



A MESSAGE FROM THE President

Notes from the September Board Meeting

The SUMA Board of Directors gathered online **September 24** for a day of virtual discussions on everything from Convention 2022 and COVID-19 to our municipal bylaw review project, the municipal election date, and more.

Convention 2022

During the meeting, the Board was presented with the logo for SUMA's 2022 Convention and Tradeshow. This year's logo embraces our theme **Connect** with five interconnecting lines that represent Saskatchewan's cities, towns, village, resort villages, and northern municipalities.



The Convention Planning Committee also presented a preliminary agenda. The committee met in advance of the Board meeting on **September 2** and discussed the **introduction of consultative sessions**, which will be designed to foster conversations with you around important municipal matters. Earlier this year, we also announced that convention is moving to the spring for 2022 and beyond. One of the reasons for moving convention was to provide a greater opportunity to **explore and enjoy the host city**. During the committee meeting, the committee discussed what those opportunities would be.

The 2022 SUMA Convention is scheduled for **April 3-6, 2022 in Regina**, with the **Municipal Marketplace** taking place **Monday, April 4**, and **Tuesday, April 5**. Last week, SUMA launched all the information you need to **book your accommodations for Convention 2022**. We are once again using **Resiada**, so booking your rooms is as easy as the click of a few buttons. An email with the link to book was sent to the main contact for each municipality, but hotel information can also be found [here](#).

COVID-19

As we continue to experience a fourth wave of COVID-19 and the province's **vaccine mandates take effect October 1**, the Board of Directors discussed what vaccine

mandates mean for our municipalities. SUMA and SUMA's City Mayors' Caucus have been meeting virtually with the Minister of Government Relations and we have made it clear that there needs to be consistent and clear messaging from the province for municipalities. We know you had many questions when the province announced the vaccine mandates, and we have tried to get you answers - answers directly from the province and answers from the COVID-19 mask and vaccine mandates webinar we held yesterday.

Bylaw Review

As municipalities, we spend a lot of time and effort writing bylaws to help further the safety, health, and well-being of our residents. But enforcing and prosecuting those bylaws can be a challenge. SUMA undertook a municipal bylaw enforcement project, looking for a way to **make bylaw enforcement more cost-effective and efficient for Saskatchewan communities.**

You may remember that a few months ago SUMA sent out a survey on behalf of researchers from the University of Saskatchewan on the topic of bylaw enforcement. From those responses, as well as additional research, a **report on the current state of bylaw enforcement and adjudication** was prepared. On Friday, we discussed that report. The **report shows municipalities rely heavily on the provincial court system** and thus a disproportionate amount of time and money is spent for what may be considered minor infractions. It also **proposes a new bylaw system, which emphasizes municipal autonomy** – a key finding in the survey. Municipalities would be able to choose if they use the new system, and if they do, they would be able to choose which laws to apply the system to, and which penalties to apply to infractions. (If a municipality chooses not to enroll in the proposed administrative system, the status quo approach to bylaw adjudication and enforcement would remain in that jurisdiction and bylaw prosecutions would continue before a justice at Provincial Court.)

We will begin advocating for the implementation of this new system throughout the province.

You can read the full report, including information on the proposed new system, [here](#).

Municipal Election Date

On the topic of provincial advocacy, the Board also talked about the municipal election date. Last month, Saskatchewan's Chief Electoral Officer recommended that the **municipal election date be moved** to avoid the voter confusion experienced in 2020 with the provincial and municipal elections being held close together.

SUMA **sent out a survey asking what date would be best for your municipality**. We will also be **asking this question at Regional Meetings in November** and we will be speaking to SARM so that we can present a unified message to the provincial government.

Federal Election Advocacy

As advocacy is a key pillar of what we do, advocacy dominated Friday's meeting. In addition to provincial advocacy, we also talked about our federal advocacy, specifically our advocacy during the federal election. Our 2021 federal election advocacy campaign focused on building - building safer, sustainable communities, and building a better municipal-federal relationship. During the campaign, we released templates of letters you could send to your local candidates and the media, highlighted the issues we were championing on social media, and talked to the media. We also held a federal election forum where you got to ask your questions. Information about our campaign can still be found on our **Federal Election Advocacy Hub**. Thank you to everyone who participated and helped get our messages out.

Changes to Building Regulations

Related to building, we also discussed changes to building regulations. The province is working on regulatory changes to rename *The Uniform Building and Accessibility Standards Regulations* to "The Building Code Regulations." The new regulations will also

require municipalities to adopt a building bylaw, if they have not already done so, making fire and CO2 alarms a requirement in all residential buildings, and give municipalities more capabilities to revoke building permits in situations where work is not progressing, as agreed upon.

Our **next Board of Directors Meeting** will take place on **December 3**.

Regional meetings are happening online **November 2** and **3**. Be sure to watch your inbox for more information.



Rodger Hayward
SUMA President