

UrbanVoice

The newsletter of the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association

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2005 Convention Edition



The dance troupe Pavylichenko put on an amazing show



Panel guest for "The Next 100 Years" plenary session



Former SUMA Presidents 'sporting' the colours



Premier Lorne Calvert



Motivational Speaker Robin Sharma



Opposition Leader Brad Wall

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Quote of the month

"Are we prepared to sit down and look at other options (for Revenue Sharing)? The answer is yes. Absolutely we are prepared to look at other options."

– Premier Lorne Calvert responding to a question from SUMA Cities Vice President Phil DeVos about SUMA's Resolution #1. The resolution calls on the province to return to the original intent of the Revenue Sharing program that saw municipalities receive a share of several provincial tax bases.



Minister Taylor and Minister Godfrey

\$147.7 million over five years, with \$59.1 million coming in the fifth year as the program peaks.

New Deal, real deal

After almost three years of anticipation about what Prime Minister Paul Martin intends in the New Deal for municipalities, federal Minister John Godfrey told the SUMA convention that he was not surprised municipalities are in a "show me the money" mood.

"The New Deal is a big deal, and rapidly becoming a real deal," Godfrey said in his presentation to delegates as part of the Big Picture session. Part of the intent is to find a new way of "doing business" when it comes to municipal needs, including the development of an "urban lens" when planning federal programs. One of the dollar outcomes already achieved last year was the complete rebate of GST on municipal goods and services.

The sharing of federal fuel (or gas) taxes is the next step, intended to support municipal infrastructure in areas like public transit, roads and bridges, water and wastewater, solid waste and community energy systems. While the longer-term view of community "sustainability" includes the four pillars of environmental, economic, social and cultural innovation, the fuel tax transfers to municipalities will focus on promoting environmental sustainability. In Saskatchewan, a working group of municipal, provincial and federal officials is reviewing possible options for allocating dollars among municipalities. City mayors and representatives from other councils have declared

a preference for straightforward per capita allocations. There has also been some thought put toward directing some of the money toward inter-municipal projects, as outlined in the "Distribution Concepts" outline discussed at the SUMA convention (and posted on the website).

Options are to be further discussed at a Municipal Forum meeting with Government Relations Minister Len Taylor. News will also be revealed in the February 23rd budget of federal Finance Minister Ralph Goodale, who is expected to announce the funding for the first four years of the program. It was learned on February 1st, at the SUMA convention, that the dollars for Saskatchewan will mean

Plenary session overview

The **first session**, called "The Big Picture", presented the perspective of all four levels of government. John Godfrey, the Minister of State for Communities and Infrastructure gave delegates an outline of the New Deal for municipalities and underscored the federal government's commitment to municipal issues.

"This is the first time in 25 years that the federal government has focused on the community agenda," said Godfrey.

Government Relations Minister Len Taylor outlined the ongoing success of the Municipal Forum and reviewed the progress made over the past year on issues including school tax, revenue

sharing and new legislation for municipalities.

Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations Chief Alphonse Bird pointed out the demographic impact of first nations on Saskatchewan and noted that the aboriginal population has doubled in the past 20 years and continues to be the fastest growing sector of our population. SUMA President Don Schlosser outlined a vision for the future of municipalities that focused on removing the fiscal impediments to growth, encouraging a self determined regional approach, and empowering municipalities to be able to determine their own futures.

The **second session**, called "Celebrating 100 Years of Growth", saw Historian Gordon Barnhart and Saskatchewan Agrivision President Red Williams provide an overview of the historical foundations of the province.

The **third session**, called "Leadership: Challenges and Opportunities", saw a spirited debate between both the participants and the delegates. Former Deputy Premier Dwain Lingenfelter's comments about the current provincial government's hours of work legislation prompted significant media coverage.

In the **final session**, called "The Next 100 Years", the diverse panel again sparked a vigorous

discussion and countered many "coffee shop myths" about the province. The focus of the session narrowed in on the importance of changing attitudes and promoting economic development.

Panel guest Rod Haugerud brought these two points together when he commented about "Saskatchewan exports".

"We need to send bread instead of wheat, we need to send steak instead of cows, we need to send technology instead of our kids," said Haugerud.

SHAW Cable taped the Plenary Sessions, and will be making copies available shortly. Watch the Urban Update for more information.

President's Message



Don Schlosser
SUMA Executive Director

SUMA's 100th Annual Convention was certainly an event befitting the celebration of a century of service to the municipal sector! The five days were jam-packed with both work and fun.

I've heard a lot of positive feedback from SUMA members about the entertainment, the education opportunities and the plenary sessions. I'd like to thank the SUMA staff for their hard work over the past few months that made it all happen.

Now, however the work shifts to you and I – the municipal leaders charged with the responsibility of "Bridging To Our Future."

There are a number of key action items coming out of convention that will be the focus for your SUMA Board of Directors over the coming year.

You heard the announcement of the New Deal for municipalities

while we were at convention. While we now have a better sense of what kind of money will be available to Saskatchewan (\$147 million over five years) we still need to work out a distribution method with the province that will benefit all municipalities. We expect to hear a more complete accounting of the funding levels of the entire program in the upcoming Federal Budget.

During convention, delegates unanimously passed Resolution #1 calling for a return to the original intent of the Revenue Sharing Program – a program that saw municipalities share the revenue from a number of provincial tax bases. I was pleased to hear Premier Lorne Calvert commit to a review of the Revenue Sharing Program (see quote on page one) for the 2006/2007 budget. Armed with this commitment, the SUMA Board will lobby for changes to revenue sharing, starting as early as when we meet with Minister Taylor at the Municipal Forum.

Finally, the three plenary sessions at convention sparked much debate and prompted some new thinking about old problems. These sessions were a good starting point for a discussion that the SUMA Board and member communities will be actively engaged in the year to come. Let the debate begin!

Executive Director



Keith Schneider
SUMA Executive Director

SUMA's 100th Anniversary Convention "Bridging To Our Future" has come and gone with many fond memories of people gathering from virtually every corner of the province to renew acquaintances, make new friends and reflect on the past and to look ahead to the challenges and opportunities facing Saskatchewan cities, towns and villages.

There was much to see and do in the five days. Three plenary sessions reviewed our historical roots, focused on our current situation and looked ahead to see what might be possible, all seemed to resonate with the delegates. Judging from the number of delegates who came forward to engage in the discussion, it clearly showed the talk-show format was conducive to active dialogue as were the topics themselves.

What seemed to emerge in the discussions was recognition of the province's untapped potential which could be realized with a shift in attitude and approach. Nor was the point lost on the

delegates of the important role and contribution Saskatchewan First Nations people are making and will continue to make with changing demographics and growing employment opportunities.

In particular the last two sessions confronted some coffee shop myths and opened our eyes to new possibilities and bold new directions. What was less clear was how to make all this happen in a sustainable way. Many ideas were tossed out but putting any one of the ideas into practice or forming a province-wide vision is where more work and thought are needed.

It was interesting to note that a similar forward looking exercise, the Centennial Summit hosted by the provincial government, took place in the very same place the week before. Moreover, on the last day of the convention the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce announced its' Action Saskatchewan – Gathering 2005. It's all about sharing a vision for the future of our province.

Maybe because it is the province's centennial, but it seems that Saskatchewan people, whether they be municipal or business leaders, want a direct role in mapping out the future of the province. How that comes about remains to be seen. There is little doubt that mayors and councils of communities of all sizes will want to be active partners in whatever forum so they can to make a contribution to the future of their community and province.

Town of Carrot River

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1979 Elgin Pelican Street Sweeper

Engine and tires, good condition; conveyer belt/bearings; top roller/bearings and power take off need repair.

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Service records available upon request.

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Telephone: (306) 768-2515

2005 Convention Chair

Wow! Well we promised to turn up the **wow factor** and judging by your comments we met all the objectives. From the fabulous opening to the closing ceremonies – delegates were wowed. It was a pleasure to be your Chair, working with a dedicated committee and staff. My personal thanks to all who made this convention a celebration to remember.

Wow – The plenary sessions – focused on leadership and empowering us as municipal leaders. We discussed the past, present and future roles of municipal government in sustaining and growing our communities. We enjoyed former deputy premier Lingenfelter and are now dancing to Monica Coney's African beat. Thanks to Paul Martin, his persistence turned up the wow factor in all the plenary sessions.

Wow – Keynotes John Cross and Robin Sharma. We needed a jolt and reminder that the success of our communities and province is our responsibility. As leaders we need to work at strategies that will seize the opportunities for success.

Wow – The Municipal Marketplace. We had over 300 exhibitors,

156 booths of products and services that will provide your municipality with a wealth of cost-effective methods, information and expertise. SUMA thanks the 56 sponsors for their continued commitment and support.

Wow – Resolutions. The passion and concern the speakers felt for their communities resonated throughout the auditorium. These concerns were surely heard by the many provincial politicians in attendance.

Wow – The President's Banquet. SUMA was proud to recognize the dedicated employees and elected officials at the President's Banquet. And who will forget, the touching remarks from Don Cody and Bob Linner, and of course Theresa, our own Canadian idol – she is an incredible role model for our young people, the future of this province.

This convention was the perfect opportunity to recharge and re-energize – now for full speed ahead – as we lead our communities in to the next 100 years!

Wow – I can hardly wait.

Randy Goulden
SUMA Convention Chair



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SUMA President Don Schlosser

2005 Convention Report



John Cross gave a passionate speech

Dialogue with Ministers

Prior to the Cabinet Bear Pit, individual ministers held dialogue sessions. The following are some of the highlights.

Government Relations Minister Len Taylor

All sectors were well represented at the dialogue session with Government Relations Minister Len Taylor.

Following a promise made at last year's convention the Minister gave a comprehensive "report card" of his department's program activities and initiatives currently underway. The Minister noted the positive working relationship developed with SUMA and SARM through the Municipal Forum and cited the papers created by two working committees of provincial and municipal officials as examples of this relationship.

While the Minister did not rule out an increase in Revenue Sharing for 2005, he did indicate a willingness to review the program and the way it is funded. He also made the point that for 2005 the Province had to find additional new monies to pay for its share of the Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund.

On the education property tax credit issue, the Minister noted the work of the working committee and the implementation steps underway to provide credits in the 2005 tax year. A comment from the floor noted how timing was an issue in that some municipalities who had already collected a

sizable portion of current year's taxes based on preliminary tax notices which might lead taxpayers to ask for a refund. The Minister indicated that it was not the intention of the province for the tax credit to "cost you money".

The significant shortfall in infrastructure funding led one delegate to question the equity of the current application process which works against those communities who have gone ahead often at considerable cost to the taxpayers and made infrastructure improvements. The suggestion was also made that if funding were allocated on

a per capita basis municipalities could better plan over the long term.

On the issue of mandatory water system assessments, a town administrator noted that their assessment recommended a \$2.5 million upgrade which was clearly out of reach and suggested that regional water pipelines will have to be seriously considered to make local costs affordable. Issues concerning SaskPower subdivision services, twinning the Yellowhead, SAMA requisitions and the composition of the board were noted as was regionalization of government services.

Justice Minister Frank Quennell

SUMA delegates had the opportunity to talk one-on-one with Justice Minister Frank Quennell. As a primary responsibility of local governments, issues of protective services are always top of mind with municipal leaders.

The issue of Crystal Methamphetamine was at the forefront with delegates, culminating with the passage of three resolutions addressing the drug. Quennell commended SUMA for taking a stance, and drew attention to several government initiatives surrounding Meth. First, he outlined the *Safer Neighborhoods and Communities*

legislation, passed last year. One of the intents of this legislation is to empower citizens to have suspected Meth labs investigated by the Province and ultimately shut down before grave dangers to the community are incurred. "In an emergency situation, people's lives are at risk," said Quennell, "That is why we have to focus on this drug." In addition, the Minister has been conversing with the federal government to have stronger sentencing for traffickers of Crystal Meth, similar to the resolution SUMA delegates passed earlier in the week. Finally, the Minister committed to having a strategy in place that would take

a proactive approach to dealing with the highly addictive and destructive substance.

The issue of the Province's commitment to increasing police presence by 200 officers was raised. The Minister stated that they are currently 49 officers short of meeting that commitment and is hopeful that these officers will be on the street within the next three years.

The City of Moose Jaw presented a resolution to the City Sector Meeting calling on the Province to allow municipalities with a population over 20,000 to have a

contract with the RCMP. Councillor Brian Swanson said that the constant contract negotiations with municipal police forces are arduous and that they would be better off with RCMP. The Minister stated that the Police Act would be reviewed this spring and this issue will be on the table.

Finally, the issue of bullying in schools was raised and the Minister has committed to ensuring that the Department of Justice would be involved in the implementation of the government's anti-bullying strategy recently announced.

Environment Minister David Forbes

Just like last year, the dialogue session with Environment Minister David Forbes, accompanied by his senior officials, focused on water and waste issues.

Some of the 200 delegates who participated were steamed about the slow resolution of disputes involving Aboriginal dams on

several Qu'Appelle Valley recreational lakes. Others wanted to see greater tolerance for non-potable water systems (as long as alternative sources of drinking water were provided), given the high costs of water system upgrading. And some simply wanted greater coordination and consistency in

watershed regulations so that the rules would not change after investments were made.

Several delegates spoke to the longstanding need for greater Provincial support for regional recycling efforts, as the SUMA Task Force had again confirmed in their Interim Report and Resolution #15.

The Minister said he "heard the urgency" and was "anxious to move on this" as "one of our key priorities." Given the strong interest in recycling partnerships, Forbes said it was time to "seize the moment." Next year's dialogue session will provide another opportunity for accountability.



SUMA, FCM and an African delegation signed an Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)



FSIN Chief Alphonse Bird speaking during the "Big Picture" plenary



SUMA members from the past and present on stage at the opening ceremony



Sask Express put on a great show



Pavylchenko's unique opening



Pavylchenko dancers



The hoop dance dazzled



The ceremonies closed with an ensemble performance of the Centennial Song



The gospel hour was well attended



FCM President Anne McLean

SUMA delegates wrestle with Cabinet in the Bear Pit

It is an annual SUMA tradition. Delegates held Cabinet's feet to the fire on Wednesday morning in the Bear Pit. Issues ranged from reviewing the Provincial - Municipal Revenue Sharing formula to recalling the contentious proposed Available Hours-of-Work regulations to the Government's vision for the future of small-town Saskatchewan.

In keeping with Resolution #1, which was passed unanimously, delegates pressed the Premier on reviewing the current revenue sharing agreement and also asked if there were any possibilities of an increase in the 2005 budget. Although he didn't rule out any increases for 2005, Premier Calvert declared an overhaul of the formula would be nearly impossible prior to this year's budget. He did, however, commit to reviewing the formula for future years, and SUMA will be sitting at the table when that discussion occurs.

The proposed Available Hours-of-Work regulations have been a hot topic of late. SUMA delegates passed a resolution calling on the government to immediately withdraw the proposed regulations as they have strong implications for Saskatchewan communities. When asked, the Premier acknowledged that the subject is indeed contentious, however he never

committed to recalling the regulations. Labour Minister Deb Higgins also acknowledged the divisive nature of the regulations, but said that there are over 120 presentations that the Government must now review and it would be unfair to all those who took the time to submit comments if the regulations were abandoned.

Several delegates questioned both the Minister of Corrections and Public Safety and the Minister in charge of the Crown Investments Corporation about the proposed decommissioning of the FleetNet 800 system. Corrections and Public Safety Minister Peter Prebble stated that SaskTel will not be turning down the system until the government is sure that a viable and operable system is in place. In addition, it was stated that the previously preferred option of push-to-talk cellular technology will not be workable as a replacement. CIC Minister Pat Atkinson also committed to having SUMA

representatives on the committee currently reviewing options for a replacement.

In the fall of 2004, the Action Committee on the Rural Economy released a report suggesting that infrastructure dollars should be committed to a few defined regional centers in order to see more efficient use of funding. In December, the SUMA Board of Directors proposed an amendment to the recommendations suggesting "self-defined municipal partnerships" be substituted for the defined regional centers. Deputy Premier Clay Serby suggested that when the final report is released, it will include SUMA's suggestion.

Finally, the perennial favorite daylight savings time debate was raised. The Premier was quick to say that there are currently too many divisive issues on the table to add the discussion of daylight savings time to the mix.

New government infrastructure grants for municipalities

The room was packed for an information session at convention on new programs designed to address the ever growing infrastructure deficit in Saskatchewan communities. Russ Krywluk from Government Relations and Norm Grenier from Western Economic Diversification Canada were on hand to talk specifically about two recently announced programs.

The much-anticipated Canada-Saskatchewan Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (MRIF) agreement was signed in January and will see a combined \$76 million in new funding injected into Saskatchewan's municipalities over the next four years with a final total of \$152 million once municipal contributions are factored in. The program will operate similarly to the previous Canada Saskatchewan Infrastructure Program (CSIP), but funding will now be on a 25/25/50 basis as opposed to the previous 33/33/33 formula. The first of two intakes of the program will commence on March 1st and end

on April 15th. More information on the program as well as the new on-line application can be found at <http://www.municipal.gov.sk.ca/mrd/prosimi.shtml>.

Norm Grenier from Western Economic Diversification Canada presented the newly announced Canada Celebrates Saskatchewan (CCS) initiative. CCS is a \$40 million Government of Canada initiative marking Saskatchewan's centennial in 2005. Western Economic Diversification will deliver the \$36.8 million in federal centennial funding allocated to capital legacy projects. Canadian

Heritage has allocated \$3.1 million for regional and national celebrations tied to national holidays and the September 5th anniversary of Saskatchewan joining Confederation.

The entitlements for communities (based on population) are as follows:

- Under 100 population - \$2000.00
- 101-200 population - \$4000.00
- 201-300 population - \$6000.00
- Over 300 population - \$20/capita

For more information on this initiative and how your community project can receive funding, go to <http://www.wd.gc.ca/centennials>.

Recycling: old and new

Landfill and recycling issues got bumped up to a review of Sask. Environment's "strategic" approach to solid waste management in the educational session at convention. It was conducted by Blaine Ganong, Director of the Air and Land Section of the Environmental Protection Branch.

Ganong reviewed the historical and ongoing approach of the provincial department, including support for the initial regional waste management pilot project (REACT in the Humboldt region) ten years ago and the four-year Centenary Capital Fund contributions which ended last year but had provided some dollars for recycling equipment and landfill closures.

Participants at the session shared many examples of how established regional waste management authorities and other municipal recycling programs are having trouble sustaining their recycling programs because of high operating costs and low recycling revenues. This "crisis" was reflected in the Interim Report of the SUMA Task Force on Regional Waste Recycling (presented at the AGM) and the subsequently supported Resolution #15.

Anticipating criticism about the unequal enforcement of prohibitions

against landfill burning, Ganong said his department hates to see burning but he does not see much when he drives across the province. This prompted Task Force Chair Fred Clipsham to ask for a show of hands at the AGM, confirming that most convention delegates knew of (neighbouring) landfills or waste pits which had been burning during the last year.

The key thrust of a re-mandated SUMA Task Force in 2005 will be working with other stakeholders toward the creation of a multi-material recycling agency to concentrate on materials like paper and packaging, plastics, glass and tin which are not covered by specialized recycling agencies (for tires, oil and beverage containers) or others about to be born (for waste paints and consumer e-waste).

The role of the multi-material agency would be to help coordinate the marketing of recycled materials and

also the distribution funds to help cover the costs of collection and handling. The source of such funding is still to be determined but could involve some cross-subsidization from other sources until those like the paper industry join the stewardship bandwagon. Obtaining some new revenues would avoid having recycling programs heavily subsidized from municipal waste collection and disposal programs as is now the case.

In the meantime, the new Association of Regional Waste Management Authorities of Saskatchewan (ARWMAS) is working with Sask. Environment to try to obtain interim funding to help pull existing regional waste authorities back from operating deficits to balancing their books. The year 2005 could be a crucial make-or-break point for regional and municipal recycling operations, as emphasized at the SUMA convention.

SUMA delegates urge action on Crystal Meth

Crystal Methamphetamine is a highly addictive and destructive drug that is making its way into many of Saskatchewan's municipalities, both large and small. As those closest to the devastating effects, municipal leaders passed three resolutions at the 2005 SUMA convention urging all levels of government to take action and get out in front of this rapidly growing problem. The first resolution passed called for the Province to immediately create an action plan that would include education, information, and enforcement for communities across the province. The resolution also called for immediate funding to increase the amount of beds available for detoxification and addiction recovery.

Viewed as primarily a "big city" problem in the past, it is becoming clearer that no community is immune to its effects.

"Saskatchewan is very similar in its lay of the land (to North Dakota)," said Sgt. Jerome Engele of the Saskatoon Integrated Drug Unit, "Were a farming community, we've got a lot of free space, we've got a lot of empty farm homesteads where people can move in and use the lab to cook."

It is a substance that can easily be made from products purchased at your local department store and pharmacy. In response, the second resolution passed called for the Province and the Saskatchewan College of Pharmacists to ensure that multiple sales of over the counter drugs containing Pseudoephedrine – the ingredient found in most cold medications and antihistamines

– to be tracked and reported. This practice has been adopted in other provinces in Canada.

The final resolution called for SUMA to ask the Province and the Federal Government to work in partnership in order to see tougher sentencing for violent and drug trafficking crimes. Although this is applicable to all drug offenses, sponsors of the resolution spoke specifically about Crystal Meth. Currently, the maximum sentence for trafficking Meth is ten years while similar crimes for cocaine and heroin is life imprisonment. At the dialogue with the Minister of Justice, Minister Quennell stated that he has sent letters to the Canadian Government urging action on this front and SUMA will continue to support these efforts.

In addition to the resolutions passed and presentations at the

SUMA policing seminar held last fall, representatives from the Town of Drayton Valley presented to a standing-room-only education session. Delegates heard how that community has taken a proactive approach to addressing the problem with a comprehensive strategy that included hiring more police officers and a community liaison to coordinate programs and educational presentations in order to mobilize and inform their citizens. Community groups were formed in order to learn more about the situation, support each other, and to help the police locate labs, dealers, and users.

With these resolutions in place, SUMA is poised to become a leader in the fight against this devastating drug. **For more information on Crystal Meth, go to the "Policy" section at www.suma.org.**



A talented trio performs at the Birthday Party



The Fowl Supper was feast



Moderator Paul Martin



A blacksmith demonstrates his craft on the streets of Boomtown



Charlie Chaplin was on hand for the celebration



Policy Analyst Cam Baker and SUMA Board Member Rolly Zimmer



Gordon Barnhart and Red Williams



The panel 'on set' during the Leadership plenary

Resolved to agree

Convention delegates were an agreeable group this year, passing all 29 resolutions which came to a vote, with only a few minor amendments. (Resolution #16 on non-potable water systems was not seconded by the sponsoring council.) The booklet of Resolution Decisions is being distributed to municipal offices with this newsletter and posted on the SUMA website.

Among those supported unanimously was Resolution #1 calling for reinstating provincial Revenue Sharing grants and indexing them again to provincial tax bases. A commitment followed from the Premier to review the program for 2006 after the budgeted amounts are confirmed for 2005.

The convention handbook contained two resolutions not included in the

December package, for maintaining 24-hour services in health centres and allowing a more flexible approach to school division amalgamations. Two more were added at convention, one on withdrawing proposed regulations for additional part-time hours of work and another on encouraging SaskWater to abandon rate increases planned for April 2005.

The city sector meeting also passed a resolution to remove the restriction against cities over 20,000 from contracting with the RCMP for policing services.

All resolutions will be forwarded for an initial response from Cabinet ministers, with further follow-up by SUMA's Executive and policy committees where required.

The New Urban Age

SUMA is proud to release, The New Urban Age, Bridging To Our Future As Urban Government In Saskatchewan, a compilation of successes and trials of the last ten years of urban municipal government history. Written by Senior Policy Analyst Mervyn Norton, The New Urban Age is essential reading for those who have recently taken up the mantle of municipal leadership and need to know how the road we have traveled can guide us to future success. But it is also a story through which a wider public can better understand why urban governments still deserve to be called the first order of government.

In celebration of 100 years of urban municipal government in Saskatchewan this book, along with The Urban Age, Building a Place for Urban Government in Saskatchewan, published in 1996, will give you the full story of the long-standing struggles to find adequate revenues to support publicly demanded local services. Municipalities were forced to lead, not only in expanding hard infrastructure but also in areas like health, education and social services.

The two book edition can be purchased for only \$24.95 including taxes (The New Urban Age, alone, is \$20 including tax). Ensure everyone on your council has a set as well as your library and school. We need to educate the youth of today of the important role local government plays, how it is the first order of government, and how they can become involved and make a difference.



Order forms are available on the SUMA website at www.suma.org or phone the SUMA office at 306-525-4380

2005 Award Recipients

Photo credit: Cindy Moleski Photography and Framing



Front row (l-r) Councillor John Kuxhaus, Big River; Muriel Rosser-Swift, St. Walburg; President Don Schlosser, presenter; Minister Len Taylor, presenter; Cecil Hovdebo, Candle Lake; Cam Leitao, Government Relations; Karen Stadnyk, Creighton.

Second row (l-r) Darlene Olson, Eatonia; Carol Schultz, Strasbourg; Bev Dovell, Dalmeny; Rudy Holland, Swift Current; Brian Marlowe, Rosetown; Mark Dubkowski, Delisle.

Back row (l-r) Bob Linner, Regina, Scoop Lewry Award; Don Cody, Prince Albert; Life Membership Award; Nick J. Bakker, Dalmeny; Peter Macek, Yorkton; Miles C. Pearce, Yorkton; Theodore Trotz, Yorkton; Stanley Sewell, Maidstone; David A. Mess, Dalmeny; Gerald McGregor, Yorkton; Alderman Bert Suknasky, Sturgis; Shelley Funk, Dalmeny.

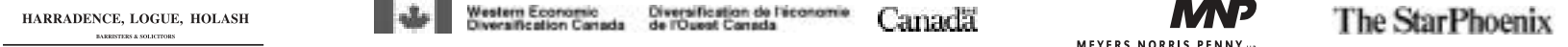
Missing from picture: Jerry Budnick, Sturgis; Randy Georges, Pinehouse; Sheila Hitchings, Wynyard; David Merkel, Whitewood; DRick Poole, Leask; Vern Poworoznyk, Sturgis; Darrell Richmond, Delisle; Daniel Voykin, Kerrobert; Brian Wotycka, Swift Current; Harry Palko, Hudson Bay; Councillor Larry Sandomirsky, Hudson Bay; Councillor Leon Wuschke, Mossbank; Alderman Peter Zerr, Kerrobert.

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Deadline Approaching on

2005 Water System Assessment Program (WSA)

The recommendations of the North Battleford Water Inquiry have ushered in a new reality for municipal waterworks in Saskatchewan. The provincial government responded with new regulations including the requirement for a Waterworks System Assessment (WSA). The assessment must be performed by, or under the direct supervision of, an independent professional Engineer. This assessment is not an option, it is required by Saskatchewan Environment.

A WSA is a valuable tool to assess both the sustainability and viability of your community's water system.

DEADLINES:

- Saskatchewan Environment Regulations require that ALL municipal waterworks must have a WSA completed by December 31, 2005.
- On-site assessment work can only be completed after spring thaw and prior to freeze up – hence time is of the essence.

- SUMA members indicating interest in participating in 2005 have been contacted by mail as of February 10, 2005.

- Rounds and groupings for assessment will be determined by March 4, 2005, with request for proposals going out to the sixteen pre-qualified engineering firms by March 15, 2005.

- Start dates for on site inspections for Round 5 – April 15th and Round 6 – May 15th.

- Requests to join after June 1st may not be accommodated due to heavy demand on engineering groups during the final push to complete assessments by year end.

Contact Susan Dishaw as soon as possible if you wish to participate in the upcoming rounds.

Phone: (306) 525-4383
Email: sdishaw@suma.org

SUMA Advantage Street and Custom Signs

Are you up to date?

The *Highways and Transportation Act, 1997* states that an "official sign" means a sign, pavement marking, barricade or object that the minister authorizes to be erected, placed, used or painted

on the roadway or right of way of a public highway – official signs may be erected, maintained and removed only by department employees, contract employees and others authorized by the minister to do so.

As our *SUMA Advantage* street and custom sign provider, Signal Industries are the resident experts in provision of regulatory information. Working closely with the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices of Canada, as well as the Sask. Highways and

Transportation Manual for signs, Signal maintains their web site www.signalindustries.ca with up-to-date legislated changes.

Don't purchase your signs until you contact the Signal reps at 1-800-565-9443.

Report from Task Force on Self-Insurance

The SUMA Board of Directors formed a Task Force on Self-Insurance in the fall of 2004 to investigate the best solution to the control of coverage/costs of property and liability insurance. As noted in the December *UrbanVoice*, the Task Force has met with other associations concerning their self-insurance programs.

Self-insurance operates in the same manner as traditional insurers as they are responsible for collecting insurance premiums, issuing policies, purchasing excess (stop loss) insurance/reinsurance, setting reserves and paying claims.

The Advantages of a self-insurance program are: lower costs – operating/overhead; surplus – unused, pre-funded loss reserves; investment income; own experience drives cost of risk; stability of pricing; broader coverage; strategic claims control; and proactive risk management services.

On January 25th a letter of request was mailed to all members, explaining the intentions of the task force and asking for volumes of coverage, claims history and statement of values for insured property which will form part of a

feasibility study being conducted. Normally this information would be contained on the first page of your existing policy.

This data will be used in the feasibility study being conducted. SUMA will enter all the data which will then be referenced by an identity number. The company handling the feasibility study will only have the identity number and not the municipal name. In this way the data is kept anonymous and confidential. By submitting your data you are not committing to place your insurance with the program

when developed. We are asking only that you assist us by sending us your statement of values and costs by March 31, 2005. SUMA will then be able to go to the market to determine the type of rates the self-insurance program would be able to garner.

The program was discussed in detail at the SUMA convention through the Saturday education session and the Annual General Meeting. Copies of the presentations can be found on the SUMA website, www.suma.org under 2005 Convention Education Sessions.

New financing program announced

SUMA announced our newest strategic partner at the 100th Annual Convention, January 29th – February 2nd. BMO Bank of Montreal was selected to provide preferred banking arrangements to all SUMA members.

All major banking institutions were invited to submit proposals.

BMO Bank of Montreal was selected as they offered the most comprehensive package and showed a willingness to customize the program to meet the individual's needs at a group rate.

Exact details can be found in the Member Services section of the SUMA website at www.suma.org. Whether you are looking for a

specific loan or full banking services, BMO Bank of Montreal is prepared to offer solutions. Some of the cash management services being offered are ADP Payroll services, Moneris Solutions, Corporate MasterCard, and Web based/online transaction banking.

As with all *SUMA Advantage* programs, this program is provided for those members who wish to use it.

For more information contact:
Gerry Syrota
BMO Bank of Montreal
at 306-569-5606 or
Brenda Oliver at the SUMA office.



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University of Regina LGA Program undergoes changes

Since 1966, the majority of urban and rural municipal administrators in Saskatchewan have received their formal training through the University of Regina's Certificate in Local Government Administration (LGA) program. As an introduction to the theory and practice of local government, the LGA program has provided over 2100 graduates with the necessary academic and skill-based training to carry out the work of municipalities across Saskatchewan.

Kim Gartner, President of Urban Municipality Administrators' Association of Saskatchewan (UMAAS) explains, "This program is vital to our association and to all urban and rural municipalities in Saskatchewan. It is through this program that future municipal

administrative officials receive the basic knowledge and understanding required to function in the realm of municipal government."

Offered by correspondence through the Credit Studies Division of the Centre for

Continuing Education at the University of Regina, the LGA program takes its' direction from an advisory body consisting of the Urban Municipality Administrators' Association of Saskatchewan (UMAAS), The Rural Municipality Administrators' Association (RMAA) and their respective Boards of Examiners as well as members of SARM, SUMA and the Department of Government Relations.

According to the members of the above associations, Saskatchewan is facing the loss of 145 administrators to retirement in the next 7 years. To address the issue of the recruitment and retention of municipal administrators, potential students interested in careers in local government need access to programs that not only provide the knowledge needed to work in a municipal office but also attract younger residents by providing opportunities for students to move from certificates into advanced education programs, including degrees.

With these issues in mind, the Credit Studies Division undertook significant review of the program in 2004. With input and assistance from UMAAS, RMAA, and the Departments of Political Science, Economics and Geography at the University of Regina, significant changes have been implemented to ensure that the LGA program accurately reflects its purpose, content and value within both the University and the wider community.

The first major change is a revision to the program name from "Certificate in Local Government Administration" to "Certificate in Local Government Authority." This name change reflects the transdisciplinary nature of the program as well as a shift in nomenclature within various credit and non-credit programs in this area across Canada.

The second and perhaps most significant change to the program is the fact that each LGA course will carry 1.5 credit hours as of May 1, 2005. Currently, LGA courses carry 0 credit hours, which means that certificate students graduate from the University of Regina but LGA certificate courses are not transferable into any other U of R certificate or degree program. With LGA courses carrying 1.5 credit hours each, students will be able to use LGA courses as electives within the Faculty of Arts at the University of Regina after May 2005. Any course completed before May 2005 will not be eligible for transfer into an Arts degree program but will still count towards the completion of the LGA certificate program.

The Departments of Political Science, Economics and Geography have shown full support for the initiative to have LGA courses carry credit hours. According to Dr. Howard Leeson, Chair of the Department of Political Science, "these changes will now allow students to include their LGA courses in an Arts degree program and encourage students to consider advanced studies in a broader stream of local government and politics." Indeed, the Credit Studies Division is working closely with the Faculty of Arts and community stakeholders to explore the possibility of developing an advanced LGA certificate as well as a degree in Local Government and Politics.

Finally, LGA students can anticipate minor changes in course names and course content for Fall 2005 as courses are revised to reflect current legislation and municipal practices.

For more information on these changes please visit the Credit Studies Division's LGA website at www.uregina.ca/cce/creditstudies or phone (306) 585-5807.

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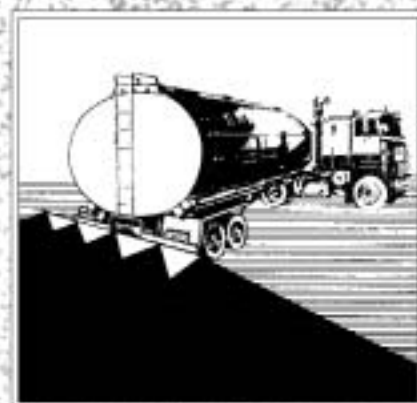
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