incentives to reward proper and responsible behaviour by our residents, to protect the environment.
7. We have the Truth And Reconciliation Report, and there is a plan to act on it wherever it is possible for the city to do so. We need to continue with that plan. I also believe that we need to challenge the Chamber of Commerce to create programs and incentives for their members to strive for a representative work force across Saskatoon.
8. I have been a strong advocate for thrifty spending. We need to focus on the basic core services that we provide to our residents, and not focus so much on building large capital projects that we don't need. Our job is to provide basic core services, and that is what we do best.