SUMA | SASKATCHEWAN URBAN MUNICIPALITIES ASSOCIATION



URBAN MUNICIPALITIES 101

Understanding Urban Municipal Government in Saskatchewan

Urban municipalities are where Saskatchewan's people live, business grows, and community comes together. They provide the infrastructure, services, and local leadership that help communities thrive and support a strong provincial economy.

From the smallest village to the largest city, We are URBAN.

BY THE NUMBERS

440
Urban municipalities in Saskatchewan.

80%
Of Saskatchewan residents live in urban municipalities.

60%
Of Canada's public infrastructure is managed by municipalities.

$1.95 billion
Spent by SK urban municipalities in 2025 on infrastructure, programs, and services.

74+%
Of Saskatchewan's GDP is generated in urban municipalities.

WHAT IS AN URBAN MUNICIPALITY?

Many think "urban" only means cities. In Saskatchewan, urban is much more than that.

According to provincial legislation, urban municipalities include:

- **Cities**
- **Towns**
- **Villages**
- **Resort Villages**
- **Northern Municipalities**

Urban municipalities vary in size and location, from large urban centres where the majority of Saskatchewan residents live to communities in rural and remote areas with very small populations. They all share a common purpose: providing local leadership, essential services, and community infrastructure.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Government of Canada uses definitions of urban that are specific to federal programs and funding.

For example, the Canada Housing Infrastructure Fund (CHIF) classifies communities of 30,000 people or less as rural. Under this program, every municipality in Saskatchewan is rural except for Saskatoon, Regina, Prince Albert, Moose Jaw, and Lloydminster (including Alberta population).

WHAT DO URBAN MUNICIPALITIES DO?

Build and Maintain Infrastructure

- Roads, streets, and bridges
- Sidewalks and pathways
- Water and wastewater systems
- Stormwater infrastructure
- Municipal buildings and facilities

Deliver Community Services

- Parks and recreation
- Arenas, pools, and sports fields
- Libraries
- Waste collection
- Community and cultural facilities

Support Safety

- Fire protection
- Emergency management
- Bylaw enforcement
- Community safety initiatives

Plan for Growth

- Housing development
- Land-use planning
- Infrastructure planning
- Asset protection

Grow Local Economies

- Support business
- Attract investment
- Enable development
- Build vibrant communities

The impact of an urban municipality doesn't stop at its municipal boundary. Urban municipalities are regional hubs where people come to work, access services, do business, participate in recreation, and connect with their communities.

HOW ARE MUNICIPAL SERVICES PAID FOR?

- Property taxes
- Utility fees
- User fees
- Provincial and federal funding

Property taxes are the only significant source of revenue that municipalities directly control but are not enough to keep pace with growing needs. SUMA advocates for increased federal and provincial funding for municipalities, while municipalities pursue innovative solutions such as shared services and regional cooperation with nearby municipalities and First Nations.

Urban municipalities may differ in size, geography, and local priorities, but they share a common goal: building safe, vibrant, and resilient communities that help Saskatchewan grow and prosper.

WHO MAKES DECISIONS?

Council Governs

Elected mayors and councillors:

- Set priorities
- Approve budgets
- Pass bylaws
- Establish policies
- Make decisions for the community

Administration Delivers

Municipal staff:

- Deliver services
- Manage operations
- Maintain infrastructure
- Implement council decisions
- Provide professional advice

FACT OR FICTION

Urban municipalities only include communities with large populations.
FICTION. Urban municipality populations range from 15 to over 315,000.

Council is responsible for the day-to-day operations of a municipality.
FICTION. Municipal employees look after day-to-day operations.

The mayor cannot make decisions for the municipality between meetings.
FACT. The mayor can only make decisions at council meetings with council.

You cannot attend your local council meetings.
FICTION. Local council meetings are open to the public. Council may close their meetings to discuss sensitive matters, however, no decisions can be made in private (in camera).

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