



City of Prince Albert

RPT 2026-109

TITLE: University of Saskatchewan and City of Prince Albert Memorandum of Understanding 2026

DATE: April 20, 2026

TO: City Council

PUBLIC: X

INCAMERA:

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the Memorandum of Understanding between the University of Saskatchewan and The City of Prince Albert be approved; and,
2. That the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized to execute the Memorandum of Understanding and any necessary documents on behalf of The City.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The City of Prince Albert and the University of Saskatchewan (UofS) have an active and growing partnership grounded in collaborative research and community-focused initiatives. Regular engagement with UofS students and staff has already informed practical improvements such as the introduction of a downtown parking app and identified emerging needs, including student housing. Several research projects have taken place or are underway in partnership with the Community Safety and Well-Being Division.

In September 2025, the UofS formally requested that this relationship be strengthened through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) modeled on the successful framework used in Saskatoon. Since then, Administration and the UofS have been developing a draft MOU and designing a cross-departmental working group to address local challenges through applied, solutions-based research.

The proposed MOU is non-binding and does not create financial commitments. Instead, it establishes a clear structure for collaboration and supports evidence-driven approaches to issues identified across City departments.

Leveraging Saskatoon's "Research Junction" model as a guide, this partnership offers Prince Albert the opportunity to access innovative research, develop practical solutions to municipal challenges, and move towards The City's strategic goal of being a progressive community through sustained, coordinated collaboration with the UofS.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Prince Albert and the UofS have established several partnership projects, particularly, in conjunction with the Community Safety and Well-Being (CSWB) Division of Community Development. These projects include an ethics-based research project to evaluate the impact of the alcohol bylaw, the Community Homelessness Advisory Committee (which co-hosted a homelessness knowledge sharing event in October 2025), and collaboration on Wastewater Surveillance analysis. In addition, CSWB undertakes regular meetings with the UofS alongside stakeholder engagement with students studying downtown, which has informed the introduction of a parking app, and a shared understanding of the need for student accommodation downtown. There is an opportunity to use this approach to support collaborative solutions to meet other departmental needs.

More recently a Letter of Agreement was signed between the City of Prince Albert and the UofS for research, evaluation, and knowledge mobilization work in relation to the Mobile Complex Needs Initiative through federal funding.

On September 22, 2025, Jay Wilson, Principal of Prince Albert Campus, presented to Executive Committee, requesting the formalization of a partnership between the UofS and The City of Prince Albert. There is an existing MOU between the UofS and The City of Saskatoon that is proving to be beneficial and provides a framework for Prince Albert.

At this meeting, Motion 0190 moved that CORR 2025-76 be received and referred to Community Development for review and report.

PROPOSED APPROACH AND RATIONALE:

Since September, the UofS and Administration have continued to meet to develop a draft MOU as well as develop a framework for a cross-departmental working group that can identify local challenges and find collaborative solutions through solutions-based research.

The MOU is a broad, non-binding agreement that creates a framework for cooperation, without creating any legal or financial commitments. The goal is to create a clear path and process for collaboration, to build on work that is already underway, and to create solutions to problems that departments across The City identify.

Potential areas of collaboration include data sharing, technological innovation, mental health and wellness, housing, and economic development.

Saskatoon's "Research Junction" model is a co-funded initiative between the City of Saskatoon and the University and is a municipal-university partnership that generates practical, evidence-based solutions. Examples of City of Saskatoon projects include:

- Looking for new ways and new materials to build winter-resistant roadways to withstand the Saskatchewan winters.
- Supports for Firefighters mental health.
- Ways to remove pollutants from wastewater.
- Improvements to supply chains to reduce repair times for water main breaks.

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- Exploring avenues for property tax reform.
 - Exploring sustainable theatre strategies.
 - Measuring outcomes from The City's Community Safety and Well-Being activity.

An MOU between the UofS and The City of Prince Albert would facilitate solutions to challenges specific to Prince Albert.

CONSULTATIONS:

Legal counsel has been working with the UofS to draft an MOU. Once approved, a cross-departmental group will collaborate with the UofS on terms of reference for the working group to identify initial projects of focus.

COMMUNICATION AND/OR ANNOUNCEMENT PLAN:

A signing event is planned for April 24, and a media release will follow Council approval of the MOU.

BUDGET/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

At this time the only resource implications associated with this partnership is staff participation in the working group. The UofS have committed to making a financial contribution in 2026-2027 to facilitate research projects. Depending on outcomes in 2026, Administration may make a 2027 budget recommendation to contribute funding to the research partnership for Council's consideration. Irrespective, the MOU does not bind The City to any financial commitment.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS:

There are no other considerations at this time.

OPTIONS TO RECOMMENDATION:

The option to the recommendation is to not proceed with the MOU. This option was not recommended given that:

- An informal partnership is well established; and,
- The UofS is an critical partner, with the Prince Albert campus as an important asset for downtown.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

This report speaks to several priorities in the 2026-2029 Strategic Plan, in particular:

(Strategic Direction – Building a Robust Economy) Strategic Goal 3: Revitalization of the City's downtown core.

(Strategic Direction – Promoting a Progressive Community) Strategic Goal 2: Collaborate with local partners and other levels of government to establish the City as a leading partner for social infrastructure innovation.

(Strategic Direction – Professional and High-Quality Public Service) Strategic Goal 2: Establish a regular, sustainable cycle for the review and continuous improvement of municipal services.

OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN:

The objectives of the MOU address multiple aspects of the Official Community Plan, by formalizing the opportunity for research partnerships to address City priorities.

PUBLIC NOTICE:

Public Notice pursuant to the Public Notice Bylaw No. 24 of 2015 is not required.

ATTACHMENTS:

UofS and CoPA MOU FINAL

Written by: Anna Dinsdale, Community Safety and Well-Being Manager

Approved by: Acting Director, Community Development & Acting City Manager