



News Release

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**Federal and provincial governments assist municipalities
in infrastructure planning**

Saskatoon, Saskatchewan — The Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association (SUMA) will develop and implement resources and training programs for municipalities to help meet new Public Sector Accounting Board regulations, thanks to an investment by the federal and provincial governments through the Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (MRIF).

The federal-provincial funding, totalling \$444,592, was announced by the Honourable Don Morgan, Minister of Justice and Attorney General on behalf of the Honourable Bill Hutchinson, Minister of Saskatchewan Municipal Affairs and Maurice Vellacott, Member of Parliament for Saskatoon Wanuskewin on behalf of the Honourable Rona Ambrose, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Western Economic Diversification.

“Saskatchewan has an aggressive growth agenda aimed at sustaining and supporting the present boom,” Minister Morgan said. “This means investing in the infrastructure that contributes to our growing and vibrant economy and enhancing the quality of life for the people who live here. I know the money announced today will be put to good use and will help Saskatchewan municipalities serve their residents for generations to come.”

Effective January 1, 2009, every Canadian municipality will be required to identify its tangible capital assets – roadways, water and sewer systems, buildings – in its annual

financial statement. A nationally-standardized reporting system means all levels of government – federal, provincial and municipal – will apply the same accounting principles to prepare their financial statements resulting in improved accountability to taxpayers and better financial management.

“Our Government recognizes that planning is crucial to the long-term sustainability of Canada’s infrastructure,” said MP Vellacott. “This investment will help municipalities better prepare for the repair and replacement of the critical transportation, communications and water management systems that help drive our economy.”

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Taking inventory and recording tangible capital assets is only the first step in the process. Condition assessments and best practices for asset management are all necessary to ensure a comprehensive database of municipal assets will provide the necessary information for municipalities to make informed decisions about asset repair and replacement.

With the federal-provincial MRIF investment, SUMA is working with municipal administrators to:

- 1.) Develop a resource manual that will guide municipalities through the reporting process;
- 2.) Deliver training sessions for administrators on methodology to collect and enter data, and assess the value or depreciate capital assets;
- 3.) Offer accounting and engineering support for technical questions (applying the regulations, valuation of assets, etc.); and
- 4.) Plan for future development of an asset information system using the collected data.

“The reporting of tangible capital assets will be a huge undertaking for municipalities,” said Allan Earle, President SUMA. “The funding provided from MRIF will play a pivotal role in providing the necessary resources to assist urban, rural and northern administrators as they learn to properly report their municipality’s capital assets.”

Under the Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (MRIF) Agreement, the federal and provincial governments committed a combined \$76 million to the Fund, with

participating communities contributing one-half of all costs, raising the total infrastructure investment above \$152 million.

In 2007, the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan provided an additional \$14.9 million to the Fund as part of their commitment to help smaller communities meet their pressing infrastructure needs. This additional funding brings the total federal and provincial investment in MRIF projects to over \$90.9 million.

- 30 -

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