



Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association
Unit 305 4741 Parliament Avenue
Regina, SK S4W 0T9
306-525-3727

April 10, 2026

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Saskatchewan's Urban Municipalities Gather for the 2026 SUMA Convention and Tradeshow

From April 12-15, over 1000 representatives from Saskatchewan's cities, towns, villages, resort villages, and northern municipalities will come together for the 2026 SUMA Convention and Tradeshow at the REAL District in Regina.

Through Convention 2026, delegates will reconnect with colleagues, focus on new ideas, network with SUMA and provincial decision makers, and reflect on municipal issues. This year, the SUMA President, Premier, Leader of the Official Opposition, Minister of Government Relations, the Government of Canada's Secretary of State for Rural Development, the Chair of the Conservative Party of Canada Saskatchewan Caucus, and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' President will all speak at the event. Delegates will attend education sessions and browse over 150 tradeshow booths with products and services tailored to municipalities in the Municipal Marketplace presented by Kinetic GPO.

This year, SUMA is pleased to present two incredible keynote addresses. Our first keynote address features Warren Macdonald, a groundbreaking mountain climber and visionary in change management. After losing both legs above the knee in a 1997 mountaineering accident, he went on to scale Tasmania's Cradle Mountain, and in 2003 became the first double above-knee amputee to summit Mt. Kilimanjaro. He's also climbed El Capitan and is the only above-knee amputee to ascend Alberta's 600-foot "Weeping Wall." Warren has shared his journey in his bestselling book *A Test of Will* and documentary *The Second Step*. As a keynote speaker, Warren inspires audiences to think boldly, embrace change, and see challenges as pathways to transformational opportunity.

The second keynote address features Dr. Jack Lucas. Jack is a Professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Calgary and Co-Director of the Canadian Municipal Barometer, a cross-Canada research partnership focused on democracy and representation in Canadian municipalities. His research is focused on

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

Roxanne Korpan
Manager of Communications
SUMA
Telephone: 306-525-4396
communications@suma.org

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democracy and representation in Canadian municipalities. In this presentation, Jack will provide an overview of the Canadian Municipal Barometer. Using data from a CMB survey of more than 6,000 Canadian adults, along with surveys of mayors and councillors across Canada, he'll share recent research on municipal "attentive publics" — the local residents who actively engage in municipal politics — and discuss the implications of his findings for public engagement and political representation.

Media are welcome at Convention but must check in at the registration desk and show media ID to receive a media badge for admission. Important events, including the President's Address, Premier's Address, and Bear Pit, are also available to the media via livestream on SUMA's YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/@SUMASask).

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Attachments:

Important Convention 2026 Events
SUMA Service Awards
Saskatchewan Municipal Awards
SUMA logo
SUMA media kit

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Important Convention 2026 Events

* Sessions that will be livestreamed to the public and available on SUMA's YouTube channel.

Please note: Media scrums are subject to availability of elected officials and may change.

Monday, April 13

Official Opening Ceremonies*	8:30 a.m. – 9:10 a.m.
Secretary of State for Rural Development Address*	8:30 a.m. – 9:10 a.m.
Chair, CPC Saskatchewan Caucus*	8:30 a.m. – 9:10 a.m.
FCM Address*	8:30 a.m. – 9:10 a.m.
Media Scrum	9:15 a.m.
SUMA President's Address *	10:25 a.m. – 11:10 a.m.
Premier's Address*	10:25 a.m. – 11:10 a.m.
Media Scrum – <i>TBC</i>	11:10 a.m.
Keynote Address – Warren Macdonald	11:10 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.
Leader of the Official Opposition's Address*	1:30 p.m. – 1:50 p.m.
Media Scrum – <i>TBC</i>	1:50 p.m.
Resolutions*	3:45 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday, April 14

Keynote Address – Dr. Jack Lucas	8:30 a.m. – 9:35 a.m.
Minister of Government Relations' Address*	11:35 a.m. – 11:55 a.m.
Saskatchewan Municipal Awards*	11:55 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Media Scrum – <i>TBC</i>	12:30 p.m.

Wednesday, April 15

Bear Pit with Provincial Cabinet*	10:45 a.m. – 12:10 p.m.
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Service Awards

Every year at the President's Gala and Awards Ceremony, the SUMA Board of Directors recognizes individuals from across the province who have demonstrated a commitment to outstanding service in the municipal field.

Through the awards program, SUMA acknowledges the contribution of individuals in the municipal field to an improved quality of life in their communities and to the advancement of local government in our province.

The SUMA Board accepts nominations from communities and councils throughout the province. The individuals nominated are considered the most deserving of recognition for their outstanding service to their communities.

On behalf of all SUMA members, we are proud to honour these individuals for their outstanding contributions to the development and prosperity of our communities and urban governments in Saskatchewan.

Meritorious Service Award

Meritorious service awards are granted to municipal employees with 20 or more years of service. It recognizes their career success, dedication, and involvement in their local communities.

These award recipients are outstanding individuals who have become role models in their communities. Through their long service, they have made a valuable contribution to the success of their municipalities. They strive for an improved quality of life through a strong local government.

- Jeff Allers – Pilot Butte, *20 years of service*
- Trevor Bartel – Preeceville, *25 years of service*
- Joe Bedecs – Carlyle, *36 years of service*
- Annette Brown – Carnduff, *33 years of service*
- Kerrie Chabot – Maple Creek, *22 years of service*
- Mel Chorney – Pilot Butte, *25 years of service*
- Kevin Dell – Pilot Butte, *30 years of service*
- Terry Fuchs – Pilot Butte, *20 years of service*
- Dalyce Hammer – Maple Creek, *21 years of service*
- Ken Hewitt – Carlyle, *27 years of service*
- Rob Klassen – Carlyle, *25 years of service*
- Lyle Lucas – Watrous, *40 years of service*



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- Murray Macala – Pilot Butte, *25 years of service*
- Stan Norrish – Lipton, *20 years of service*
- Michelle Orsted – Carlyle, *23 years of service*
- Orrin Redden – Watrous, *26 years of service*
- Trevor Sali – Pilot Butte, *20 years of service*
- Rob Schoonbaert – Lipton, *20 years of service*
- Elaine Scott – Melfort, *27 years of service*
- Lydell Shatula – Nipawin, *20 years of service*
- Michele Sorensen – Nipawin, *27 years of service*
- Lesley Thibault – Tisdale, *27 years of service*
- Todd Thompson – Carlyle, *20 years of service*
- Ron Tomolak – Lipton, *20 years of service*
- Travis VanMeer – Carlyle, *25 years of service*
- Lance Whitteron – Lumsden, *24 years of service*
- Kim Wilkes – Weyburn, *24 years of service*

Honorary Service Award

Honorary Service Awards are granted to elected officials throughout the province with 20 or more years of service. It recognizes their long-term dedication to, and involvement in, their local communities.

These award recipients are individuals who demonstrate leadership in their communities and who strive for an improved quality of life. Their generous contributions of time and talent have strengthened their local governments.

There are no Honorary Service Award recipients this year. We look forward to celebrating next year.

Scoop Lewry Award

The Scoop Lewry Award recognizes outstanding service in municipal government or administration on a local, provincial, and national basis.

This award is dedicated to the memory of L.H. “Scoop” Lewry, long-time Mayor of Moose Jaw and past SUMA President, who dedicated his career to improving his community with a kind and humanitarian spirit.

This year’s recipient of the Scoop Lewry Award is Charlie Clark.



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Charlie Clark was first elected to Saskatoon City Council in 2006. He served in that role until 2016 when he was elected Mayor, a position he held until deciding not to run again in the 2024 election.

“I wanted to run and try to be somebody that brought people together to solve problems instead of allowing divisions to get deeper,” he said.

For Charlie, relationship building was the thread that wove through his entire municipal career and beyond. His belief in learning from others, staying connected, and ensuring Saskatoon was a welcoming city for all was at the core of all he did. From the rapid expansion Saskatoon faced in 2008—when Council held the dual priorities of providing infrastructure and services for a larger population and ensuring that everyone, regardless of background, felt welcome in a city that was swiftly becoming more diverse—to leading the city through the 2020 pandemic and beyond with polarization and diversity becoming commonplace, Charlie maintained the position that being a bridge builder was a key to success.

“I realized that we learn the most from people who are different from us,” Charlie explained. “I always tried to talk to people and stay connected, and ensured that Council, regardless of their political perspectives, treated each other civilly and modelled working together to solve problems.”

Charlie sat on numerous boards and committees during his time on Council. He was particularly proud of the work done by the Board of Police Commissioners, which hired two new police chiefs and maintained a focus on relationship building in a diverse community; the Meewasin Valley Authority’s work in building a national urban park and conserving areas that have become the “jewel of Saskatoon”; and the Planning for Growth (P4G) initiative, which built a framework for regional cooperation that can be used as a model for others throughout the province. He also found incredible value in his time on SUMA’s City Mayors’ Caucus, sharing challenges and supporting one another.

Through the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, Charlie served as the Vice Chair of the Western Economic Solutions Task Force, a group focused on bringing a unified voice from Western Canada to the Federal Government in Ottawa. He also led efforts around reconciliation and cities through FCM, focusing on bringing together mayors from cities across the country with Indigenous leaders to have discussions on the role that municipalities can play in reconciliation and the ways in which stronger relationships can be built between cities and their Indigenous neighbours. Charlie is expanding this work in his current role as Treaty Relations Lead with the Office of the Treaty Commissioner.



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Charlie sits on the board of STR8 UP, an organization that offers outreach services, programming, and support to those who have lived or are living criminal street lifestyles and who want to make positive changes in their lives. He also volunteers his time at the local food bank and Saskatoon's Friendship Inn.

"I'm inspired by the (individuals in STR8 UP) who are trying to better themselves," he said, noting that many of those are people that society may have typically already written off. He adds that this volunteer work is a way for him to stay grounded and humble.

In a world that feels increasingly divisive, Charlie has simple advice for people who are looking to run for municipal council: "Do it. It's a great experience whether you win or lose." He adds that he believes that local government will be what holds democracy together, and that strong leaders and relationships are more important than ever.

"We really need people to be in that leadership role, but with the mindset of collaboration, of relationship building, of hearing from different points of view, and leading from that approach."

Life Membership Award

A SUMA Life Membership Award is granted by the Board of Directors to a municipal elected official who served on the SUMA Board of Directors.

It recognizes an individual whose career exemplifies commitment and dedication to community, and significant contributions to urban government in Saskatchewan through the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association.

The recipient of this year's Life Membership Award is Ted Zurakowski.

Ted Zurakowski sat on Prince Albert City Council from 2006 to January 2023, serving six terms as a City Councillor. He was appointed to the SUMA Board of Directors in 2010 and served on that Board until his resignation in late January 2023.

Ted chose to run for council to play an active role in fixing the issues he saw in Prince Albert. In 2006, there were several—the closure of the pulp mill, an increase of speeding in school zones, and part of the city was repeatedly flooding.

"As hokey as it sounds, I wanted to be part of the solution," Ted said, adding that he appreciated being able to help people with their issues and relieve a lot of stress,



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whether it was a big picture, strategic goal, or a smaller issue unique to a few individuals in the community.

In addition to bringing forward a flood protection plan, included in a \$16 million infrastructure plan, Ted and the rest of the council set to work elevating the status of Prince Albert from a city where a now defunct mill was a centerpiece to a destination city—a “welcoming, inclusive, recreational place where (folks) live and play.”

Out of this came the creation of the Cornerstone Shopping District—creating opportunities for new businesses to thrive—and many new recreational areas.

“All of those pieces filter down,” Ted explained. “[For example,] it’s now a healthier city because of the number of parks we have.”

Ted became interested in sitting on the SUMA Board when he realized the commonality between all communities in Saskatchewan. “Our city is unique, and it’s not unique. The issues are the same.”

Sitting on the SUMA Board, Ted realized, was an excellent opportunity to learn from other cities and communities, and to find common solutions to common problems. During his time on the SUMA Board, Ted was most proud of seeing SUMA grow in its advocacy, in particular with the development of Municipal Revenue Sharing, a cornerstone of funding for communities that remains just as important today.

He noted that none of this would have been possible without the excellent leadership at SUMA, which led to the hiring of great staff. “That’s where the magic happens. It allows the elected officials to make those changes.”

While Ted is now retired from municipal politics, he has some advice for those looking to get involved, either on their local council or on one of SUMA’s caucuses: “You’ll never do anything by yourself. You need others in the room to be in the same page.”

“Listen before you talk. Make people feel valued. [And remember], you’re talking to people who already know a lot about your community.”

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