

**Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency  
Rural/Urban Advisory Committee**  
Meeting Minutes for November 19, 2025  
Ramada Hotel – Oak Room 1818 Victoria Avenue, Regina; or  
Virtual Meeting Microsoft Teams

**Urban Advisory Committee**

**Members Present:**

Randy Goulden, Committee Chair, SAMA Board Member, Urban Sector  
Audrey Trombley, SAMA Board Member  
Myron Knafelc (ex officio), SAMA Board Chair  
Kevin Tooley, SUMA Cities  
Bruce Fidler, SUMA Towns  
Lisa Grudnizki, Saskatchewan School Boards Association  
Danielle Longtin, Saskatchewan Assessment Appraisers' Association

**Members Absent**

Dawn Luhning, SAMA Board Member, City Sector  
Walter Strelasky, SUMA Cities  
Vacant, SUMA Towns  
Vacant, SUMA Villages  
Vacant, SUMA Villages  
Vacant, SUMA Board Member  
Doug Allan, Provincial Association of Resort Communities of Saskatchewan

**Rural Advisory Committee**

**Members Present:**

John Wagner, Committee Chair, SAMA Board Member, Rural Sector  
Rod Quintin, SAMA Board Member, Rural Sector  
Myron Knafelc (ex officio), SAMA Board Chair  
Jim Angus, SAMA Board Member  
Ray Allen, SARM Division 2  
Shawn Kramer, SARM Division 3  
Norm Hall, SARM Division 4  
Kim Herbst, SARM Division 6  
Blair Cummins, Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities  
Garry Dixon, Provincial Association of Resort Communities of Saskatchewan  
Kate Kading, Saskatchewan School Boards Association

**Members Absent:**

Vacant, SARM Division 1  
Maurice Werezak, SARM Division 5  
Jeff Sedor, Saskatchewan Assessment Appraisers' Association

**Observers Present:**

Kelly Munce, Ministry of Government Relations  
Andrea Ulrich, Ministry of Government Relations  
Betty Rogers, SAMA CEO

**Observers Absent:**

Jean-Marc Nadeau, SUMA Administration  
Vacant, Saskatchewan School Boards Association  
Tamara Knight, Urban Municipal Administrators Association of Saskatchewan

**SAMA Administration Present:**

Rebecca Schultz, Committee Secretary, SAMA  
Shaun Cooney, SAMA TS&P  
Karlo Simonson, SAMA QAD  
Darwin Kanius, SAMA TS&P

**Observers Present:**

Dami Ogundiwin, Ministry of Government Relations  
Myron Kopec, Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities  
Kathy Bank, Saskatchewan School Boards Association  
Trent Sim, Rural Municipal Administrators Association of Saskatchewan  
Betty Rogers, CEO, SAMA

**Guests Present:**

Garry Hammett, SAMA TS&P

**Guests Absent:**

Patrick Chastel, Ministry of Agriculture  
Nik Whalen, Reeve, RM 187

**SAMA Administration Present:**

Kim Hardy, Committee Secretary, SAMA  
Kevin Groat, SAMA ASD  
Andrew Workman, SAMA TS&P  
Karlo Simonson, SAMA QAD

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Decision/Resolution:</b>
1. Call to Order	John Wagner, Chair of the Rural Advisory Committee, called the meeting to order at 10:15 am.
2. Opening Remarks	John Wagner, SAMA Board Member, welcomed attendees to the Rural/Urban Advisory Committee.
3. Introductions	In-person attendees introduced themselves.
4. Approval of the Meeting Agenda	<b>MOTION</b> by Norm Hall that the agenda be approved. <b>Carried</b>
5. Minutes from the Previous Business Meeting held March 26, 2025	<b>MOTION</b> by Bruce Fiddler that the minutes of the March 26, 2025, joint Rural and Urban Advisory committee's business meeting be adopted as circulated. <b>Carried</b>
6. Business Arising from the Minutes of each respective Committee	No issues arising from the previous meeting on March 26, 2025.
7. <u>SAMA Update</u>	
Item 7a: CEO Report	PowerPoint presentation by Betty Rogers, SAMA's CEO.  <b><u>Committee Comments</u></b>  No questions or comments from the Committees.  <b>MOTION</b> by Norm Hall that the Committees receive the CEO report.  <b>Carried</b>
Item 7b: Assessment Services Division Report	PowerPoint presentation by Kevin Groat, ASD.  <b><u>Committee Comments</u></b>  <u>Rural Member</u> : What is the gap between SAMA's current budget and the required budget for 2026?  <u>SAMA CEO</u> : If the total budget remains fixed, SAMA will be operating at deficit in 2026. However, SAMA has a plan to manage operations to the best degree possible, such as leaving positions vacant or minimizing other expenses.  <u>SAMA Board Member</u> : From the Board's perspective, the impacts from budget are already being felt by SAMA. For example, SAMA will be decreasing the inspection goal from 110,000 to 100,000 properties in 2026.

The key areas where SAMA is requesting additional funding is for technological enhancements to ensure that the agency is keeping pace in areas like artificial intelligence (AI) and geographic information systems (GIS). Additionally, SAMA has requested additional funding for personnel to ensure that staff are in-place to mitigate key person risks as staff retire over the coming years.

Rural Member: Did SAMA have to cancel some reinspection plans in RMs due to these budget issues?

SAMA Administration: These RMs were not impacted by the budget issues for SAMA.

SAMA chose to reschedule these inspections until next year due to several factors such as new staff needing to be trained and support of value work in the first revaluation year.

SAMA Board Member: SUMA and SARM have increasingly been asked to assist with funding. For example, in the 1980's the province provided 65% of SAMA's funding, but this has been reduced to 55% from the provincial government and 45% from SARM and SUMA municipalities.

**MOTION** by Kim Herbst that the Committees receive the SAMA ASD report.

**Carried**

Item 7c: Assessment Governance Report

PowerPoint presentation by Shaun Cooney, TS&P.

#### **Committee Comments**

Urban Member: What are SAMA's specific funding requests for next year?

SAMA Administration: SAMA has a four-year plan that outlines a capital funding request to further incorporate technologies, such as GIS and AI, into SAMA's processes. Additionally, SAMA has requested a budget increase to cover inflationary costs of operation.

SAMA Board Member: SAMA has accomplished remarkable things while working within their existing budget. The additional funding request should provide further efficiencies in the work of the agency.

Rural Member: For GIS and AI development, will SAMA develop these internally or will external companies be contracted?

SAMA Administration: Currently, SAMA has been developing these areas internally through our Information Services (IS) and Technical Standards & Policy (TS&P) divisions.

To ensure that the development of these technologies is cost effective, SAMA has been utilizing free resources such as QGIS and Sentinel II imagery. In the future, SAMA may need to look into other products with more advanced features, but these free resources provide a sound starting point for the agency.

Rural Member: Has SAMA worked with other organizations, which are also utilizing GIS, to develop this further?

SAMA Administration: As part of developing GIS, SAMA has been working with several other organizations, such as the Water Security Agency, to ensure that we are not duplicating work that has already been completed by other government organization.

Rural Member: Most of the province has been covered with LiDAR (light detection and ranging). Does SAMA have access to that data?

SAMA Administration: SAMA, through the Saskatchewan Geospatial Imagery Collaborative, has been provided access to LiDAR data for the province.

LiDAR should be a beneficial tool for SAMA to begin providing to appraisers to assist with their valuation work. This could include assisting with identifying agricultural land rating areas from the office, which would create efficiencies for the agency.

**MOTION** by Bruce Fiddler that the Committees receive the Assessment Governance report.

**Carried**

8. Assessment Appeal Update:  
Item 8a: Assessment Appeals Update

Power point presentation by Darwin Kanius, TS&P.

Committee Comments

SAMA Board Member: Does the Ministry of Government Relations have an update on the one appeal per property within the revaluation cycle recommendation for legislation? This was a recommendation that was developed from the IPTI Assessment System Review.

Ministry of Government Relations: This recommendation has been discussed by the Ministry and other stakeholders. At this time, the Ministry is not planning to move forward with this recommendation as it would limit the ability to appeal for property owners.

**MOTION** by Myron Kopec that the Committees receive the Assessment Appeals Update report.

**Carried**

Item 8b: SAMA's Optimization of Legal Resources for Assessment Appeals

Power point presentation by Darwin Kanius, TS&P and Laurel Korbo, ASD.

### **Committee Comments**

SAMA Board Member: SAMA administration has done an excellent job with tracking and reducing legal costs over the last several years. The investment that was made several years ago with additional legal costs appears to be paying dividends with appeal decisions over the last few years.

SAMA Administration: SAMA recently converted a vacant position at the agency to a Support of Value Coordinator role. This has provided an excellent resource for tracking, handling appeals more efficiently, and the ability to provide training to other staff.

Urban Member: SAMA's reduction in legal costs over the last several years provides support for SAMA's funding request from the provincial government.

SAMA Board Member: Thank you. Another aspect to consider is the increased revenue for municipalities and the education sector that SAMA provides through our core functions of maintenance, reinspection, etc.

This is another area that should be considered by stakeholders when reviewing SAMA's funding request because decreases to SAMA's budget may impact revenue for municipalities and the education sector.

**MOTION** by Kevin Tooley that the Committees receive the Optimization of Legal Resources for Assessment Appeals report.

**Carried**

*Break from 12:00 pm to 12:55 pm*

9. 2029 Revaluation Preparations:

Item 9a: Revaluation Board Orders

PowerPoint presentation by Andrew Workman, TS&P.

### **Committee Comments**

No questions or comments from the Committees.

**MOTION** by Norm Hall that the Committees receive the Revaluation Board Orders report.

**Carried**

Item 9b: Publications and Policy Considerations

PowerPoint presentation by Andrew Workman, TS&P.

### **Committee Comments**

Rural Observer: Would Sask. Crop Insurance have information where irrigated land is located that could be provided to SAMA?

SAMA Administration: SAMA has contacted other organizations, but there is not a single repository for this information.

Rural Member: The combination of LiDAR and GIS to identify centre pivot/irrigated land should provide sound results.

SAMA Administration: These should be great tools to help identify the irrigated land within the province.

The next step for SAMA will be reviewing and considering how irrigated land should be included within the agricultural land models and what should be included. For example, should the increased sale price of irrigated land drive the adjustment or should it be related to the value of the equipment needed for irrigated land?

**MOTION** by Kim Herbst that the Committees receive the Publications and Policy Considerations report.

**Carried**

10. Future Developments:

Item 10a: SAMA's Revaluation Continuous Improvement Review

PowerPoint presentation by Rebecca Schultz, ASD.

Committee Comments

No questions or comments from the Committees.

**MOTION** by Bruce Fiddler that the Committees receive SAMA's Revaluation Continuous Improvement Review report.

**Carried**

Item 10b: The Use of Artificial Intelligence in Property Assessment

PowerPoint presentation by Shaun Cooney, TS&P.

Committee Comments

SAMA Board Member: The potential of AI is immense. However, SAMA will need to ensure that we are cautious with our utilization and testing of AI.

Rural Member: Does AI present any cybersecurity issues?

SAMA Administration: AI can have cybersecurity concerns depending upon the AI that is utilized. SAMA is reviewing the tools that are out there and ensuring that confidential information is protected.

As part of the AI discussion, SAMA has been connecting with other jurisdictions in Canada to review how they are utilizing AI within their assessment systems.

**MOTION** by Kevin Tooley that the Committees receive The Use of Artificial Intelligence in Property Assessment report.

**Carried**

11. Advisory Member Feedback Session:

Facilitated by Shaun Cooney, TS&P.

SAMA Administration: SAMA appreciates your attendance today. Over the past several years we have incorporated a hybrid SAMA advisory meeting model that allows members to attend virtually or in person.

SAMA has a new project charter established to review the structure of the SAMA advisory committee meetings to determine where we can make improvements and ensure the information we share is beneficial to stakeholders. We are looking for feedback from our advisory members on how SAMA can enhance these consultation meetings in the future. We welcome any feedback you have regarding the format and content of future meetings.

Rural Observer: Related to the SAMA budget request, municipalities will struggle to cover the funding difference should the provincial government not provide additional funding to SAMA.

SAMA Board Member: SAMA recommends that any SARM and SUMA representatives that have concerns related to funding should provide these concerns to government for their consideration.

Rural Observer: Are the advisory committees structures defined through legislation?

SAMA Administration: Provincial legislation does contain the requirements for SAMA to conduct its consultation through our advisory committees. The urban, rural and city committees are outlined in legislation. At the direction of the SAMA board, we also established a commercial committee to round out provincial stakeholder feedback.

The advisory committees are unique to Saskatchewan and allow for stakeholder groups to provide feedback on assessment policy and other items directly to SAMA. SAMA has recently had other jurisdictions in Canada reach out to discuss how these committees are setup and managed.

An additional aspect for the advisory committees is regulated policy needs to be approved by SAMA's Board, and subject to that, the Minister of Government Relations. The Minister requires SAMA to provide information on feedback received from stakeholder groups, which make the advisory committees a key role in that process.

Rural Observer: Is there a term of reference, and roles and responsibilities document available to advisory committee members?

SAMA Administration: Yes, there is a document available on our website. SAMA's website also contains other information including previous advisory committee meeting minutes and documents outlining the roles of advisory committee members. Any members of the committees can reach out to SAMA, and we can provide you with more information.

*Previous Advisory Meeting Minutes can be accessed here:*

<https://www.sama.sk.ca/document-library-news/meeting-minutes>

*Terms of Reference can be accessed through links available on this page:*

<https://www.sama.sk.ca/about-sama/our-people/advisory-committees>

Rural Member: Are hamlets and special service areas assessed differently depending on their proximity to larger centers?

SAMA Administration: All of our market-based valuations are completed using market data. This means that SAMA is using sales information to develop assessment values. If the sales are showing a higher value closer to a larger municipality, then that is going to be reflected in the market based valuations.

Municipalities can also be clustered together in a market grouping for this analysis. Each revaluation, SAMA's assessment services division will review updated sales information and ensure property values are accurately reflecting the market data.

Rural Member: For hamlets, if one goes bankrupt and they need to merge with another municipality; the hamlet can request that an urban municipality merge with them. That urban municipality can deny the request. However, a rural municipality cannot deny the request. In my opinion, this is not fair for rural municipalities in the province.

For the GIS flooding tool, is SAMA reviewing this information ahead of revaluations?

SAMA Administration: In the past, SAMA has relied on property owner information to determine the flooding adjustment that should be applied.

The flooding tool will allow SAMA to take multiple years of GIS imagery to create a more fact based flooding adjustment. SAMA currently has access to around 10 years of imagery data. In the future, when more data is available for the tool, its application can be applied more efficiently throughout the province.

If any municipalities have a request to review drainage in their areas, SAMA recommends that this be submitted with their annual maintenance.



Rural Member: Based upon information from Ontario, does SAMA know what the overall savings could be from using AI?

SAMA Administration: From SAMA's review of Ontario information, they are currently using AI as a tool to assist with their core business functions, such as aggregating sales information that can be sold to external clients. The usage of AI has helped Ontario to increase their profits and reduce their reliance on municipal funding.

SAMA does not have an exact estimate on the potential savings of AI, but from a high-level it should assist with various aspects of SAMA's core services. SAMA will continue to discuss AI development with other jurisdictions to ensure that AI usage is developed in a sound fashion.

SAMA Board Member: SAMA staff demonstrated today that their work is focused on providing a quality product at the same time as building resiliency. As discussed, SAMA will need additional funding to ensure that this quality product can be maintained in the future.

SAMA CEO: If there is an opportunity for SAMA to speak in front of the SSBA or other groups, please let us know.

Urban Member: With successful implementation of AI and GIS technologies, SAMA could be a resource to many government entities and to private companies as well.

To assist with stakeholder understanding, SAMA could develop a discussion paper on these technologies and what their anticipated benefits and costs would be for SAMA as well as external stakeholders.

SAMA Administration: SAMA can consider creating this type of discussion paper.

Legislation allows SAMA to sell assessment data on behalf of stakeholders, supporting our budget needs. We receive multiple monthly requests for various data types, highlighting its value. We're evaluating how best to share this information and develop products for stakeholders. Government ministries and agencies are requesting this information and are exploring tools like GIS and AI. Due to a lack of resources available for information requests, we are evaluating future products to better serve external groups.

## 12. Other Business

Item 12a: Next Urban and Rural Advisory Committees Meeting

The next Rural and Urban Advisory Committee Meeting is currently scheduled for March 25, 2026. Location to be determined.

Item 12b: SAMA's Annual General Meeting

Scheduled for April 22, 2026, in Saskatoon.

**MOTION** by Audrey Trombley to adjourn the meeting at 2:15 pm.

**Carried**