

# UrbanVoice

The newsletter of the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association

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## City mayors push for Revenue Sharing this fall

The case of the missing Revenue Sharing funding was still high on the agenda list for city mayors and managers at their Sept. 28-29 meetings in Swift Current. Their news release and letter requesting a meeting with Premier Lorne Calvert gave further support to the SUMA-wide lobbying campaign to obtain at least \$10 million more for urban municipalities this fall. (A meeting with the Premier has been tentatively set for November 28.)

A mid-year adjustment to the Revenue Sharing pool is expected to correct the fact that no increase was included in the 2005 provincial budget after three successive years of modest increases. At least an additional \$10 million is expected for the 2006 budget, or a \$20 million increase if there is no fall adjustment. These increases would still leave the urban grant pool at less than the total Revenue Sharing transfer achieved 20 years ago (without adjusting for inflation).

The bigger goal, beyond closing the Revenue Sharing gap, is to return to some annual "escalator" index, so that the size of the pool grows with the expansion of four provincial tax bases: personal and corporate income, vehicle fuel and other consumption subject to the provincial sales tax. These goals were recorded in a unanimously passed SUMA convention resolution last February.

City mayors agreed to take back to their councils, for adoption and transmission to the provincial government, another strongly worded resolution on the return to a true Revenue Sharing formula. It is also expected that a Review Committee under the Municipal Forum will report by the end of November, confirming the ongoing need for unconditional Revenue Sharing transfers.

Other revenue concerns discussed with Government Relations Minister Len Taylor included the shifting rules for infrastructure project approval under the

Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (MRIF) and the need to quickly access the announced New Deal funding from federal gas taxes. The mayors also tackled the unfair 25% provincial holdback fee for offenses ticketed by local police, the double-counted spring announcement of \$25 million in federal funding for urban transit, and the interest in legislative amendments to permit a local hotel tax.

An interest in controlling local expenses also led to discussions about the need for further legislative protection against municipal liability, and imposed costs resulting from fire and policy service salary arbitrations. Concerns were also raised with Corrections and Public Safety Minister Peter Prebble about the cost of possible new fire staffing standards proposed by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA 1710 and 1720), but the Minister committed to respecting "municipal terrain."

City mayors also confirmed at the meeting that they will be looking to SUMA Vice-President Phil DeVos to serve as chairperson and spokesperson for their caucus, although other mayors will continue to host their semi-annual meetings on a rotating basis. Both SUMA and the caucus have agreed, in principle, to committing more resources to preparing policy agendas and undertaking follow-up actions. What remains to be seen is whether the provincial government will also commit to developing a coordinated "urban agenda" rather than a piecemeal response to priority issues.

### Inside this issue

President Don Schlosser offers some thoughts on Revenue Sharing, and offers support on behalf of SUMA members for their colleagues in Prince Albert. PA Mayor Don Stiglitz makes it clear in an interview that he's optimistic about the future of forestry in his city. Regina City Councilor and SUMA Board member Fred Clipsham offers a suggestion for an alternate use for the pulp mill.

Continuing the positive theme, the Town of Craik is demonstrating what is possible when you embrace the right idea at the right time.

SUMA's annual Convention is getting closer, and there's information in this issue about the convention and expanded trade show. SUMA's new Executive Director offers his observations from the most recent round of regional meetings, including the challenges facing municipalities across the province. He also has some first impressions on his new job.

This issue also has short updates on New Deal funding and efforts to persuade the provincial government to reduce the education tax burden on property ratepayers. With a new session of the provincial Legislature beginning November 7 and the province's mid-year financial update following soon after, things may have changed by the time you read this!

## New Deal Update

The new secretariat established by Saskatchewan Government Relations to manage funding under the federal government's "New Deal for Cities and Communities" is now preparing to disburse funds to municipalities. Federal dollars were expected to reach the secretariat by November first, with the funding to be paid out within 60 days.

Kathy Rintoul, the director of the secretariat, told participants at the SUMA regional meeting at Swift Current in October that municipalities must submit their Infrastructure Investment Plans and then sign individual funding agreements with Government Relations before the cheques go out. Rintoul stated that the secretariat will work with municipalities to facilitate the funding flow.

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## Education Property Tax Coalition Gathering Support

A combined call by a coalition of five Saskatchewan organizations for the provincial government to produce a plan for increased funding for K-12 education over the long term is gathering additional support. The coalition, consisting of the Provincial Association of Resort Communities of Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce, the Saskatchewan School Boards Association and SUMA, made the call at a news conference in late September. Spokespersons at the news conference acknowledged that the province has committed \$110 million to increase the level of

provincial support to education to 45 per cent for 2005 and 2006. However, the spokespersons called on the province to continue to provide more funding to raise the province's level of funding to at least 50 per cent in 2006 and to at least 60 per cent by 2008.

On the political front, the Saskatchewan Liberal Party expressed its support for the coalition's position later the same day. In a news release Saskatchewan Liberal Leader David Karwacki said reform of the education portion of the property tax should be the number one tax reform priority in the province.

In a letter to SUMA President Don Schlosser Saskatchewan

Party Leader Brad Wall noted that his party had included a commitment to both short and long-term education property tax relief in its 2004 policy renewal package.

"It is also the case that the Calvert government raised the PST a year and a half ago, and have already collected more than enough to go beyond what they already committed to do in terms of property tax relief," Wall observed in his letter.

In October the Saskatchewan Real Estate Association also weighed in, stating that the next budget offers a rare opportunity to make a strategic change in taxes. The SREA said the

property tax is decades out of date and badly needs reform. The Association stated that the property tax is a larger cost for businesses than even the corporate capital tax.

*Education continued on page 3*

**SUMA has a new address!**

**SUMA's offices are now located at:**

**200 - 2222 - 13th Ave.  
Regina, SK S4P 3M7**



# President's Message

There are several topics I'd like to touch on in this issue of *Urban Voice*. With the provincial Legislature re-convening about a week before *Urban Voice* goes to press, some of my thoughts on Revenue Sharing may be outdated by the time you read this. If so, that would be a good thing, because as I write this we are still waiting to hear that the province will provide an additional \$10 million to urban municipalities in the current 2005-06 fiscal year. SUMA has also requested the provincial government provide an additional \$10 million in the 2006-07 budget to help municipalities deliver the services their residents require, and to help meet the ever-increasing costs of operating the facilities that make our communities desirable places to live.

Many smaller municipalities have made it clear in the letters they have sent to Cabinet ministers and MLAs that their prime concern is for unconditional funding that will enable them to provide services and maintain

their existing infrastructure without placing an even heavier burden on their ratepayers.

Many municipal Councils have provided copies to SUMA of the letters they have sent to the provincial government and their local MLAs. Over and over again these letters convey a sense of optimism that communities are ready to seize economic development opportunities, if they are given the tools to do the job. Proper funding is one of those tools, or course. Another tool is the Clearing the Path initiative being spearheaded by SARM, which aims to streamline regulatory approval processes and make it easier for new businesses to establish in rural and smaller communities around our province. SUMA continues to support Clearing the Path, believing that everyone in Saskatchewan will benefit from an environment that encourages more economic development.

SUMA continues to watch the situation in Prince Albert, where

the pulp and paper mill is scheduled to close in the new year. While this is a terrible blow for the province's third-largest city, Prince Albert Mayor Jim Stiglitz expressed determination and optimism in a telephone interview a day after the first meeting of the Task Force established by the provincial government to address the closure. Please read Mayor Stiglitz's comments elsewhere in *Urban Voice*.

On a more positive note, I am delighted to report that Weyburn's new ethanol plant is now in production. I anticipate that the official opening ceremonies will be held during the second half of November. This plant marks an important step forward for the ethanol industry in Saskatchewan, and particularly for grain producers around Weyburn, who will provide the feedstock for this plant.

Ethanol is attractive as an alternative vehicle fuel with clear environmental benefits when compared with gasoline. As the price of oil has risen in recent months, the economics of ethanol production have also become more attractive. Saskatchewan is

blessed with abundant sources of feedstock for ethanol production. I hope that many more plants like the one in Weyburn will soon spring up around our province.

As I write this, regional meetings are being held in each each of eight regions. These Spring and Fall regional meetings are important events for SUMA members to share information and discuss issues of concern on a regional basis. They also provide opportunities for SUMA staff and representatives from the provincial government and other organizations to pass along the latest information on various subjects, and to answer any questions you may have, face-to-face. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the regional directors for their hours of hard work in helping to organize the regional meetings. I also acknowledge the many contributions made by SUMA staff members to the regional meetings. On top of the usual travel schedule, this fall our staffers faced the additional challenge of packing and moving offices during this busy period. I thank them for the dedication and hard work.

# Executive Director

I am writing this report from Theodore, Saskatchewan. This great village along the Yellowhead Route is hosting communities from the North East region in our series of fall regional meetings. To date, SUMA staff has met with elected officials and administrators in Luseland, Swift Current, Glaslyn and Birch Hills. The issues and challenges which are being raised at these meetings are significant: floods, plant closures and lay-offs, decaying infrastructure, fuel increases, and limited revenue streams are just a few of the topics which have been discussed at these meetings.

More impressive, though, are the determination and optimism being demonstrated by municipalities in the face of adversity. Many towns and villages are also exploring new initiatives to increase efficiencies and further share services. These include the designation of primary transportation corridors with adjacent municipalities, the construction of water distribution systems to tap into existing water plants, the sharing of municipal

bylaw enforcement services and the operation of regional waste management systems.

It is also week number six on the job for me. I have spent most of my time getting to know my SUMA co-workers, our board members, our communities, our strategic partners and key government representatives. Mostly, I have acquainted myself with SUMA's extensive agenda and pressing issues. In the next few days, the Executive and the Board will review our 2006 budget. Again, strategic representation (through policy and research) and member services will continue to be major components of SUMA's operations for 2006.

In conjunction with the City Mayors' Caucus, SUMA has renewed its demands for expanded revenue sharing from the Provincial Government. Draft discussion papers from sectoral committees are currently being circulated for final approval and will provide a basis for the next phase of the assessment. Meanwhile, SUMA continues to request an additional 10 million

dollars from the Provincial Government in its mid-term budget review. The ongoing support and follow-up from all municipalities is essential in the pursuit of our objectives.

The "Dawning of a New Direction" theme of our 2006 Convention, is most appropriate to launch a new century for Saskatchewan's municipalities. The convention committee has lined up an exciting program

which should inspire optimism and encourage creativity for all those in attendance. As expressed by President Don Schlosser upon his return from Ottawa a few weeks ago, words such as sustainable development and capacity building will soon become part of our municipal lingo. We hope that the Convention will introduce options and solutions to the challenges ahead!



200 - 2222 - 13th Avenue  
Regina, SK S4P 3M7  
Phone (306) 525-3727  
Fax (306) 525-4373  
suma@suma.org http://www.suma.org

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## SUMA EXECUTIVE

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Mayor Allan Earle, Vice-President, Towns  
Mayor Barry Gunther, Vice-President, Villages, Resort Villages and Northern Municipalities

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Laurent Mougeot ..... Executive Director  
Mervyn Norton ..... Senior Policy Analyst  
Brenda Oliver .. Manager - Member Services  
Cam Baker ..... Policy Analyst  
Michelle Paetsch ..... Manager - Finance and Administration  
HJ Linnen Associates .... Communication Services

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# Craik Mayor Presents Development Message to Public Policy Forum

"We choose to reduce the size of our ecological footprint, while at the same time helping to revitalize rural Saskatchewan," Craik Mayor Rod Haugerud told his audience at a presentation sponsored by the Saskatchewan Institute of Public Policy (SIPP) at the University of Regina. During his talk Mayor Haugerud talked about the history, present and future of the Craik Sustainable Living Project (CSLP), which is drawing attention from around the world.

"What is it that makes a town of about 450 people and an RM of 350 think they can do this?," Haugerud asked rhetorically. "Both have histories of leadership and taking chances," he said. "The RM was one of the first to offer a form of Medicare, and the town owns and operates its own cable TV system. Our community hospital was one of the last to be absorbed into a larger health region."

Mayor Haugerud also noted that when he was first elected in 1997 there were letters from the RM on the Council agenda. He

wondered why the two councils didn't just talk to each other. Today, the RM and town do just that, with their offices in the same building and sharing one boardroom for their meetings.

The Mayor also recounted how the residents in the community took ownership during the construction of the highly energy-efficient Eco-Centre, bringing coffee, baking and hot chocolate to people working on the building. Volunteers from all over the world also showed up to work for a few hours or a few days, he said.

Haugerud expects that the community will have an industrial hemp processing plant in operation by next year, producing a fabric trademarked "Crailar" from hemp grown in the area. "That will help us keep anywhere from \$1 million to \$1.5 million in the community by reducing freight costs to ship agricultural production out of the area," he said.

The Mayor also said the CSLP has partnered with a federal agency, Forest 2020, which has planted 100 acres of hybrid

poplars, with the CSLP supplying effluent irrigation. If the federal government implements a system of carbon credits, he adds, at \$15 per tonne those trees will produce annual revenues of \$375,000. The CSLP will also participate in a demonstration project that may make Craik the first zero-waste community in North America.

Mayor Haugerud also revealed that the 14 house lots for a planned eco-village on 127 acres of land owned by the RM are almost ready for sale. The houses that will be built there must adhere to the same energy-efficiency principles used in the Eco-Centre. There's already a line-up of 25 potential buyers from across Canada, and one from North Dakota. One condition is that the homebuilders must make their new dwellings accessible to the public, in effect making them a collection of demonstration projects.

"We have two interested parties from Calgary," Haugerud chuckled. "Maybe we'll have people moving from Calgary to Craik."

## Have Confidence, Mayor Advises

In response to a question about why Craik has been successful in overcoming obstacles to new development, Mayor Rod Haugerud told the audience at the SIPP forum that a strong sense of confidence is essential.

"I've learned that in elected office, the only people you will hear from are those who are mad at you," he said. "I won't kid you. There are people who don't like what we're doing, but you have to be willing to take a chance."

Asked how other communities could emulate his community's success, the Mayor advised finding out what makes a community unique. "We have a reservoir, we have land and we have 5,000 vehicles a day going by on the Louis Riel Trail. Plus, in a small community you can get a demonstration project up and running quickly," Haugerud said. "I'd like to see the corridor between Regina and Saskatoon become the home of many demonstration projects."

# Natural Gas Savings Program Offers Savings and Stability

Mayor Dave Schappert of Langenburg first learned about SUMA's Natural Gas Savings Program at an annual Convention, and he's glad he did. Langenburg has an assured price for natural gas of \$6.50 per gigajoule – the standard measure used by buyers and sellers of natural gas – until October, 2009.

"The cost went up when we were in negotiations (with CEG Energy Options, SUMA's partner in the program), but it's certainly better than the going rate today," says Mayor Schappert. "We're pleased to have that rate until 2009. Finding out about the program was one of those times it was worthwhile to be at Convention," he adds.

Sheila Newlove, administrator for the Town of Imperial, describes the program in one word, "Excellent." Imperial has all of its major and smaller facilities under the contract. "We saved about \$6,500 under the old contract, and CEG estimates

we'll save \$15,000 to \$20,000 in our current contract. When you look at today's price, the savings may go even higher. This is good!" she adds.

The Village of Loreburn opted for a three-year contract that provides a stable price until November 2006, says Village Clerk Muriel Stronski. "We were looking at where prices are today at our last council meeting, and thank God we chose a three-year term," she says.

The Natural Gas Savings program was created 13 years ago as a partnership between SUMA and CEG Energy Options, which has supplied natural gas to commercial, institutional and industrial customers in western Canada for 18 years. CEG employs market intelligence and hedging strategies to offer customers long-term price certainty in what has become a volatile market.

"The utilities in British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan don't

do long-term hedging like we do," explains Roger Magneson from CEG's Saskatoon office. "Saskatchewan is about the longest, and it has to adjust its costs about once a year. We use the futures market to lock in gas at a certain price, and that allows us to offer our customers one, three and five-year contracts."

Not surprisingly, most recent contract renewals between CEG and its municipal customers have been for five years. That provides municipal customers with cost certainty at a time when natural gas market prices are above \$10 per gigajoule, and perhaps

heading even higher. Some SUMA members have contracts with CEG at \$5.40 per gigajoule. Even at that price Magneson says his company is "making a little bit of profit." (SaskEnergy, the province's Crown utility, makes its profit from its transmission and distribution system, which imposes delivery charges on all suppliers of natural gas.)

Surveying the gas futures market, Magneson says most of the price escalation is in the near future. "For CEG, the best buying opportunities continue to be on longer, multiple-year terms," he says.

## Education Property Tax Coalition *continued from page 1*

At the news conference on October 21 SREA spokesperson Al Didur and Yorkton Mayor Phil DeVos, in his capacity as chair of the provincial city mayors' caucus, called for a two-pronged attack on the antiquated property tax by reducing by 50 per cent the school share of taxes on property and by restoring a true provincial-municipal revenue sharing arrangement, with the level of aid to municipalities tied to changes in the economy.

"Property tax affects a wide cross-section of Saskatchewan people: in towns, in cities, on

farms, in business," Didur said. At the same time, the Association also called on the provincial government to restore "a real provincial-municipal revenue sharing plan, to gear aid for municipalities to economic growth."

Didur and DeVos stated that a reduction in property tax would directly benefit more people than any other single option under consideration, would free substantial cash in the economy and help new businesses increase in value more quickly, improving their chances of success.

## Thank You


**The following is a portion of a note received at the SUMA office.**

*To the SUMA Board of Directors:*

*I wish to thank again the SUMA Board and staff for my retirement dinner and the wonderful send off it was. It was truly a grand time and a memorable experience for me, Marlene and our two children, Jon and Abby, who were able to join us.*

*I especially want to thank all who were so kind to come forward and offer their generous comments and humorous anecdotes. I should add that I also appreciated very much the many personal best wishes directors, spouses and friends extended to me and my family on my retirement.*

*Keith Schneider*

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# DAWNING OF A NEW DIRECTION

## SUMA CONVENTION 2006

Saskatchewan municipalities will examine new directions at the 101st SUMA annual convention February 5 through 8, 2006 in Regina. You will want to register early to ensure you are able to attend the break-out sessions of your choice as well as qualify for the early bird registration fee. The convention program and registration forms are included with this issue of the Urban Voice.

### New directions – going beyond best practices

SUMA will challenge members to look at what is new, what is innovative. In our programming we will go beyond best practices to new technologies and concepts that you can consider for your municipality. Our education sessions on Sunday, February 5 will cover energy conservation, water technology, recycling and waste management, purchasing practices, local policing, disaster planning and tourism.

### New directions in community development and leadership

The two main sessions will deal with new directions in community development and community leadership. What new directions will we be looking at? Sustainability is the key word these days – it plays a part

in federal and provincial funding. Regional Cooperation is key to remaining sustainable. Sharing services within the region will also play a major role. What role can immigration play in increasing your population and workforce? You are the leaders in your communities. Are there new directions you can be taking? Are there best practices that you are not aware of? These sessions will address all of these issues.

### Cabinet participation at convention

Premier Calvert and Minister Len Taylor have been invited to address our delegates. Government Relations will set up an office at the Queensbury for the entire convention to enable the minister and his staff to meet with you. Other cabinet ministers and their staff are being offered meeting space for the same purpose – to allow you the time to meet with them to discuss your specific concerns. Please check the SUMA website at [www.suma.org](http://www.suma.org) for updates.

The last day of convention is Cabinet day. First, you will have the opportunity to participate in dialogue sessions with individual cabinet members. This will be followed by the Bear Pit with the Premier and his Cabinet.

### Municipal Marketplace Tradeshow

Wow – we've expanded. Municipal Marketplace is now the largest trade show of its kind in western Canada. With over 150 displays, you will have the opportunity to meet with the primary suppliers to the municipal market. Our strategic partners will be there, along with many new companies that can provide you with what you need in your community. From the new and innovative to the tried and true, the trade show is the place to be.

SUMA is also sending you complimentary passes so you can invite your town foremen, senior purchasing staff and public works people to attend the trade show. In this way you can meet together with these suppliers. Delegates have indicated they consider the trade show a major component of the convention. In return, the trade show exhibitors underwrite a major portion of convention expenses, which allows us to keep our registration fees as low as they are. We recommend that you take the time to attend the trade show while you are at convention.

Breakfast will be available in the trade show area on Monday and Tuesday mornings at 8:00 a.m. By attending the trade show you will be eligible for a major delegate draw on each of the two days. At your request, we will be providing refreshment breaks in the convention area, as well as the trade show area. It is our hope that this will not deter you from spending time in the trade show.

### Awards and recognition

Long serving elected officials and municipal employees will be recognized on your behalf by SUMA at the President's Banquet

on Tuesday, February 7th. We enjoy recognizing these deserving individuals in front of their peers.

### Networking

Convention is more than what you learn through sessions – it is SUMA's main event that brings you together with other elected officials and administrators every year. Networking with your peers is fun and informative. This is where you hear specifics on what others are experiencing and how they are handling issues. We encourage you to make use of social events and breaks to network with members – renew acquaintances and meet new people – expand your network.

### Fun?

Yes we have some of that at convention, as well. Sunday night is Mardi Gras at SUMA! Stroll down Bourbon Street – tempt your taste buds with some Cajun cuisine – listen to the sounds of Louisiana Jane or try your hand at the SUMA casino tables. Come on out and enjoy it all!

Monday night the Board of Directors invite you to Hospitality Night at the Regina Inn. Drop by and mingle with friends, and maybe even sing a song or two.

Tuesday night is the President's Banquet. The festivities will feature dinner, awards ceremony and entertainment provided by highly talented improvisational comedian Roman Danylo.

### Partners Program

While you are attending the SUMA convention your partner is welcome to register for the Partners' Program. Full information is included with this issue of *Urban Voice*.

## The Glory of Easter

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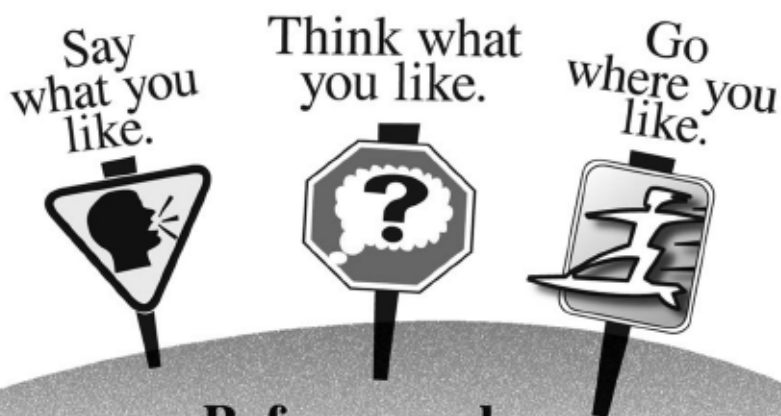


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# “PA is far from finished!”

On October 4th, Prince Albert Mayor Jim Stiglitz was shocked when he got the phone call informing him the Weyerhaeuser pulp and paper mill would close, laying off almost 700 employees. It was, he recalls, a depressing day. However, even before the day ended, his spirits were lifting.

“Premier Calvert and I talked a couple of times, and before the day ended, he had struck a task force to explore options for the

forest industry here,” Stiglitz said in a telephone interview one day after the first meeting of the task force. “The forest is still here, and we have the Forestry Centre here, so we have all the experts close at hand.”

Stiglitz represents the City on the task force. He has cleared many events from his calendar so he can concentrate on his number one priority, developing a viable future for forestry in PA.

“Over the next few months we’re going to bring in many experts, and we’re going to learn a lot about forestry,” Stiglitz says. “Our future may not be in paper production; I have a feeling we’re at the crossroads of positive change.”

The Mayor concedes the mill closure will create some short-term pain in the community. Some workers are worried, and the local papers are filled with job vacancies for tradespeople, mostly in Alberta. Stiglitz expects some workers will take jobs that enable them to commute to jobs on a fly-in, fly-out basis. Weyerhaeuser will be missed, he adds, because many groups relied on the company’s good corporate citizenship. Businesses remain optimistic, he says, perhaps because many business operators remember the dire predictions for the city when Burns Meats closed its processing plant in 1981.

“Prince Albert has grown by leaps and bounds since Burns closed. Some people think that



Mayor Jim Stiglitz knows the forest is still there. The question is, How will it be used?

Weyerhaeuser is our largest employer, and they’re surprised to learn it’s our fourth-largest,” Stiglitz says. “My colleagues on Council and I are keeping a positive attitude; we believe something positive will come out of this.”

“Thanks to everyone around Saskatchewan for your telephone calls and emails with your ideas and good wishes. PA is far from finished,” Stiglitz declared.



## A letter re the pulp and paper mill closure in Prince Albert

On October 18, Regina City Councilor Fred Clipsham wrote to the Mayor of Prince Albert, Jim Stiglitz, with a suggestion for a new use for the pulp mill. Mayor Stiglitz is a member of the Task Force established to examine future options for the mill. The following are excerpts from Fred Clipsham’s letter, edited with his permission. Note that the suggestions are his, and not those of SUMA.



You will know from Prince Albert’s involvement in a regional waste authority that early in 2005 SUMA appealed to the government on behalf of Saskatchewan’s twelve regional waste authorities to contribute \$2 million to help cover the costs of recycling efforts. In the end, the provincial government contributed \$700,000 in one-time money, with the additional promise that a paper stewardship program would be in place by April, 2006 to ensure the costs of paper recycling were covered by the paper industry.

\*\*\*

Saskatchewan Environment recently hosted a workshop on recycling which included a presentation by a representative of Nova Scotia’s Recycling Board. Her observations on that province’s success with paper recycling was instructive – they can recycle all they gather because there is a box board plant (box board is used for corn flakes or kleenex boxes, etc.) in the province.

Which bring me to my proposal for the Prince Albert Pulp Mill:

I am no expert on the pulp process, of course, but if the pulp mill can be adapted to recycle more and more paper fibre from

Saskatchewan communities it would achieve an important public policy purpose – guaranteeing a floor price for recycled paper fibre. This would mean paper fibre recycling would no longer be a drain on solid waste management budgets at the local level.

It would also tie in nicely with (Environment) Minister Forbes’ objective of an overarching paper stewardship program for Saskatchewan, and bring Saskatchewan Environment one step closer to creating a policy framework which would mean regional authorities would no longer have to come to the province for bail-outs when markets for recycled paper fibre provide inadequate returns.

If there are extra costs at the pulp mill to achieve this policy objective, I would suggest that they be considered in the context of a provincial recycling policy.

\*\*\*

I offer the above in the hope that your task force finds a solution that will keep the plant open and continue to provide employment for residents of Prince Albert and northern Saskatchewan. The suggestions are my own and not those of SUMA.

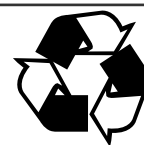
**Councilor Fred Clipsham, City of Regina**

(Copies of the letter were sent to Premier Calvert, Minister of Environment David Forbes, Minister of Highways Eldon Lautermilch and SUMA.)

As you know, I chair SUMA’s Task Force on Regional Waste Recycling, and through that duty I have learned a great deal about recycling issues in Saskatchewan and beyond. One of the biggest and most difficult issues is how to deal with the enormous volumes of waste paper fibre generated each day, in every community.

\*\*\*

Recycling should be much more than just a strategy to reduce landfilling costs. Recycling should be a public policy objective in its own right. Optimally, recycling policies would be governed at the provincial level, just as solid waste management is. ...



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## Register now for Sorting Out Recycling Issues

Sustainability is at the top of everyone's list these days, whether we're talking about the environment or the communities we live in. The upcoming SUMA education session, being held November 29th in Regina and November 30th in Saskatoon, will help you understand how community interest in recycling can lead to successful programs rather than a costly drain on municipal taxpayers.

You'll hear from senior officials from the provincial government as well as from partnering groups within the

recycling industry. The presenters will share program successes and discussions will focus on the provincial role in regulating recycling and landfilling, where the funding comes from and how it's spent, as well as how solid waste management fits in as a self-financing utility model. This session is a "must attend" for anyone interested in innovative ways of generating stewardship revenues and sustaining recycling in their region.

**Register today –  
fax your form to SUMA  
at 306-525-4373.**

### Insurance Update

## Health and Dental Info Now Online

Elected officials and municipal employees who are members of health and dental insurance plans provided by Great-West Life can now access claims history and other information online at [www.gwl.ca](http://www.gwl.ca). The secure site requires plan members to register the first time they visit the site. Once plan members have registered they will be able to check of the status of their latest claim and up to 24 months of claims history, view health and wellness topics and review common questions. The site allows registered users to enter information on claims forms online, and then print them off.

### New Enrollment/Change Form

SUMA has made some minor revisions to the Group Insurance Enrollment/Change form, primarily to comply with privacy legislation requirements. Privacy information and space for an authorization are now provided at the bottom of the form. New forms will be sent out to municipalities as their old stocks run out.

# Thank you

Thank you to SUMA for partnering with Saskatchewan Crimestoppers through a voluntary levy.

This ongoing support allows Saskatchewan Crimestoppers to help make your community a safer place to live.

For more information about our program visit us online at [www.saskcrimestoppers.com](http://www.saskcrimestoppers.com)

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Fax: (306) 780-8567

email: [douglas.dersch@rcmp-grc.ca](mailto:douglas.dersch@rcmp-grc.ca)



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# UMAAS Planning for the Future

The following article was submitted by Cathy Coleman, UMAAS Division 5 Director, and Administrator for the Town of Watson.

As one of the "New Kids on the Block" I was a little overwhelmed to be informed that it was my turn to submit an article for the *Urban Voice*. I joined the group of UMAAS directors at our annual Convention in June of this year, and attended my first directors' meeting in September. As I sat back and listened to this group – which is out of character for me – I realized the wisdom and dedication that these people hold. I know that being a part of this group will enrich me and help me in my profession.

My first big involvement was to sit down with the group under the guidance of Peter Krebs of Prud'Homme, and work on our new UMAAS Strategic Plan for the next five years. In the last few years we, as administrators, have seen many changes in our field, and we will continue to be challenged with big changes in the future.

One of our objectives is to ensure adequate access for training to prepare for the new Municipal Act and subsequent information

after the implementation of the Act to deal with inevitable issues that will arise along the way.

In our plan we also want to focus on bringing attention to our members and municipal employers the value of continued education and professional development of municipal administrators. At the same time we are endeavoring to ensure administration compensation packages are fair and equitable within the management market place. By using our association with SUMA and *Urban Voice* we hope to convey to councils the professionalism and guidance that their administrator brings to the table. We also hope that councils will recognize the importance of encouraging their administrator to be involved in our association by attendance at workshops and our annual convention.

I have touched on a couple of issues being addressed in our new Strategic Plan, which remains a work in progress. Over the next five years our association will continue its work to maintain the integrity of our status as a publicly recognized, professional organization specializing in municipal government administration.

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# SUMA Advantage

In this issue, SUMA is highlighting one of its strategic partners, SUCCESS Office Systems. SUMA awarded the office machines program to SUCCESS following a stringent Request For Proposal process based on quality of products, pricing and service. SUCCESS can be reached via the web [www.successos.com](http://www.successos.com), or through your contract administrator, Craig Charuk, at 721-4066, 1-800-667-8173, email [charuk@successos.com](mailto:charuk@successos.com)

## SUCCESS Office Systems, Ricoh, and the Environment

For over 20 years, SUCCESS Office Systems and Ricoh, the company's main supplier of office equipment, have led the office automation industry in creating environmentally friendly products and processes, and in helping to build partnerships among government, industry, and environmental groups. Ricoh believes that good corporate citizenship is good business... that you prefer to do business with companies you respect. Since we all live on this planet together, each of us is obligated to do everything we can to preserve it.

## Environmental Choice Program

Environmental Choice is Environment Canada's ecolabelling program. Ricoh has been certified by Environmental Choice, which helps consumers to identify products and services that are environmentally friendly. Participation in the program gives Ricoh the right to advertise on the Environmental Choice website and receive a listing in the Environmental Choice Catalogue, an annual publication that is regularly consulted by

consumers who are seeking to purchase environmentally friendly products and services.

To qualify as a certified user of the Environmental Choice Logo (the "EcoLogo") Ricoh's products had to undergo stringent examination and provide proof that they met all the criteria of the program. Standards dealt with such things as noise and dust emissions, recyclability after useful life, energy saving features, ozone emissions, use of CFCs in the manufacturing process and creation of VOCs. All of the products presented by Ricoh for certification had already met similar stringent standards in the United States (Energy Star) and in Europe (Blue Angel), and they passed with flying colours in Canada. There are 34 models of copiers (including digital and analog, colour and black & white), 12 models of printers and 11 models of facsimile machines that are currently certified.

This certification is a major achievement for SUCCESS Office Systems and Ricoh. It will enhance the many already attractive and competitive features of the Ricoh product line. SUCCESS Office Systems is very proud that all the systems have been certified and will be working diligently to ensure that as new systems are released, they too will receive the EcoLogo sticker.

Ricoh encourages customers to recycle their empty toner bottles and offers to take back the empties - free of charge! Toner bottles that are returned to Ricoh will be delivered to a recycler who will re-use them in a waste-to-energy process. The ten most popular models of fax toner cartridges are also recycled at no charge to you, the customer.

## SUMA Sign Program

Signal Industries (1998) Limited - a SUMA Strategic Partner since 1998 - has provided our members with quality signs (at a discounted rate), superior service and updates on legislated changes in signage since 1998.



When researching sign prices for cost comparison purposes, it is important to remember there is a wide variety of qualities and standards of materials used in the manufacture of traffic control signage. Signal Industry standards include the following:

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Saskatchewan Labour



## When it comes to water, quality counts.

The same high standards municipalities apply to provide quality drinking water and wastewater systems are applied by Saskatchewan credit unions when it comes to offering municipalities an affordable range of financing options for water infrastructure projects.

In partnership with the Commercial Leasing area (formerly known as CULEASE) of Concentra Financial, Saskatchewan credit unions are an attractive option for municipalities looking for a source of financing for their water projects. "What we can provide is access to a range of financial vehicles, including lines of credit, leases and other services municipalities may require on terms that are commercial and market competitive," says Michael Fix, General Manager of Commercial Leasing, Concentra Financial.

If your municipality is looking for an external source of financing for

a water project, consider your local credit union and Concentra Financial.

The Village of St. Louis did. Their water project is just one example of what's possible at the local level. The village financed a big part of its \$175,000 water pipeline project through Northgate Credit Union and Commercial Leasing at Concentra Financial. Villagers have a new supply of quality water thanks to a village project managed and financed at the local level.



Joan Boyer

Credit unions have been doing that in Saskatchewan for more than 60 years."

"We were delighted to be involved in the village project," says Joan Boyer of Northgate Credit Union. "It was a matter of meeting local needs at the local level.

*Contact your local credit union or Concentra Financial to explore your financing options. Because when it comes to water, quality counts.*



**Saskatchewan Credit Unions**



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[www.concentrafinancial.ca](http://www.concentrafinancial.ca)  
[www.saskcu.com](http://www.saskcu.com)

## Elbow water treatment plant receives major upgrade

The Village of Elbow has taken a big step toward ensuring a reliable supply of high quality water for its residents, following SaskWater's \$853,000 investment in the purchase and upgrade of the Elbow regional water treatment plant.

SaskWater took over ownership and operation of the regional water treatment system on September 1, 2005, after purchasing it from the community for \$375,000. The plant currently serves about 600 permanent residents in the villages of Elbow, Loreburn, and Strongfield, and rural users along the Line 19 Water Pipeline Utility, as well as the Harbor Golf Course.

Located just north of Douglas Provincial Park near the shore of Lake Diefenbaker, Elbow and its surrounding area is well-known as a recreational hot spot. The local population grows exponentially during peak summer months, creating demand for high volumes of water. In 2004, the Elbow water treatment plant produced 36,000,000 gallons of potable water – equal to the annual water usage of a community of 1,300 people.

In the past, these peak demands on supply have put pressure on the system, jeopardizing its ability to meet current and future regulatory requirements. To address this problem, SaskWater will invest an estimated \$468,000 in upgrades to the water treatment plant to improve water quality and increase capacity of the existing facility. This will include the installation of a new treatment unit to increase treated water

production by 55 percent, and a new treated water reservoir to increase storage by 60,000 gallons.

SaskWater Marketing and Communications Manager Felechia Brodie said the new facilities will accommodate growth in the community. "As a result, the water treatment plant will be able to meet seasonal demands for high volumes of water without sacrificing quality."

Several upgrades have already been completed at the facility, including the installation of new equipment to measure turbidity (clarity) and chlorine residual. A new on-line monitoring system provides 24/7 surveillance of the quality of water produced by the plant, and repairs were made to the fire supply pump to ensure its operation should a fire occur in the community.

Village residents experienced an interruption in water supply over the Labor Day weekend, caused by a valve breakdown at the plant. SaskWater technologist Sean Kopchuk received a call from Elbow village Alderman Joel Perry at 10:15 a.m. Sunday, informing him the village's water supply had shut off. Already on his way to Elbow when he received the call, Kopchuk arrived at the facility at 10:35 a.m. and discovered a control valve had failed to open, causing a decrease in the reservoir level and an automatic shut-down of the plant.

Kopchuk manually opened the valve and had the plant running at full capacity within an hour after his arrival. However, "because of the low reservoir level, the distribution pumps

could not be turned on until a sufficient recovery time had passed," he said. By 3 p.m., the pumps were turned on and water was restored to village residents.

SaskWater has since repaired the valve and installed an automated level controller to monitor the reservoir level. Connected to the on-line monitoring system, the automated level controller will alert SaskWater's operators if the reservoir level decreases.

SaskWater plans to install a new backwash pump at the water treatment plant this fall, which will help maintain water pressure during periods of peak demand or when the plant system needs cleaning.

The current water intake is experiencing problems with sedimentation. As a solution, the company plans to extend the water intake deeper into Lake Diefenbaker and make additional changes to the plant piping to improve water quality in 2006.

In addition, SaskWater plans to invest another \$128,000 over the long term to replace aging equipment at the water treatment plant, including the supply pump.

Elbow Mayor Richard Lindemann said he is very pleased with how the transition of the water treatment plant to SaskWater is progressing. "I am very impressed with the work [SaskWater's operators] have been doing," he said. "I can sleep easier at night knowing they've got things under control."

SaskWater provides competitively-priced, customer-focussed, quality water and wastewater services.



**SaskWater**  
*The Quality Advantage*