

# **AGENDA**

## **MUNICIPAL FORUM**

10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Friday, April 30, 2010  
Room 218, Legislative Building, Regina

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|---|-------------------------|
| Opening Remarks, Review of the Agenda   | 10:00 – 10:10 a.m.      |
| 1. MSSP Update – Review progress on Long-term Municipal Infrastructure Program/Plan (MA)                                | 10:10 – 10:30 a.m.      |
| 2. Municipal Sector Capacity - Update on Advisory Services Activity (MA)  | 10:30 – 10:50 a.m.      |
| 3. Rural-Urban Governance – Options for Consideration (MA)  | 10:50 – 11:10 a.m.      |
| 4. Planning for Growth Initiative (MA, SUMA, SARM)  | 11:10 – 11:30 a.m.      |
| 5. Municipal Compliance re: Gas Tax Program – Update and decisions from last New Deal Management Committee Meeting (MA) | 11:30 – 11:55 a.m.      |
| <b>- LUNCH -</b>  | 11:55 a.m. – 12:25 p.m. |
| 6. SAMA – 2010-11 Budget Implications (SUMA, SARM)  | 12:25 – 12:40 p.m.      |
| 7. Enterprise Regions – 2010-11 Budget Implications (SUMA, SARM)  | 12:40 – 12:55 p.m.      |
| 8. Other Business / Next Municipal Forum Date   | 12:55 – 1:00 p.m.       |
| Adjourn   | 1:00 p.m.               |

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## **Municipal Forum Summary Notes**

April 30, 2010, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.  
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### **Attendance:**

*Municipal Affairs (MA)* – Minister Jeremy Harrison, Deputy Minister Van Isman  
[Bill Cooper, Morgan Bradshaw, Kirby Wright, John Edwards, Keith Comstock,  
Ralph Leibel, Jeff Welke, Sheldon Green, Kyle Toffan, Kathy Rintoul,  
Chris Gunningham, Kristin Wagman, Erin McConnell]

*Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association (SUMA)* – Allan Earle (President),  
Fred Clipsham, Rolly Zimmer, Barry Gunther, Debra Button, Malcolm Eaton  
[Laurent Mougeot, Mark Cooper]

*Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM)* – David Marit (President),  
Ray Orb [Ken Engel, Dale Harvey]

Meeting Chair: Minister Harrison.

### **1. Greetings, Review of Agenda**

- Meeting called to order by Minister Harrison and the agenda was approved, with additions under “Other Business”.
- SUMA requested discussion under “Other Business” regarding budget reductions to the West Nile Virus Program, and Dutch Elm Disease Program.
- The Presidents of SUMA and SARM made brief opening remarks.

### **2. Municipal Sector Strategic Plan Update – Review progress on Long-term Municipal Infrastructure Program/Plan**

- Keith Comstock presented the Project Charter and work breakdown structure (distributed prior to the meeting) on work to develop a long-term infrastructure program, and asked for feedback and direction.
- The Forum gave direction to proceed and asked that officials keep the Minister and the Associations well informed of progress over the ensuing months.

### **3. Municipal Sector Capacity – Update on Advisory Services Activity**

- Sheldon Green gave an information presentation outlining Advisory Services’ activity; including the volume and types of calls, service users, etc.
- The Associations commented about need for succession planning, enhanced municipal recruitment and retention practices, and the ongoing need for an Administrator Internship Program.

#### **4. Rural-Urban Governance – Options for Consideration**

- Keith Comstock presented the final report of the committee tasked to examine the rural urban governance options (distributed prior to the meeting).
- SARM expressed its view that ongoing financial incentives were not necessary and would be inappropriate. SUMA agreed.
- The Associations gave direction to amend the incentives section in the report; it was felt that it should not appear as if municipalities were being encouraged to consider this potential new governance option. Financial supports to study and enable merging, etc., are to remain as an option in the report.
- Other suggestions were to change legislation to make the restructuring process easier and to consider subclass authority for rural municipalities in this project.
- Direction was given to proceed to broader consultation and report at the fall Municipal Forum.

#### **5. Planning for Growth Initiative**

- Ralph Leibel and Kathy Rintoul spoke to the new Planning for Growth funding program.
- The program is a one-time funding initiative (final amount not yet confirmed) to be managed by the New Deal Secretariat in the Grants Administration and Financial Management Branch of Municipal Affairs. The goal of the funding program is to enhance regional planning capacity and establish best practices to facilitate sustainable growth and development across the province.
- There was some discussion around the need for more planning districts and perhaps this program will encourage them.
- The Associations showed support for this initiative and a public announcement is expected in the near future.
- Minister asked the Associations for feedback regarding the proposed amendments to *The Planning and Development Act*. Ralph Leibel will meet with the Associations as soon as possible to clarify any final points.
- It was noted that the sector needs funding for planning that is long-term, not just one-time funding.

#### **6. Municipal Compliance re: Gas Tax Program – Update and decisions from last New Deal Management Committee Meeting**

- Kathy Rintoul gave a presentation about the number of municipalities not meeting the terms and conditions for Gas Tax funding. She noted the progress made to reduce the number of non-compliant municipalities in recent months, but many remain. These municipalities risk jeopardizing federal gas tax funding for all of Saskatchewan.
- Municipal Affairs indicated work will continue on this issue, and if necessary, funding may be withheld or the municipality will be asked to repay earlier gas tax funds to force compliance.
- There was discussion regarding support mechanisms provided by the Ministry.
- SARM indicated they are working directly with RMs not in compliance and, in many cases, changes in administration may have caused the issues.

## **7. Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency – 2010-11 Budget Implications**

- The Associations expressed concern for the cuts to SAMA's funding and its ability to provide services.
- There was discussion around the need to focus on maintenance and re-inspections, and the Associations expressed a desire to be consulted prior to budget cuts to provincial programs and agencies.

## **8. Enterprise Regions – 2010-11 Budget Implications**

- Ernest Heapy and Marilyn Day of Enterprise Saskatchewan gave a presentation on the Enterprise Regions' budget. They indicated the full effects of the provincial budget cuts may not be felt until 2011-12.
- The Associations expressed concern for the cuts to Enterprise Regions and the potential implications to regional project funding. SARM noted the cuts might have a negative impact on the buy-in of municipalities and their participation in the regions.

## **9. Other Business / Next Municipal Forum Date**

- SUMA expressed its concern regarding the West Nile Virus Program municipal grants that were cut in the 2010-11 provincial budget. The Province indicated monitoring of the disease would continue. If issues arise, the Province will be involved to help address them.
- SUMA expressed its concern regarding the 2010-11 funding reductions to the Dutch Elm Disease Program. The Province continues to monitor the disease around larger centres.
- SUMA expressed its concern that the government-to-government (G2G) relationship should have meant the sector would be consulted in advance about impending provincial budget decisions.
- Minister acknowledged that view, but noted the confidentiality of the Treasury Board and Cabinet budget deliberation processes could not be breached.
- The Minister noted the G2G relationship is important, and the meeting agenda has several joint projects demonstrating the Province's commitment to the relationship.
- Minister briefly discussed the New West Partnership agreement, as the signing had not yet taken place. Municipal Affairs indicated it would distribute information on this agreement as soon as they receive it following the meeting.
- The date for the next Municipal Forum date was not determined.

*The meeting was adjourned.*