



# A MESSAGE FROM THE President

## Notes from the September Board Meeting

The SUMA Board of Directors gathered in Saskatoon on **September 23** for a full meeting agenda, with discussions on everything from Convention 2023 to property assessments, mental health and addictions, environmental issues, and more.

### Convention 2023

During the meeting, the Board approved key details for the 2023 SUMA Convention and Tradeshow, including the Convention theme: **Tune In**. (You can also think of it as 'toon in', since we will be in Saskatoon.) In the 2022 SUMA Convention survey, 80 per cent of respondents said education, learning what the provincial government is doing, and borrowing ideas and connecting with peers is most important to their municipality. Convention 2023 is an **opportunity to tune into new ideas from peers, presenters, provincial leaders, and from SUMA, as we tune in and learn from you.**

The 2023 SUMA Convention is scheduled for **April 16-19, 2023 at TCU Place in Saskatoon**. During the Board of Directors meeting, we received a preliminary agenda. The Convention Planning Committee met in advance of the Board meeting on **September 6** and discussed the agenda, including the **return of our Dialogue with SUMA sessions and excursions** to take place on **Sunday, April 16**. One of the reasons for moving convention to April was to provide a greater opportunity to **explore and enjoy the host city**. Due to COVID-19, we were unable to host excursions for Convention 2022, so we are excited for the opportunities at Convention 2023.

For 2023, we are also introducing a reception to the Municipal Marketplace. The **Municipal Marketplace**, presented by Kinetic GPO, will run **all day Monday, April 17** and the **morning of Tuesday, April 18**. On **Sunday, April 16**, we will kick off the tradeshow with an **afternoon reception** so you will have **early access to booths and exhibitors**.

For those ready to **book accommodations for Convention 2023**, reservations are now open. We are once again using **Resiada**, so booking 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](#).

### Property Assessments and Taxes

In response to concerns brought forward by Saskatchewan hometowns, SUMA, in partnership with Saskatchewan's cities, commissioned a **project on Saskatchewan's property assessment and taxation system**. For the project, SUMA engaged the International Property Tax Institute (IPTI) to conduct an independent review of the system. In July 2022, the IPTI completed the report titled "Review of the Property Tax System in Saskatchewan, April 2022." The report provides options for change on a wide range of assessment and taxation policy matters.

On September 23, the Board of Directors discussed the report. We directed SUMA's

**administration to develop an advocacy strategy** relating to the recommendations in the report. You can read the full report [here](#). In September, we also released a joint media release with SAMA. [Read the media release](#).

## **Mental Health and Addictions**

Focusing on strategy, we **identified key strategic issues related to mental health and addictions** during the meeting. In February, the Board of Directors made mental health and addictions a cornerstone advocacy issue for SUMA. The COVID-19 pandemic compounded mental health and addictions issues that were already a critical crisis in Saskatchewan and Canada, and while mental health and social services are primarily provincial responsibilities, Saskatchewan's hometowns are dealing with complications that arise from mental health and addictions issues in the province.

We identified **partnerships** - partnerships with other agencies and experts - as a strategic priority, as well as **access to adequate, affordable housing**. During the discussion, the Board of Directors reiterated the importance of ensuring that, while advocating for mental health and addictions supports in Saskatchewan, the **costs are not downloaded onto municipalities**.

## **Environmental Advocacy**

Advocacy relating to the environment was a focus of the meeting as well as we made a number of decisions related to environmental issues.

To assist SUMA in finding the best ways to address the environmental issues faced by Saskatchewan's hometowns, the Board of Directors approved of **SUMA hiring a consultant to develop an environmental policy, create a toolkit** to help municipalities address their environmental concerns, **and make recommendations** on how SUMA should advocate the provincial and federal governments.

SUMA will also be **establishing a Wetland Policy Ad Hoc Committee** to **draft a made-in-Saskatchewan wetland policy**. The policy relates to the **resolution** passed by Saskatchewan's hometowns at Convention 2021, resolving that SUMA advocate for the development and adoption of a wetland policy comparable to the policies currently in place in Alberta and Manitoba.

## **Board Minutes Now Available**

To increase transparency and detail all of the work SUMA is doing on behalf of Saskatchewan's hometowns, we are now posting **agendas, minutes, and reports from our Board of Director meetings on the SUMA website**. The documents will be posted following approval of our meeting minutes. We approved the meeting minutes from our June 17 Board meeting at our recent meeting, so you can find the agenda, minutes, and reports from our June Board meeting in the [member portal](#) on SUMA's website.

### ***Accessing the Member Portal***

The member portal is password protected. Representatives from each member municipality are able to access the portal using the primary email address provided to SUMA as part of your municipality's membership, and selected password.

If your municipality has not yet accessed the portal, you will need to set up your password. Navigate to the member login in the upper right corner of the [suma.org](#) homepage and scroll down to the "Forgot Password" link. Enter the email that is set as the **primary contact** for your SUMA membership. An email will be sent to that address prompting you to set up a new password.

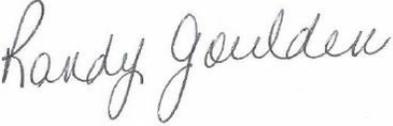
In addition to meeting minutes, the portal features recordings of webinars, consultation opportunities, a wiki with shared documents, and more exclusive SUMA member content. As the municipality is the registered SUMA member, SUMA is unable to provide individual portal access, so we encourage the credentials be shared among administration and council.

If you have any trouble accessing the portal, please contact [communications2@suma.org](mailto:communications2@suma.org) for further assistance.

## Next Meeting Date

Our **next Board of Directors Meeting** will take place on **December 2**.

Sincerely,



Randy Goulden  
SUMA President

SUMA | [suma.org](http://suma.org)

