

Urban Update



The bi-weekly e-newsletter from the Voice of Urban Saskatchewan

Issue No. 13-07

March 25, 2013

Minimum/Base Tax Update

Early in 2013 it was brought to SUMA's attention that the provincial government's legal interpretation of how urban governments apply minimum and base tax has changed. Urban governments were told that according to legislation, they were not permitted to apply a different minimum or base tax amount to a parcel of land without improvements. The rate established by a local government must be the same across all properties within a property class, such as residential.

Under this new interpretation, local councils would need to determine whether the minimum rate should be applied to non-improved properties or a lower rate should be established for improved properties. This change in policy was a surprise to urban governments as many have been applying different rates for years. This change in interpretation was going to have a significant impact on urban governments.

SUMA immediately contacted Government Relations to clarify the rationale for this change in policy and to seek a resolution that would reduce the impact to urban governments. After working with Government Relations, SUMA is pleased to announce that the government has approved changes to *The Municipalities Act*, *The Cities Act* and *The Northern Municipalities Act* to permit a local government to apply a minimum/base tax to land only, improvements only, or land

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Quote of the Week:

Divide each difficulty into as many parts as is feasible and necessary to resolve it.

Rene Descartes

SUMA Classifieds

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

[SUMA: Policy Advisor \(March 28\)](#)

and improvements together within a property class.

To view the specific changes, please visit [the Saskatchewan Gazette website](#).

If you have any questions related to this matter, please contact Sean McEachern - Director, Policy and Communications at smceachern@suma.org or 306-525-4394.

Provincial Budget Highlights

The provincial budget was tabled last Wednesday. SUMA responded with a [media release](#), applauding the government's investment in urban governments. We have also [compiled a list](#) of areas where the budget may affect urban governments.

We will keep you informed as more information is available on various aspects of the budget.

New Host Hotels



SUMA is pleased to have partnered with four hotels to offer members discounted rates in Regina and Saskatoon.

Saskatoon:

Park Town Hotel - rates starting at \$145/night

Travelodge - rates starting at \$134/night

Regina:

Ramada Hotel & Convention Centre - rates starting at \$132/night

Travelodge - rates starting at \$119/night

You can use the hotels when travelling for business or leisure. If asked to provide a membership card at check-in, use your 2012 membership card until the 2013 membership card arrives.

For full details on the program, and to find links to the hotels'

SUMA: Group Benefits Administrator
(March 28)

Town of Watrous: Recreation Director
(April 3)

Town of LeRoy: Planning
Development and Administration
Officer (April 5)

Village of Creelman: Administrator
(April 8)

Town of Ituna: Administrator (April 12)

Town of Valleyview: Engineering
Assistant/Construction Manager (Until Filled)

Town of Dalmeny: Public Works
Operator (Until Filled)

City of Meadow Lake: City Manager
(Until Filled)

Village of Pierceland: Administrator
(Until Filled)

Village of Fillmore: Administrator
(Until Filled)

Town of Arcola: Town Administrator
(Until Filled)

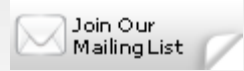
Town of Southey: Town Foreman
(Until Filled)

FOR SALE

Equipment for Sale by Tender (April 9)

For more details on these ads, visit the *SUMA Classifieds* under the *Urban Marketplace* tab.

websites for more details on their properties, visit the pages for the [Saskatoon Host Hotels](#) and the [Regina Host Hotels](#).



Renewed Partnership with Signal Industries



Regina-based sign provider Signal Industries is a long-time SUMA Advantage partner, but recently the program has undertaken some changes to the benefit of SUMA members.

The discount provided by Signal Industries used to be on only standard signs; now the discount applies to all products sold by Signal Industries. SUMA members can contact Signal Industries directly to place orders and to calculate what your SUMA discount will be you can use the [pricing calculator](#). See more information on this program [on the SUMA website](#).

Congratulations Caronport!

Caronport has been declared the winner of the 2013 *in motion* Community Challenge. They will receive the grand prize of \$10,000 for logging the most minutes of physical activity from March 1-15. More than two million minutes of physical activity were logged on the challenge website by 27 communities.

According to Heidi M. Soggie, community challenge organizer, "The \$10,000 will go towards building a community trail around the perimeter of the community for families to use year round, for activities like walking, running, cycling and skiing."

Dalmeny came in "a very close second," while Cudworth, Quill Lake, Gull Lake, Spiritwood, and Bienfait all accumulated more than 100,000 minutes of physical activity.

Congratulations to all who participated!

Final Reminder: CAP Deadline

SUMA has long advocated for sustainable funding for community airports. In 2010, the SUMA Board of Directors endorsed a policy advocating for additional funding for airport infrastructure in southern Saskatchewan. The Community Airport Partnership (CAP) program has since received a much-needed boost to continue building links among Saskatchewan and national and international markets. Please take advantage of this program for your regional community airport. Our members identified the renewal of this program as a priority, and so we want to make sure that all of the available money gets used up.

The deadline for CAP applications is Monday April 1, 2013.

Further detailed information on the 2013-2014 CAP Program and Application Guidelines is available on [the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure website](#).

Other grants with

Building Standards Workshop

This spring, Saskatchewan will adopt the National Building Code of Canada 2010, and the National Fire Code of Canada 2010, with a few amendments. To help inform code users such as municipal officials, building officials and the fire service, the Ministry of Government Relations, Building Standards and Licensing Branch is hosting workshops in various locations across the province.

Prince Albert - Tuesday, March 26

Yorkton - Wednesday, March 27

Swift Current - Thursday, April 4

Humboldt - Tuesday, April 16

North Battleford - Friday, April 19

More information on the agenda and how to register are available on [the Ministry website](#).

Capital Rent Subsidy Program

Last week, the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation (SHC) began accepting applications for the Capital Rent Subsidy Program. The program is funded by the provincial and federal governments, and offers up to \$40,000 per unit as capital loan to bridge the gap between the market rent and the rent affordable for low- to moderate-income households.

To qualify, market rents must be reduced by \$300 per unit for qualifying households for 10 years. More information, including FAQs and application details, are available on the [Housing page of the Social Services website](#).

Proposals will be accepted until Thursday, April 25, 2013. Office hours are Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. and 1:00-5:00 p.m.

upcoming deadlines:

[CN EcoConnexions](#) (March 29)

[Community Grant Program](#) (April 1)

[Community Vitality Program](#) (April 1)

[PAGP Physical Activity Grant](#) (April 1)

[Problem Gambling](#)

[Prevention and Treatment Grants](#) (April 1)

[Building Communities](#)

[Through Arts and Heritage](#) (April 30)

About Us

We'd like to thank you for reading the Urban Update this week and we welcome your comments.

SUMA

200-2222 13th Ave.

Regina, SK S4P 3M7

suma@suma.org

<http://www.suma.org>

Did You Know...

There is an online [Encyclopedia of Saskatchewan](#). It covers subjects such as Arts and Culture, Communities, Social Policy, and Transportation.

It also offers "This Day in History" tidbits. For today, it shows that in 1904 a "fierce, 3-day blizzard left five trains snowbound in the Saskatchewan region between Winnipeg and Calgary."