

Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development
The Rural Community Adaptation Grant Program

Guidelines and Criteria

Objective:

The Rural Community Adaptation Grant Program (RCAP) consists of \$15 million new funding to increase the capacity of rural communities and regions to transition and adapt, resulting in greater resilience and new, more diverse economic opportunities. This grant is part of a Government of Alberta (GOA) Community Adaptation and Transition Initiative to support communities. Overall funding for the Initiative was made available through the National Community Development Trust.

Program Description and Eligible Activities

The program will support eligible projects that are community based and focus on creative community driven actions and solutions that include at least one of the following project themes:

- *Assessment and Planning* – projects that engage a community to take stock of its current situation and plan for an adaptation or transition;
- *Capacity Building* – projects that increase community knowledge, skills and training through building youth, enhancing community leadership, or strengthening community organizations;
- *Rural economic development* – community led economic development projects or strategies such as entrepreneurship encouragement, regional cluster development, the innovative use of technology, value added product development, other economic infrastructure, and economic diversification;
- *Unique community solutions* – other adaptation activities driven by rural communities and regions that can demonstrate a lasting impact that might not otherwise be included in the above.

Please note that projects must comply with Canada's obligations pursuant to the North American Free Trade Agreement, the Softwood Lumber Agreement, and its membership in the World Trade Organization.

Eligible Applicants

Rural communities in transition represented by local governments (i.e. local authorities as defined in the Municipal Government Act that are legal entities, bands as defined in the Indian Act, or Metis settlements) that are in or facing an imminent economic hardship caused by global economic volatility, a significant environmental event, or circumstances that require a new direction for the community.

Incorporated community organizations (e.g. not-for-profit organizations, industry associations, or regional organizations) that are collaborating with a rural community.

For the purposes of this program, a rural community is defined as any Alberta community outside of the seven urban centres of Calgary, Edmonton, Fort McMurray, Grande Prairie, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, or Red Deer.

Eligible Costs

- Staff directly employed by the project (incremental to ongoing business of an organization)
- Rental or lease of facilities and improvements
- Specialized machinery, equipment, or technology
- Consultants, technical and professional fees
- Direct costs for materials and supplies for the project
- IT and Communications
- Domestic travel consistent with GOA travel rates

Ineligible Costs include:

- Purchase of Land or Vehicles
- Goods and Services Tax (GST) or Costs of borrowing
- Construction costs of buildings or core public infrastructure (e.g. roads, sewer etc.)
- Costs to set up a Society, Association, or Company
- Municipal debt retirement or lost tax base
- Costs that are already paid for by another government program or organization
- Costs incurred prior to project approval
- Any other cost deemed by the Minister to be ineligible

Funding Levels

Up to 90 percent of eligible non-capital projects costs and up to 50 percent of eligible capital costs to a maximum of \$500,000 per project.

Minimum grant size is \$10,000.

Applicant must provide a minimum of 10 percent of approved total non capital project costs and a minimum of 25 percent of approved capital project costs provided other necessary funding is available. In kind contributions may be considered. Applicants are encouraged to leverage this grant program with others where eligible.

Other Funding and Assessment Criteria

Initiatives will be targeted to high priority, vulnerable communities including:

- Agriculture and forestry reliant communities
- Communities directly impacted by the Mountain Pine Beetle (MPB) infestation
- Other communities that can demonstrate that they are going through an economic transition and must adapt

Other considerations for establishing priority include:

- Level of reliance on a single resource industry, level of MPB infestation, or level of economic/population decline
- Level of community/regional engagement, support, collaboration, and partnership
- Project implements an action or strategy identified in an existing community plan
- Level of innovation or use of technology
- Capacity to successfully complete project
- Availability of other funding sources
- Ability to become self sustaining in the long term

Funding must be approved before projects are initiated.

Program Term

Program funding will expire on March 31, 2011 or earlier depending on availability of funds.

Application and Selection Process

Project applicants must complete an application form and submit a project proposal to Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development (ARD) where it will be screened for meeting program requirements and criteria. The final date for applications will be December 31, 2010.

Eligible applications will then be evaluated for acceptability and priority by a Cross-Ministry Program Committee that will make project funding recommendations for the consideration of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development. Authority for approving or rejecting applications rests with the Minister.

Not all projects will be approved. Only those best meeting the criteria will be considered.

Other

Applicants whose projects are approved must enter into a grant agreement with the Government of Alberta in order to receive funding. The funding agreement will contain all the terms and conditions of the funding.

For Further Information Contact

Rural Development Division
Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development
#106, J.G. O'Donoghue Building
7000 – 113 Street
Edmonton, AB
T6H 5T6

Tel: 780-427-2409
Fax: 780-427-4227