

SUMA Questionnaire – Alanna Koch

As I have been travelling this province during the leadership campaign, I have had the opportunity to meet with many of your members across Saskatchewan. That dialogue is very valuable to me as your leaders reflect the values and attitudes of their ratepayers -- the citizens of Saskatchewan.

If I am fortunate to be elected leader of the Saskatchewan Party and the Premier of Saskatchewan, I would continue to grow the partnership the provincial government has had with SUMA. Thank you for the opportunity to address the concerns of your membership. Please find my answers below:

1. Do you support one point of all PST revenues being dedicated to municipal revenue sharing? Why or why not? How will you ensure this program remains a permanent funding program for municipalities?

As Premier, I would continue with the Municipal Revenue Sharing program. I believe it is important that municipalities have stable and predictable funding. That can be delivered through the one point on PST. I recognize historically that has been a challenge. Municipal governments struggled to find balance because they were left guessing what their funding level would be on a year to year basis. That was unacceptable.

However, there is only one taxpayer, and I would expect my government to work with its stakeholders to ensure we do not put undue burden on another level of government and ultimately citizens.

2. Do you support a made-in-Saskatchewan infrastructure program for our hometowns, beyond the federal cost sharing programs in place? Why or why not?

I have committed to creating a Transportation Master Plan for the entire province. In my platform [*A Vision for 2030: Growth Plan 2.0*](#), I have outlined a comprehensive approach to infrastructure spending. I recognize the critical importance of a strong and well-planned infrastructure system. My government will develop a rolling four-year road maintenance plan in consultation with municipalities. Decisions will be made based on economic considerations and the conditions the assets will be in.

You, as the local elected leaders, know your communities' need best. We will also consult with communities to identify transportation priorities, then develop and publish a Four-year transportation infrastructure plan.

3. Do you support a formalized consultation protocol between the Government of Saskatchewan and SUMA? Why or why not?

I know that urban municipalities are key to the province's growth and prosperity. If elected, I would ask my Cabinet to review our current relationship with SUMA and discuss how to best address future issues. This would include a comprehensive approach to consultations including a transparent plan to help the public understand policy and budget priorities.

I announced my [own mandate letter](#) that outlines my priorities if elected leader. I expect my Cabinet and MLAs to have open and meaningful conversations with the people we serve. I also will have an agreed upon and measurable plan that both elected and unelected officials will work together to deliver. That means the future Minister of Government Relations will have clear goals and objectives created in consultation and shared with organizations like SUMA. I am committed to increasing access to senior decision-makers by establishing regional Cabinet meetings.

4. Do you support hometowns having access to additional revenue sources such as additional taxing authority beyond property tax? Why or why not?

Citizens want all elected leaders to be mindful that there is just one taxpayer. I am committed to balancing the provincial budget and take the challenge of government living within its means very seriously. I believe our taxpayers expect that.

The province has provided urban municipalities with the authority to manage their own property and commercial taxes. In addition, current legislation provides for the use of additional tax tools to adjust taxes to reflect local economic conditions. I understand that we have also set percentages of value that will assist commercial properties TO face the challenges of low commodity prices.

My government would continue to allow municipalities local autonomy in setting mill rates, while providing exemptions and abatements. As a government, we would consult with SUMA on proposed new revenue streams and make a careful determination on what impact they may have on economic development.

5. How will you support municipal leadership on dealing with climate change?

First, I am committed to fighting the Federal Government's carbon tax. It will do nothing to fight climate change. I would work to find an alternative solution, one that recognizes Saskatchewan's contribution to global food and energy security and the carbon sequestration that happens naturally in our soils, grasslands and forests.

We also need to look to technology to reduce greenhouse gases. Saskatchewan has committed to increasing the amount of power that comes from renewable sources. Municipal

governments are an important partner since local oversight will be critical in land-use planning and development.

6. In most cases, SaskPower and SaskEnergy do not provide any compensation to municipalities for municipal services provided, such as emergency services and road infrastructure -- all of which private sector companies pay for. How would you deal with this disparity, both in terms of buildings within municipalities and for underground infrastructure?

I commit to a comprehensive review of the current funding arrangements and would make a determination about what constitutes fair. I know the impact of the decision to reduce the Grants-in-Lieu have resulted in serious challenges for our municipal budgets. And I have heard a great deal about the damage to the relationship between the province and urban governments.

If elected leader, I would commit to delivering any changes in funding agreements upfront. As I said before, I know that municipal governments need a stable and predictable funding arrangement. I intend to listen closely to advice SUMA offers and work closely with rural municipalities to review this issue.

7. At what level of funding, and in which funding pools, do you support the province participating in Phase II of the federal infrastructure program? Why?

If elected, my government would participate fully in Phase II of the federal infrastructure program. However, we must do so within the bounds of being fiscally responsible. I have made balancing the budget a top priority, although I am committed to doing it over four years instead of three as I would like my government to have the ability to participate in programs such as this one.

As I noted above, my platform includes a Master Transportation Plan – which is an integral part of my Growth Plan 2.0. We will also work to ensure the federal government can provide priority infrastructure funding for trade corridors vital to Saskatchewan export interests. We will determine how best to finance the province's contribution based on those priority assessments.