Meewasin Development Review – Application Guide

Prior to formal application

i. Consult with Meewasin Administration
Applicants are encouraged to open conversation with Meewasin staff at the earliest possible stage of project development. Meewasin staff can help applicants understand the Development Review process, and learn about the applicant's idea.

ii. Meewasin Administration Informal Review
Meewasin staff may make suggestions to the applicant, advise the applicant of any technical studies which Meewasin may require, and identify potential issues while the concept is being developed. Consulting with Meewasin staff at this stage allows for collaboration with applicants before significant resources have been invested in finalizing the plans.

iii. Application Preparation
The applicant can incorporate Meewasin staff's input into the plans and/or prepare rationale for the Authority's review.

Formal application

1. Formal Application
Applicants must submit a completed application form, along with a non-refundable fee and any other materials requested on the application form. Additional materials often include a site plan, building elevations, planting plan, and lighting plan, among others. Applications and drawings are encouraged to be at approximately 50% completion of the project. The deadline for applications is the first of the month.

2. Application Acknowledgement
The applicant will receive a letter acknowledging receipt of the application materials and advising of the date and time of the development review committee meeting. Applicant will acknowledge attendance at the meeting with administration.

3. Administrative Review
Meewasin administration reviews the application for consistency with the Development Plan which includes the following development review objectives and guidelines:

a. Consistency with the Meewasin Development Plan, which includes:
    i. Four Overarching Concepts:
        1. Balance of human use and conservation of the natural system.
        2. Health of the valley, of ecosystems and humans.
        3. Fit of humans with the natural system.
        4. Linkage: of the river and natural system, of social linkage, of urban-rural linkage, of time linkage.
    ii. Three Goals:
        1. Protect the natural and heritage resources of the valley
        2. Develop and encourage projects which enhance the natural and heritage resources and quality of life in the Saskatoon region.
        3. Increase understanding and awareness of the natural and heritage resources.

b. Proposed improvement takes account of the natural and heritage resources and other special characteristics of a site.
c. Proposed improvement fits with Development Review Policy (some of which may or may not apply):

Natural resources:
Significant natural resources shall be conserved. Lost biomass will be replaced.

Slope stability:
A proposed improvement shall not cause or contribute to instability of the slopes of the South Saskatchewan River Valley.

Drainage:
A proposed improvement shall not result in unnecessary or adverse alteration of surface or subsurface drainage.

Landscape construction and maintenance:
Landscape construction shall be used where appropriate to soften the visual impact of buildings or structures, screen facilities such as parking lots or outdoor storage areas, buffer or separate different uses, beautify parks and open spaces, and integrate the landscape along the riverbanks into the adjacent neighbourhoods.

River channel:
A proposed improvement shall not cause or contribute to an adverse alteration of the shape of the river channel (channel morphology) or water flow dynamics (river dynamics).

Public access:
Provision shall be made for a continuous and safe pedestrian circulation system for the public along the riverbank.

Design:
Buildings or structures proposed within the Meewasin Valley shall be designed to complement the river valley setting.

Traffic:
A proposed improvement shall not adversely alter traffic circulation in the vicinity of the improvement or add substantially to the volume of local traffic to the detriment of the surrounding area and the safety of people. Further, the on-site pedestrian and vehicular circulation systems of a public park or similar public facility, and the access to the facility, shall be efficient, safe and complement the natural and heritage resources.

Service facilities and maintenance:
Service facilities (Meewasin operated buildings) shall be constructed and maintained to complement, or not detract from, the Meewasin Valley. Further, service facilities shall be constructed and maintained to ensure public convenience, use and safety in the Meewasin Valley.

Heritage resources:
Significant heritage resources in the Meewasin Valley shall be identified and, wherever possible, preserved and interpreted.

Sustainable building practices:
Sustainable building practices are encouraged by Meewasin.

Industrial uses (from the River Edge Industrial Location Policy):
Industrial uses are not permitted in close proximity to the riverbank.

Development Review Meeting
Applicants are encouraged to attend the Development Review meeting to present their application to the committee. Applicants will need to be at the meeting on time in order to present their application and answer committee questions. This Committee includes geotechnical engineers, landscape architects, architects, and community planners. They make recommendation to the Meewasin Board (or the "Authority") based on their professional view on whether the application shows consistency with the planning principles for the Meewasin Valley. Presentations are encouraged to be approximately five minutes long, and applicants should be prepared to discuss specific technical details of the proposal.

After Development Review Meeting
Meewasin staff will formally review the application and advise the applicant in writing of the committee recommendation for the Board. The letter will also advise them of the date and time of the public hearing and invite them to present. On the Monday before the public hearing, the applicant will receive an email from administration asking for confirmation regarding who will present on the applicant's behalf at the public hearing.

Public Notice
Prior to the public hearing, public notice of the application will be advertised in the local paper, on the Meewasin website (Meewasin.com), and posted on the proposed site. Submission materials will be made available to the public at this time. Any confidential materials should be discussed with Meewasin staff prior to the public notice.

Public Hearing
The application is heard by the Board of Meewasin at a public meeting, which is open to the public, and the decision is posted publicly. Applicants or representatives must be on time to present their application and answer board questions. Applicants should note that there could also be questions asked of the applicant by members of the public, as applications are heard during the public portion of the meeting. Presentations are limited to five minutes, with time for questions at the end. The authority considers recommendations from the Development Review Committee and the administration when making its decision, but it is not bound by those recommendations. The Authority may approve, approve with conditions, defer to a later date, or deny an application. The Authority may also issue a timeframe for the decision to be in effect.

After Public Hearing
The Authority will advise the applicant in writing of its decision with respect to the application within 60 days of receipt of a complete application (ie. once all required materials, including any materials required as conditions of approval, have been submitted).

Project Monitoring
Meewasin staff will monitor and review any conditions set in the board's decision with the applicant as the project is built. Should an extension to the decision timeframe be necessary, applicants may apply for an extension.

Applicants should also be aware of Meewasin's construction protocols, found at the end of the Development Review Policy on pages 28-31.