



Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SUMA Recognizes Efforts, but More Funding Necessary in Budget 2024-25

Provincial investments into Saskatchewan's hometowns help improve the quality of life for residents. With the 2024-25 budget, SUMA recognizes the province's efforts to improve lives across Saskatchewan by maintaining key operating funding and increasing investments in key healthcare infrastructure. We are, however, disappointed in the decrease to transportation infrastructure for our northern communities, and the static state of other collaborative funding models, and health services, particularly those connected mental health and addictions and affordable housing.

We are glad to see the continuance of Municipal Revenue Sharing and use of the agreed-upon formula, which will result in a substantial, and much-needed increase to funding for municipal operations.

"It's good to see the value the provincial government places on municipal revenue sharing. For so many communities, collaboration and shared resources are the way to growth, and without revenue sharing many of us would suffer," said President Randy Goulden.

SUMA is also pleased to see an increase to the budget for the Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency after several years of frozen funding. SAMA is integral to our assessment system, which is how municipalities bring in funding from property taxes.

SUMA is disappointed to see a \$16 million decrease to the government's annual investment in northern transportation systems, including highways, airports, and ice roads. Transportation is extremely challenging in the north, and increased investment is necessary to ensure public safety and further increase economic growth and development in northern Saskatchewan.

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

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“At a time when we need to focus on growth and ways to help our communities be in the best possible shape to grow, it is disheartening to see cuts in investment for our northern members. This is a step back from where we need to be going, and it will certainly have an impact on northern economic development,” President Goulden said.

We are also concerned with the lack of any funding increase to the Community Airport Partnership (CAP) Program. Because municipalities partner on these expenses, static funding increases the amount that municipalities must pay or decreases the number of maintenance projects that can be undertaken. This is concerning for our cities, in particular, who shoulder the lion’s share of funding for airports, even though those airports serve the broader areas around those cities.

Mental health and addictions continue to be a key focus for SUMA, and our communities continue to struggle to help people experiencing housing insecurity and addictions. We’re pleased to see the province follow through with its previous commitments around treatment beds, but there is still much work to be done in the areas of community supports, housing for those with complex needs, and harm reduction.

Finally, we are disappointed with the meagre increase to the Saskatchewan Income Support (SIS) and Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID) programs. SUMA has been calling on this Government to make changes to both the funding provided and the administration of these programs for over a year now, and we will continue to do so until Saskatchewan’s most vulnerable get the help they require. Municipalities are on the front lines of dealing with the homelessness crisis, but we have the fewest fiscal tools to work with, and insufficient jurisdiction to address the problem.

SUMA looks forward to continuing to work with the Provincial government to ensure Saskatchewan’s hometowns remain the best, and most affordable, place to live, work, and play.

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