



GOVERNANCE Update

September 28, 2026

Message from the President

Welcome to the latest edition of Governance Update!

September is a busy time of year for most as summer holidays wrap up and SUMA—along with municipal, provincial, and federal governments—is no exception.



As we "return to work," we are turning our focus to pre-budget advocacy: outlining what we'd like to see in the spring provincial budget and the federal budget that is set to be released in a few weeks.

Our asks this year were largely focused on financial and regulatory pressures municipalities are facing and how targeted provincial investments could alleviate these challenges and improve local service delivery and community resilience.

We look forward to the announcement of the 2026-27 budgets and continuing to work with our federal and provincial counterparts for the betterment of Saskatchewan's municipalities.

We need your voice shaping our advocacy, too. We'd like to invite you to the **SUMA Virtual Advocacy Forum on October 15 from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.** Join us online to connect directly with provincial decision-makers in four interactive Dialogue with Ministers sessions. Visit [our website](#) to learn more.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Randy Goulden".

Randy Goulden
SUMA President

Notes from the Board

The Board of Directors met in Elk Ridge for their quarterly meeting on September 17.

The agenda included the 2026-27 capital and operating budget and updates on the first year of our new strategic plan. Robust discussions were held around the continued

implementation of our Caucus structure, including the role of Caucuses in advocacy, and the preliminary budget for the 2027 fiscal year was approved.

The Board will meet for a final time this year in December.



DID YOU KNOW?

The [SUMA Member Portal](#) hosts valuable resources for members including minutes from all Board and Caucus meetings, webinar recordings, and more.

Each municipality has one shared login for the Member Portal that should be distributed to all staff and members of council. Please contact your Chief Administrative Officer for access. We encourage you to revisit or share previous webinars and other relevant information with other staff or elected officials.

If you are unsure of your login information, please contact communications2@suma.org for assistance.

CAUCUS UPDATES

All of SUMA's Caucuses met in advance of the September Board Meeting.

Each Caucus took part in a Convention focus group, led by Education and Events Advisor Stephanie Bourassa. These focus groups are ongoing efforts to continue to improve the Convention experience for all our attendees.

Northern Caucus

The Northern Caucus meeting was scheduled for August 26. Quorum was not made, so no official decisions were made.

Those in attendance received advocacy updates on the resolutions they put forth at Convention: a report on wildfire mitigation efforts planned for the 2026-27 year, and a roll up of pre-budget asks from the provincial government, which includes an ask for rotating bylaw officers to be placed in northern communities.

Those who were not in attendance received those same updates via email.

If you would like to get in touch with the Northern Caucus, reach out to your regional representative or Cheyenne Geysen, Advocacy Advisor responsible for the Northern Caucus, at 306-525-4320 or communications2@suma.org.

Village and Resort Village Caucus

The Village and Resort Village Caucus held its quarterly meeting on August 19. It was the Caucus' first meeting with all seven regional spots filled and everyone in attendance.

Ongoing business included very engaging and thorough discussions on regional collaboration, the Municipal Sustainability Working Group, and bylaw resources and enforcement. While there is strong acknowledgement that regional cooperation is essential for smaller communities to continue to fund infrastructure and deliver essential programs and services for residents, this can also come with a new set of challenges. Identifying and removing new barriers, harmonization of policies and bylaws, and development of resources such as multi-party agreement templates will be important issues to sort out so that municipalities have the knowledge and tools they require.

The next meeting for the Village and Resort Village Caucus is scheduled for Wednesday, November 18.

Previous meeting agendas and minutes can be found on the SUMA Member Portal. If you have any questions or concerns, please get in touch with your regional rep, or reach out to Dustin Austman, Advocacy Advisor responsible for the Village and Resort Village Caucus, at 306-525-4321 or advocacy3@suma.org.

Town Caucus

The Town Caucus met on August 27.

Members discussed challenges and opportunities related to renewable energy development, including public concerns, misinformation, property values, road maintenance, and environmental impacts. The Town Caucus members emphasized early municipal engagement, predictable revenue, community benefits, and the need for greater municipal capacity and support.

The Town Caucus discussed the need for municipalities to better understand the impacts and opportunities associated with Artificial Intelligence (AI) and data centres, including infrastructure, energy, water, employment, and economic development. The Caucus members emphasized the importance of meaningful municipal consultation in the early planning and development of provincial AI and data centre strategies.

Members also discussed the importance of regional emergency planning, coordination, and communication during emergencies. The discussion also emphasized moving beyond immediate response toward long-term environmental resilience and disaster mitigation.

Members raised concerns about healthcare recruitment competition between municipalities and the need for more coordinated approaches to attracting healthcare professionals, and discussed the need for better promotion and communication of funding opportunities, including the Canada Build Strong grant, to ensure municipalities are aware of application deadlines. Public safety concerns related to e-bikes, quads, and golf carts were raised, including the need for effective bylaw enforcement. Finally, Caucus members highlighted the need for economic development support and the importance of keeping local and Canadian businesses viable.

If you would like to get in touch with the Town Caucus, reach out to your regional representative or Augustina Osaseri, Advocacy Advisor responsible for the Town Caucus, at 306-525-4394 or advocacy1@suma.org.

City Caucus

SUMA's City Caucus met on August 11.

The meeting focused on emerging municipal issues, advocacy priorities, and opportunities for collaboration.

Councillor Victoria Flores of Regina provided an update on her new role with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). Members discussed how FCM initiatives could support local advocacy efforts and strengthen municipal priorities.

The Caucus continued discussions on *The Response to Illicit Drugs Act* and its impacts on communities. Members shared local experiences and emphasized the importance of collecting data on municipal costs to support future advocacy and policy development.

Members also discussed the value of bringing issues from council meetings to Caucus, creating opportunities to share best practices, address common challenges, and learn from one another.

Artificial intelligence (AI) and data centre development were key topics of discussion. Members raised concerns about consultation processes, explored approaches used by other municipal associations, and shared experiences related to AI governance and regional policy coordination.

Additional policy matters were identified for future discussion, including a municipal policy under development related to access to public property and public lands in situations involving mental health, addictions, and homelessness concerns.

Finally, members discussed concerns regarding community mailbox maintenance, including snow clearing and upkeep responsibilities, and noted the need for greater clarity around roles and responsibilities.

If you would like to get in touch with the City Caucus, reach out to your regional representative or Harrison Andruschak, Advocacy Advisor responsible for the City Caucus, at 306-525-4389 or advocacy2@suma.org.

ADVOCACY UPDATES

Advocacy in the summer months is largely focused on relationship building. Relationships built during this time open doors and answer phones for us later when we do need to bring an issue forward, and understanding the needs of our members positions us well to bring forward the right issues at the right times.

One of the highlights of this relationship building this past summer was SUMA's response to an almost unprecedented transition in the provincial government, shuffling 19 Deputy Ministers and Crown corporation or agency CEOs. SUMA was quick to reach out to each new appointee with congratulatory correspondence and has since been actively engaging those whose portfolios have direct implications for municipalities. These efforts are intended to establish strong working relationships early and ensure municipal perspectives are incorporated into ongoing policy discussions.

A few key SUMA events will help inform those future policy discussions. This summer saw us take the SUMA Regional Roadshow throughout our province, from Assiniboia in the south, as far north as Île-à-la-Crosse, collecting information from our members from their communities and identifying emerging challenges. Feedback was aligned with advocacy

priorities that our caucuses have also identified: infrastructure investment, municipal finances, public safety, and healthcare continue to be the dominant concerns facing Saskatchewan municipalities and remain central pillars of SUMA's advocacy agenda.

SUMA also expanded its collaborative advocacy efforts through hosting a Library Symposium in July. The event brought together directors and board chairs from regional libraries and single-municipality library systems to examine the current state of library services in Saskatchewan and identify areas of shared concern. We are now establishing a joint task force with municipal elected officials and library representatives to advance shared advocacy objectives.

In August, we hosted our annual SUMA Summer School at the University of Regina, where mayors and councillors came together to learn from each other and a fantastic lineup of speakers. They also had the opportunity to interact directly with members of SUMA's Board and Administration to discuss issues of concern to them.

Summer at SUMA also saw the submission of SUMA's pre-budget requests to both the federal government and various ministries of the provincial government. This is earlier than members may be used to hearing about budget submissions, given that the Federal Government has changed from March to November budgets. We also adjusted our timeline for provincial submissions to better align with when ministries are bringing issues forward to their ministers, rather than aiming for when things were moving forward to Treasury Board. By aligning more closely with internal government planning cycles, SUMA hopes to improve the likelihood that municipal priorities will be incorporated into ministry recommendations and ultimately reflected in the provincial budget.

One of the final highlights of our summer advocacy was a joint advocacy discussion involving both the provincial and federal ministers responsible for public safety. The meeting provided an important opportunity to raise municipal concerns regarding emergency preparedness, equipment requirements, and the need for stronger coordination among municipal, provincial, and federal governments during emergency situations. The conversation reinforced the importance of intergovernmental collaboration and positioned municipalities as critical partners in ensuring community preparedness and resilience.

Looking ahead, the next quarter will focus on several important initiatives. SUMA will host the inaugural [SUMA Virtual Advocacy Forum](#) on October 15, giving members a chance to speak with ministers outside of Convention. Then SUMA will host its annual MLA Reception in November, giving us the opportunity to strengthen relationships between the SUMA Board and MLAs from across the province, while reinforcing our existing advocacy priorities and our recent budget submissions. We're also busy preparing for our annual [Virtual SUMA Summit](#) in January, and getting the call for resolutions ready to go in preparation for [Convention 2027](#).

Thank you to you, our members, for your continued support.

Do you have questions about SUMA's advocacy? Email SUMA's Director of Advocacy Services, Sean McKenzie, at advocacydir@suma.org.

CONTACT YOUR REPRESENTATIVES

Want to connect with your representatives? Find their contact details on the [Municipal Directory](#).

Unsure which region you're located in? Search for your municipality [here](#).

Northern Caucus



Mayor Lyle Herman
Northern Village of La Loche

Northern Caucus Chair
Vice President of Northern
Municipalities

Vice-Chair, Councillor Abby Besharah, Northern
Town of La Ronge

Mayor Rick Laliberte, Northern Village of Beauval

Mayor Bruce Fidler, Northern Town of Creighton

Councillor Sandra Hansen, Northern Hamlet of
Stony Rapids

Village and Resort Village Caucus



Mayor Nora McLearn
Village of Neville

Village and Resort Village
Caucus Chair, Southwest
Region
Vice President of Villages and
Resort Villages

Central Region: Mayor Corey Fernets, Resort
Village of Thode

East Central Region: Mayor Linda Restau, Resort
Village of Westend

Northeast Region: Councillor David Duhaime,
Village of Bjorkdale

Northwest Region: Councillor Ken Huber, Village of
Goodsoil

Southeast Region: Mayor Josh Vass, Village of
Pangman

West Central Region: Mayor Susan Robertson,
Village of Broderick

Town Caucus



Mayor Michelle McKenzie
Town of Maple Creek

Central Region: Councillor Lamatia Robinson,
Town of Colonsay

East Central Region: Councillor Gina Rakochy,
Town of Canora

Northeast Region: Councillor Kathy Evans, Town of
Birch Hills

Northwest Region: Mayor Dennis Helmuth, Town of
Rosthern

Southeast Region: Councillor Greg Wall, Town of
Carnduff

City Caucus



Councillor Dawn Kilmer
City of Prince Albert

City Caucus Chair
Vice President of Cities

Councillor Kirsten Walliser, City of Estevan

Councillor Dave Rowe, City of Humboldt

Councillor Jason Whiting, City of Lloydminster

Councillor Spencer Nikkel, City of Martensville

Councillor Tom Harrison, City of Meadow Lake

Councillor Tara Muntain, City of Melfort

Councillor Doug Mark, City of Melville

Councillor Jamey Logan, City of Moose Jaw

Councillor Greg Lightfoot, City of North Battleford

Councillor Victoria Flores, City of Regina

Councillor Bev Dubois, City of Saskatoon

Councillor Leanne Tuntland-Wiebe, City of Swift
Current

Deputy Mayor and Councillor Kevin Tooley, City of
Warman

Councillor Kellie Sidloski, City of Weyburn

Councillor Dustin Brears, City of Yorkton



Councillor Randy Donauer
City of Saskatoon

Vice President - City of Saskatoon



Councillor Shanon Zachidniak
City of Regina

Vice President - City of Regina



Mayor Gerald Aalbers
City of Lloydminster

Ex-Officio Board Member
City Mayors Caucus Chair



CAO Barry Elliott
Town of Maple Creek

Ex-Officio Board Member
UMAAS President

SUMA | suma.org
Unit 305 - 4741 Parliament Avenue., Regina SK
306-525-3727



SUMA | Unit 305-4741 Parliament Ave. | Regina, SK S4W 0T9 CA

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