

# Agricultural Societies Infrastructure Revitalization Program

## Program Guidelines

### Description

The Agricultural Societies Infrastructure Revitalization Program (ASIRP) (the “program”) is a new capital grant program administered by Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation to support major repairs at existing agricultural society facilities. Budget 2023 allocated \$2.5 million per year for three years for the program (fiscal years 2023-24, 2024-25, and 2025-26, which run April 1 – March 31).

ASIRP will contribute to ensuring that agricultural society facilities continue to play an important part in encouraging improvement in agriculture and enhanced quality of life in communities across Alberta.

These guidelines are provided for informational purposes only. In the event of any conflict or inconsistency between these guidelines and the program terms and conditions, the program terms and conditions prevail.

### Program outcomes

The program is intended to help address issues related to aging agricultural society infrastructure to promote one or more of following outcomes:

- Extending the useful life of the facility or infrastructure
- Addressing health or safety issues
- Improving functionality or service delivery
- Reducing operating costs

### Eligibility

Eligible applicants must:

1. be an agricultural society incorporated under the Agricultural Societies Act (Alberta) or are designated as an agricultural society in Section 2 of the Agricultural Societies Regulation,
2. be in good standing under the *Agricultural Societies Act* (i.e. up to date on annual returns, bylaws, annual general meetings, financial statements, with the overall affairs of the society generally being conducted in a proper manner);
3. own or operate a facility or other built infrastructure. The agricultural society must own or have an operating lease agreement in place with the owner of the land in question with the authority to undertake the contemplated repairs; and
4. meet all other qualifications specified in the program terms and conditions.

This program extends to existing facilities or infrastructure in place at the time of the application only.

### Examples of facilities and built infrastructure (not an exhaustive list)

- Community halls, arenas, curling rinks, riding arenas, grandstands, pavilions, barns, agriplexes, and rec centres.

### Examples of projects (not an exhaustive list)

- Roof repair, commercial kitchens, washrooms, accessibility improvements, lighting, heating, insulation, refrigeration, ventilation, windows, and doors.

### Eligible project costs

- Costs directly attributable to the approved project include:
  - Contractors (e.g. trades people, labourers).

- Project materials, supplies, and fixed equipment (e.g. equipment that are permanently installed on the site such as boilers, exhaust fans, ice plants).
- Expenses invoiced to and paid by the agricultural society.
- Capital asset/equipment must be owned or operated by the agricultural society for a minimum of five years following the conclusion of the project.
- The agricultural society must contribute 20 per cent of the total eligible project costs, to a maximum of \$25,000.
- Projects must have total eligible project costs of at least \$12,500 to be eligible for the program.

#### Ineligible project costs

- New construction
- Motorized vehicles and other non-fixed equipment (e.g. passenger vehicles, tractors, skid steers, riding mowers, Zambonis)
- Tools and small power equipment
- Projects that do not result in an actual physical repair being completed (e.g. projects that only involve engineering, feasibility studies, design work)
- Regular operating costs
- Expenses paid by someone else or reimbursed by someone else other than the agricultural society
- Expenses incurred outside the project term (as detailed in the application) or before the application was submitted
- GST, travel expenses, land acquisition
- Administrative expenses (e.g. legal fees, bookkeeping, bank charges, permits)
- Volunteer expenses (e.g. honorariums, gifts, food)
- Non-arm's length transactions that may involve a conflict of interest of board members or staff
- Costs deemed ineligible by the Minister

#### Funding parameters

- The maximum amount of grant that may be awarded for a project is \$100,000. The minimum amount is \$10,000.
- An agricultural society may apply to the program more than once. However:
  - Only one grant application per fiscal year is allowed.
  - The agricultural society must complete its project (including final reporting) before applying again.
  - The maximum amount that an agricultural society may receive over the duration of the program is \$100,000.
- If approved, all grant funds are provided at the beginning of the project.

#### Matching requirements

- Applicants must provide at least 20 per cent of the total eligible project costs as their matching requirement, within the following limits:

Total Eligible Project Costs	Matching Requirement (20%)	Grant Amount
\$12,500	\$2,500	\$10,000 (Program minimum)
\$125,000	\$25,000	\$100,000
Over \$125,000	\$25,000*	\$100,000 (Program maximum)

(Note: Total eligible project costs may exceed \$125,000 but do not require matching above that level as the maximum grant size is capped.)

- Matching requirements must be confirmed (approved) or in place (received) before applying.
- Applicant's portion can be cash, in kind, or a combination.
  - Can include internal funds, project partners, federal or municipal funding, and donations.
  - Cannot include other Government of Alberta grants.
  - In-kind contributions include:
    - General labour at \$20/hr
    - Skilled labour (trades) at \$40/hr
    - Donated equipment (including operator and fuel) at \$120/hr (e.g. scissor lift, skid steer, picker truck, welding truck)
    - Donated materials at fair market value

- In-kind contributions must be supported through donation letters or invoices and volunteer sign-in sheets with actual hours included in the final report.

### **Project assessment**

- Applications are evaluated on a first-come, first-served basis so long as all eligibility requirements are met (i.e. eligible applicant, facility, project, and expenses).
- Projects must be fully planned prior to commencement with clearly defined projects costs, timelines, and outcomes.
- Supporting documentation must be provided. Supporting documentation includes quotes/estimates to support project budget, property title or lease agreement as applicable, letter of support from owner if applicable, and photos of needed repairs.

### **How to apply**

- Applicants must submit an application form and agree to the program terms and conditions included with the application.
- Applicants may be contacted for further information.

### **Project management**

- Applicants are responsible for all local permits and approvals as required.
- All spending and borrowing must be done in accordance with each society's bylaws (e.g. financial signing authority, transaction limits, borrowing limits).
- Upon receipt of grant funding, successful applicants will have 18 months to complete their project and provide a final report. If the project is completed sooner, applicants must provide a final report within two months of completing the project.

### **Funding limitations**

- Program funding is limited, and once the annual budget has been fully allocated, the program will be closed until the following fiscal year. Applications received after the budget has been fully allocated will be kept on file for the next year unless rescinded by the applicant.
- Agricultural societies are not guaranteed to receive their full funding request.
- Not all agricultural societies will receive funding under the program.
- Annual budgets and appropriations from the legislature are subject to change.

### **Intake deadline**

The 2023-24 program intake will close January 31, 2024. Note that the budget may be fully allocated before the intake period closes. Subsequent program intakes will be confirmed in the future.

### **Contact**

- Phone: 780-968-3517 (toll free: 310-0000 before the phone number)
- Fax: 780-963-4709 or email: [af.agsocietygrants@gov.ab.ca](mailto:af.agsocietygrants@gov.ab.ca)