

**MUNICIPAL FORUM - LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN**

THE MINISTRY OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS
(hereinafter known as MA)

AND

THE SASKATCHEWAN ASSOCIATION OF RURAL MUNICIPALITIES
(hereinafter known as SARM)

AND

THE SASKATCHEWAN URBAN MUNICIPALITIES ASSOCIATION
(hereinafter known as SUMA)

Mandate

Through these Municipal Forums, the partners (MA, SARM, and SUMA) are committed to developing new municipal policies, legislative and other initiatives and financial programs. The partners agree that collaboration will be very beneficial to resolving difficult policy and other issues so whenever possible a joint and agreed upon approach should be taken. This will ensure that the Minister of MA can make appropriate representation to his Cabinet colleagues on behalf of the sector, and that the Presidents of SARM and SUMA can likewise make representation to their members. This collaborative relationship is the basis of a government to government relationship between the province and the municipal sector. This approach also acknowledges the unique status of the respective associations, as established under provincial legislation.

Objectives

The Municipal Forum partnership is premised on a results-based approach through which the provincial government and the urban and rural municipal sectors will collaboratively address and co-ordinate key municipal issues. The partners are committed to using the Municipal Forum to discuss and, when appropriate, come to joint decisions on issues in order to meet both the provincial government's legislative and budget driven processes and the municipal associations' consultation timeframes. While the partners do not have an expectation that a complete consensus can be reached on each and every issue that might come before the Municipal Forum, they recognize that by enabling a frank and open discussion, the Municipal Forum will help all the partners to better understand one another.

The Municipal Forum partnership will also promote tripartite approaches that engage the federal government where appropriate and, where the parties reach a consensus on positions jointly, advance them to the federal government.

The Municipal Forum is a critical reporting and direction-providing body for ongoing shared strategic initiatives, such as the Municipal Sector Strategic Plan (MSSP) sector tables.

Participants

- SUMA, SARM and MA will bring representatives to the Municipal Forum as necessary.
- MA, SUMA and SARM will decide on an issue specific basis if broader participation is required for specific discussions or to participate on committees.
- Federal government participation will be encouraged by the partners when appropriate.
- The Premier and other Cabinet Ministers will be encouraged to participate in the discussion of relevant issues at the Municipal Forum.

Logistics

- The parties agree that the following provisions will apply to establishment and operation of the Municipal Forum:

Development of Agenda

- MA will coordinate the consultations and agenda material with SARM, SUMA and within government in order to define the issues/opportunities for discussion on each agenda.
- Priority setting discussions geared to government business cycles (legislation and budget) must be considered in order to support, where applicable, the Minister in seeking Cabinet approval.
- Priority setting discussions geared to support the municipal sector's own consultation and decision-making processes with its members must be considered.
- The important role of the Municipal Forum as an approving body for the MSSP work must be considered in selecting appropriate agenda items.
- Unless otherwise determined by mutual consent of the parties, agendas for Municipal Forums will follow the format outlined in Appendix A.

Agenda Timelines

- Agendas shall be tentatively finalized four weeks in advance of the meeting to provide adequate time to invite outside participants.
- Additional agenda items will be considered up to two weeks before the meeting if outside participants are not involved.
- The agenda and related material will be distributed to the parties one week before the meeting.
- All agendas will provide an opportunity to raise new business.

Municipal Forum Schedule

- Municipal Forums can be scheduled at any time by mutual agreement but will be held at least twice a year.
- These twice yearly meetings will occur in the first two weeks of April and the first two weeks of October, unless they are rescheduled by prior mutual agreement of the parties.
- Municipal Forums shall be held in Regina unless all parties agree to another arrangement.

Specific Project Working Committees

- Although the MSSP sector tables will be the primary working tables to which the Municipal Forum will assign work, the parties will from time to time desire to establish separate working committees to undertake project based work.
- This work may include matters such as policy, legislation, financial and program issues, or other matters as determined by the parties. In order to direct the logistics and composition of working committees, the following committee guidelines are recommended:
 - all partners will be represented on a committee;
 - the partners shall designate a committee chairperson; and
 - the partners shall set timelines, reporting expectations and deliverables for the working committees in a terms of reference.
- The parties shall develop project charters or terms of reference for these specific working committees as appropriate. These committees shall have finite durations and shall regularly report on progress to the Municipal Forum.

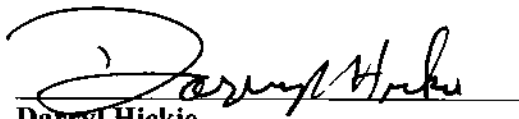
Communications

- The partners agree that the details of discussions, the background reports and papers prepared for and distributed at the Municipal Forum will be public, unless all parties agree otherwise.
- When applicable, the parties agree to discuss media communications at the Municipal Forum, but each party will continue to determine their own communication with their members and the public.

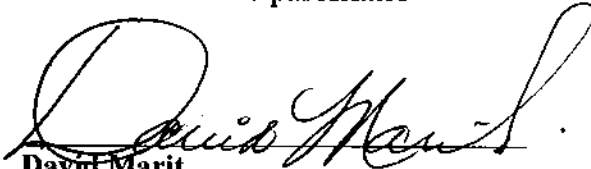
Effective Date

- This letter of understanding shall be effective from the date of signature to December 31, 2013. The parties may revisit this agreement at anytime to negotiate revisions.

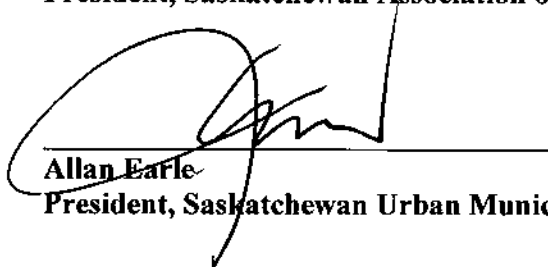
Signed on behalf of:



Darryl Hickie
Minister of Municipal Affairs



David Marit
President, Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities



Allan Earle
President, Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association

Appendix "A"

Sample Municipal Forum Agenda

- 1) Greetings, Approval of the Agenda**

- 2) Emerging/Priority Issues**
 - a. from the municipal sector**
 - b. from the province (MA and/or other ministries)**

- 3) Review the Municipal Sector Strategic Plan**
 - a. Progress to date**
 - i. MA related files**
 - ii. Other ministries as required**
 - b. Priority/Agenda setting**
 - i. MA related files**
 - ii. Other ministries as required**

- 4) Other Agenda Items as Required**