



Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SUMA Calls on Government of Saskatchewan to Better Support Urban Municipalities

With the release of the Government of Saskatchewan's 2026-2027 budget, SUMA is pleased to see the Government of Saskatchewan acknowledging the importance of both urban and rural municipalities in our province.

Municipalities in Saskatchewan benefit greatly from the Municipal Revenue Sharing (MRS) program, which recognizes the benefit municipal services, such as policing, fire, and recreation, bring to the province. MRS provides predictable, unconditional funding to our cities, towns, villages, resort villages, northern municipalities, as well as rural municipalities. We are grateful for the Government's continued commitment to MRS and its record investment of \$392.4 million, an increase of \$30.7 million from last year's budget.

"Municipalities provide over 60% of public infrastructure in Canada and many of the services we rely on—from water and waste treatment to ice rinks and recreation centres. The costs for delivering these services continue to go up while municipalities have limited options for municipal revenue streams," said SUMA President Randy Goulden. "The Municipal Revenue Sharing Program provides stable funding to help ensure local governments can continue to provide the services residents depend on."

However, municipalities in Saskatchewan are continuously under pressure to do more with less. The funding provided by municipal revenue sharing is no longer enough. Funding for urban infrastructure, for example, has remained static over the past several years.

For urban municipalities to meet the needs of their residents and those in surrounding regions, we need to see more equitable distribution of funding for municipalities. With this year's announcement regarding the changes to the set capital portion of the Communities in Transition fund – bringing the fund up to \$1.5 million, to be taken off MRS – this issue is clearly highlighted. Cities and northern municipalities will be providing a combined 55.3% of the funding, despite never making use of the program. In contrast, rural municipalities, who are the only municipalities to see direct benefits outside of strategic initiatives, will be required to provide only 28.5% of funding.

We can also see this disparity in potash tax sharing – rural municipalities currently receive 90% of the levies, with the urbans splitting the remaining 10%.

Urban municipalities also provide recreational and cultural facilities for their own residents and for those who travel from surrounding rural and urban municipalities. We are calling on the Government to require recreational infrastructure funding agreements between urban and rural municipalities to ensure that these facilities can remain in place.

“We look forward to discussions with SARM and the Government of Saskatchewan to come up with solutions that will benefit and strengthen both rural and urban municipalities in Saskatchewan,” said President Goulden. “We are stronger when we work together.”

With communities across Saskatchewan facing challenges in accessing healthcare, there is significant need for new healthcare facilities in urban municipalities to serve their residents and those in surrounding regions. We are pleased to see the Government reduce the amount of funding urban municipalities must contribute to building new healthcare facilities, from 20% down to 10%. However, the responsibility to collect funding from surrounding municipalities, both rural and urban, falls to the urban municipality in question. Healthcare facilities in urban municipalities are key to delivering essential services to all residents of the province, and we would like to see the province take on the responsibility of collecting contributions from municipalities surrounding the hospital.

We were pleased to see an increase to core operational funding for the Saskatchewan Asset Management Agency. SAMA’s stable, up-to-date property assessment system is a key service for Saskatchewan’s communities.

We appreciate the establishment of a utility arrears loan for vulnerable households, which responds to SUMA’s advocacy for those at risk of homelessness, as well as the budget’s small increases to income support programs and social housing, though these increases continue to fall short of the investments needed to bring housing and programming up to a basic subsistence level.

“We continue to look to the Government for continuous engagement around the mental health and addictions and homelessness crisis faced by our province, including needed improvements to income support programs. We recognize there is still much work to do around solving these issues, which impacts all of Saskatchewan’s urban municipalities,” stated President Goulden.

Finally, we would like to see more funding for the urban highway connector program, as well as funding for the purchase of paratransit vehicles, as was referenced in a resolution at Convention 2025.

SUMA envisions a province where everyone has access to the essential services they require and the infrastructure that makes these services possible. Continued support for urban municipalities is vital for this future.

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For more information visit www.suma.org, or to arrange an interview please contact:

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