

Alberta Community Partnership Program Guidelines

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Alberta Community Partnership Program Guidelines

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1. Guidelines

These guidelines are intended to assist applicants in completing Alberta Community Partnership (ACP) applications and financial reporting requirements for the program year. Before applying, applicants should consider both the general program information supplied in the main part of the guidelines and the component-specific information in the schedule(s).

2. Program Highlights

- All applicants and grant recipients are required to submit their grant applications, amendment requests and statements of funding and expenditures (SFEs) through ACP Online (ACPO).
 - Access to ACPO is through MAConnect at www.mconnect.alberta.ca/MAConnect, the web portal that provides external stakeholders secure access to Municipal Affairs' key business applications.
 - Municipalities that already use MAConnect can request staff access to ACPO through the municipality's MAConnect Stakeholder Administrator. The Stakeholder Administrator is the person delegated to manage access to applications and other forms in MAConnect on behalf of the municipality through the MAConnect Stakeholder Agreement.
 - Section 4 outlines the submission method, including additional detail on ACPO and the Stakeholder Agreement.
- Intermunicipal Collaboration (IC) project eligibility continues to give priority to projects that focus on Intermunicipal Collaboration Frameworks and Intermunicipal Development Plans (see Schedules 1A and 1B).
 - IC applications are due by January 20, 2020. Applications submitted after the deadline will not be considered.
 - The application must include a certification that council resolutions supporting the project are in place. Partnerships that do not have the required council resolutions in place prior to the application deadline must provide confirmation of their resolutions to Municipal Affairs via email to acp.grants@gov.ab.ca by March 2, 2020 (see Schedule 1A).

- The Cooperative Processes stream of the Mediation and Cooperative Processes (MCP) component continues to require that applicants provide cost-share contributions.
- Municipal Internship (MI) applications were due October 1 of the current program year.
- The Local Land Use Planning component is no longer available. It was a limited-term component that provided grants to municipalities with populations of up to 3,500 to create Municipal Development Plans (MDPs) for the first time.

3. Key Dates and Contacts

ACTIVITY	TIMELINE	QUESTIONS? CONTACT
Project Application Submission	Municipal Internship due October 1, 2019; Intermunicipal Collaboration due January 20, 2020; and Mediation and Cooperative Processes, Municipal Restructuring, and Strategic Initiatives accepted up to February 3, 2020.	Call a Grant Advisor at 780-422-7125 (toll-free 310-0000), or email acp.grants@gov.ab.ca
Statement of Funding and Expenditures (SFE)	Due within 60 days of project completion date identified in the conditional grant agreement.	Call a Grant Advisor at 780-422-7125 (toll-free 310-0000), or email acp.grants@gov.ab.ca
Communication and Project Recognition	Ongoing.	Call a Grant Advisor at 780-422-7125 (toll-free 310-0000), or email acp.grants@gov.ab.ca

4. Submission Method

Alberta Community Partnership Online (ACPO)

ACPO is available through MAConnect. ACPO gives municipalities the ability to:

- create, edit, and submit ACP applications online;
- view and track the status of ACP applications;
- view agreement, payment, and reporting summary information for projects funded under ACP or the former Regional Collaboration Program (RCP);
- create, edit and submit ACP and RCP amendment requests; and
- create, edit and submit ACP and RCP SFEs.

Municipalities that already use MAConnect can request staff access to ACPO through the municipality's MAConnect Stakeholder Administrator. The Stakeholder Administrator is the person delegated to manage access to applications in MAConnect on behalf of the municipality through the MAConnect Stakeholder Agreement.

All current Stakeholder Administrators are able to submit an electronic request through their MAConnect dashboard to grant a staff member access to ACPO. If the municipality needs to assign another Stakeholder Administrator, a request can be emailed to ACPOaccess@gov.ab.ca.

Municipalities that do not have access to MAConnect will need to enter into a Stakeholder Agreement before requesting access to ACPO. The Stakeholder Agreement can be requested by emailing to ACPOaccess@gov.ab.ca or contacting 780-644-2413 (toll-free in Alberta by first dialing 310-0000). Once the Stakeholder Agreement has been signed and returned to Municipal Affairs, the municipality will be able to request access to ACPO through their designated Stakeholder Administrator.

An ACPO help guide is available on the ACP program website at: www.alberta.ca/alberta-community-partnership.aspx.

5. Program Objective

The objective of the ACP program is to improve the viability and long-term sustainability of municipalities by providing support for regional collaboration and capacity building initiatives.

The ACP program is designed to support municipalities in attaining the following key program outcomes:

- New or enhanced regional municipal services;
- Improved municipal capacity to respond to municipal and regional priorities; and
- Effective intermunicipal relations through joint and collaborative activities.

6. Funding Components

Project funding is administered under five distinct funding components. Information regarding specific objectives, eligibility criteria, and other conditions for each component are found in Schedules 1-5.

Intermunicipal Collaboration (IC) (Schedule 1A)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop regional land use plans and service delivery frameworks
Municipal Restructuring (MR) (Schedule 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore regional governance and minimize costs associated with municipal restructuring processes such as amalgamation, dissolution, or viability reviews
Mediation and Cooperative Processes (MCP) (Schedule 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Resolve intermunicipal conflict through dispute resolution alternatives and/or develop collaborative protocols
Municipal Internship (MI) (Schedule 4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recruit and train interns to pursue senior administrator, finance officer, and land use planner positions in municipal government
Strategic Initiatives (SI) (Schedule 5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support for initiatives that align with provincial priorities and address intermunicipal needs of strategic significance

7. Eligibility Requirements

7.1) Eligible Applicants

Applicant Type	Column Heading
Municipalities (cities, towns, villages, summer villages, municipal districts, specialized municipalities, special areas)	All*
Improvement Districts	IC, MCP, or SI
Metis Settlements	IC, MCP, or SI
Townsite of Redwood Meadows Administration Society	IC, MCP, or SI
Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board and Calgary Metropolitan Region Board	MI Land Use Planner or SI
Municipally-controlled planning service agencies	MI Land Use Planner

* Eligibility to apply under the MI streams is dependent on municipal population (see Schedule 4).

First Nations are eligible to participate under the IC component as non-managing, formal project partners on IC project applications. A band council resolution is required to confirm project participation.

The Minister may vary any program criteria, such as eligibility and application requirements, to respond to the Government of Alberta and Municipal Affairs' priorities.

7.2) Contributions to Other Entities

Ineligible entities under the ACP include individuals, for-profit corporations, not-for-profit organizations, regional service commissions (excluding planning commissions), intermunicipal entities, and municipal subsidiary corporations (for-profit and not-for-profit).

Successful applicants may contract these entities to conduct project activities. In these instances, the contracted entity is not considered a project partner, and the applicant remains responsible for the use of the funds, achieving project outcomes, and reporting on activities related to the approved project.

7.3) Eligible Projects

Eligible project information is provided in the component schedules.

7.4) Ineligible Expenses

The following expenses are ineligible for all components:

- Existing and ongoing operational costs;
- Floodway mapping costs;
- Costs already funded under other grant programs; and
- Goods and Services Tax (GST).

8. Application Process

8.1) Project Application

A separate application form is required for each project submission.

Project applications can be submitted any time prior to the deadline(s) specified in Section 3.

Applications submitted through ACPO contain a certification statement to be completed by the authorized user, and do not require a signature.

8.2) Review and Approval Process

Each project application submitted to Municipal Affairs will be reviewed to ensure it meets the requirements outlined in these guidelines. Once a project is assessed, a recommendation is forwarded to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. All decisions by the Minister are final. Applicants will be advised in writing of the status of their submission, and a list of successful projects will be posted annually to the program website.

Project applications submitted under the IC component will be evaluated based on merit (see Schedule 1B), with scores assigned based only on the information provided in the application. Applicants should ensure all relevant sections of the form are completed, as incomplete applications may result in a lower score relative to other submitted applications. Funding decisions will be made by March 31 of the program year.

MI applications were due by October 1, 2019, IC applications are due by January 20, 2020, and applications under the other funding components (MR, MCP, and SI) should be submitted by February 3, 2020 to be considered in the current program year. It is anticipated that applications will be processed and municipalities advised of project funding status in writing, within 10 to 12 weeks following submission, or by March 31 of the program year.

9. Funding Agreement and Amendment Process

9.1) Conditional Grant Agreement (CGA)

Following the Minister's approval of a project, successful applicants must enter into a CGA with Municipal Affairs. The CGA sets out the terms and conditions for the grant funding. This includes project start and end dates, project scope, grant payment conditions, and reporting requirements.

9.2) Amending an Agreement

If the project scope or time period to use grant funds change after project approval, an amendment is required. An Amendment Request Form is available through ACPO. The amendment request should be submitted prior to the CGA project completion date. Questions regarding scope and time changes can be directed to a Grant Advisor.

10. Time Period to Use Grant Funds

The ACP program year is based on the provincial fiscal year, which commences April 1. Grant funds can be retroactively applied to approved projects beginning April 1 of the current program year unless otherwise stipulated in the executed CGA. See component schedules for specific details regarding time periods to use grant funds.

11. Use of Other Grant Funds

ACP grants may be used in combination with funds from other provincial-municipal or federal-municipal grant programs, unless doing so is prohibited by the other program. Using ACP grant funds for costs covered by other programs, as per section 7.4, is not an allowable use of ACP funds.

If a grant recipient chooses to use multiple grant funding sources for a project, it is their responsibility to understand each grant program's specific funding requirements.

More information about specific requirements of provincial-municipal grant programs can be found on the respective program websites, accessible through the Municipal Grants Web Portal at <http://municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/municipal-grants-web-portal>.

12. Requirement for Award of Contract

All calls for proposals or tenders for projects funded under the ACP shall be carried out in accordance with the rules, regulations and laws governing such activities and in accordance with the best current procurement practices. They must also be advertised in accordance with the guidelines of the New West Partnership Trade Agreement (www.newwestpartnershiptrade.ca), and the Canadian Free Trade Agreement (www.cfta-alec.ca/agreement-on-internal-trade).

13. Payment Process and Financial Reporting Requirements

13.1) Payments

ACP payments will be made following legislative approval of the provincial budget, and Ministerial authorization of the component budgets. Payments for approved projects will be made based on the conditions of the CGA. Typically, the grant payment is made within one month following the execution of the CGA, unless stated otherwise.

13.2) Statement of Funding and Expenditures (SFE)

The grant recipient must submit an SFE for each project. Submission of the SFE is through ACPO and is due 60 days following the project completion date. The SFE summarizes the grant amount received, the actual project costs, grant funding applied, portion of funding provided by other grant programs and municipal sources, and income earned and applied to the project. Income earned on the ACP grant funding becomes part of the funding available to apply to project expenditures.

The SFE must be completed by the CAO or delegate, who certifies that the grant recipient is in compliance with the terms of the CGA, program guidelines, and administrative procedures. All supporting documentation such as reports, drawings, and invoices for project costs must be retained by the municipalities for a minimum of three years following completion of the project.

The SFE may be subject to review by the Provincial Auditor General.

Additional reporting is required for the MI component (see Schedule 4), and may be required under other components.

13.3) Credit Items

Income earned on deposited or invested ACP grant funds must be reported under Credit Items on the SFE.

The amount of income earned on the funds becomes part of the total grant funding available for the project.

13.4) Calculation of Income Earned

The municipality must maintain separate accounting records for the grant funds.

The municipality is encouraged to invest and earn income on all unexpended grant funds, subject to the provisions of Section 250 of the *Municipal Government Act*.

The amount of income earned on grant funds may be calculated by one of two methods:

- the actual income earned on the funds being held; or
- the estimated (notional) income earned on the funds. For example, multiply the average grant funding balance over one or more months that the grant funds were held in an account by the average interest rate over those months.

14. Site Visits

Municipal Affairs may select and visit a number of municipalities to discuss ACP program delivery, explore suggestions for program improvement, and view completed ACP-funded projects where appropriate.

15. Communications and Project Recognition Requirements

Municipalities may choose to recognize a project milestone through advertising, public information campaigns, or ceremonies and events. If a municipality initiates a communications event related to an ACP-funded project, they are asked to advise Municipal Affairs of the proposed event a minimum of 15 working days prior to the celebration/launch/event.

News releases should acknowledge the province's contribution and must include a quote from the Minister or other GoA representative as determined by the province. Any advertising of ACP-funded projects should include a reference to the ACP program and the province's contribution.

To discuss project recognition options or communications requirements, please call a Grant Advisor at 780-422-7125 (toll-free in Alberta by first dialing 310-0000), or email acp.grants@gov.ab.ca.

Schedule 1A – Intermunicipal Collaboration

1. Objective

The objective of the Intermunicipal Collaboration (IC) component is to promote municipal viability by providing support to partnerships of two or more municipalities to develop regional land use plans and service delivery frameworks.

By having regional land use plans and frameworks for service delivery in place, municipalities lay the foundation to move from concept to reality. The plans and frameworks will ensure that:

- roles and responsibilities have been defined;
- participating municipalities are on board with the next step; and
- the partnership knows what it will take in time and resources to get their project off the ground.

2. Eligible Entities

The following entities are eligible grant recipients (managing partners) under the IC component:

- Municipalities (cities, towns, villages, summer villages, municipal districts, specialized municipalities, improvement districts, and special areas);
- Metis Settlements; and the
- Townsite of Redwood Meadows Administration Society.

First Nations are eligible to participate as non-managing, formal project partners on IC project applications.

3. Eligible Projects

Projects which directly support intermunicipal land use or produce frameworks for regional approaches to service delivery are eligible for grants under the IC component.

These are projects that produce plans, agreements, studies, or frameworks which the partnership can use to determine, establish, or govern integrated or cooperative approaches to municipal service delivery.

A municipal service is defined as any activity or work undertaken by, provided for, or on behalf of, a municipality for the purpose of providing good government, facilities or other items that are necessary or desirable to develop and maintain safe and viable communities. Planning is considered a municipal service for the purpose of this component.

A partnership may undertake a regional service planning project in order to determine such factors as the costs, benefits, governance model options, revenue or cost-sharing arrangements, or operational requirements for intermunicipal service delivery.

The *Municipal Government Act (MGA)* requires the adoption of Intermunicipal Collaboration Frameworks (ICFs) between municipalities. A partnership may apply for an IC grant to work towards elements of an ICF, such as gathering technical expertise on the governance, delivery, and costs of intermunicipal services, or to create Intermunicipal Development Plans (IDPs). The direct development of an ICF is eligible under IC.

Projects may include more than one element or deliverable related to the service planning initiative. For example, a partnership may submit a project application to develop several IDPs for the partnership's region.

Applications will be reviewed to ensure that the project supports or creates arrangements for cooperative approaches to delivering services within the partnership, and that the project genuinely produces a regional result. If a project appears to benefit only the participants individually or if it is unclear how the project relates to supporting intermunicipal service delivery, the project may be deemed ineligible.

Some regional partnerships may benefit from working with facilitators or dispute resolution specialists to prepare for intermunicipal service negotiations. Funding and support for these activities are available under the Mediation and Cooperative Processes (MCP) component. See Schedule 3 for further information.

Certain regional projects may be a better fit under other ACP components or grant programs. Please see the table below for examples.

Regional Municipal Service Delivery – Development Phases		
Phase	Eligible IC Projects	Projects Eligible Under Other Funding Sources
Explore Opportunity To determine if a regional approach to municipal service delivery makes sense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional service needs or gaps assessment Regional service-specific feasibility study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broad exploration of regional governance options (See MR component, Schedule 2) Facilitator or dispute resolution specialist to prepare regional parties for regional service negotiations (See MCP component, Schedule 3)
Establish Scope Decision tools and guidance documents to determine the best approach to regional service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service-specific delivery options Regional service cost sharing models Regional service-specific business plan or strategy Regional growth plan Intermunicipal development plan that may include updated municipal development plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional governance study and/or business case (See MR component, Schedule 2)
Lay Groundwork Establish the framework for cooperative or integrated services within the partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal framework for a regional service delivery authority Intermunicipal development plan or intermunicipal collaboration framework, including MDPs developed in support of the above Intermunicipal service sharing agreements 	
Deliver Service Implementation and direct delivery of the regional service	Capital projects and operating pilots are <u>not</u> eligible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facility construction; equipment purchases (Municipal Sustainability Initiative - Capital¹, Federal Gas Tax Fund¹) Set up and ongoing regional service delivery costs (Municipal Sustainability Initiative - Operating¹)

¹ Information about these programs is available at the Municipal Affairs Grant Portal <https://www.alberta.ca/municipal-affairs-grant-programs.aspx>.

a) Itemized Expenditure Breakdown

Expenditures should be directly attributable to the project outcomes, and may include contract and project management costs.

An itemized breakdown of all expenditure items and estimated project costs must be provided under the Budget section of the application form. The list of estimated project costs should specifically identify the types of consultant activities (e.g. development of specific plans, facilitation of stakeholder consultations, conducting a service inventory, consultant travel expenses, project management), and vendor costs (e.g. advertising, public consultation venue rental, and offsite printing).

If the budget expense item is general or vague, or if it is unclear how an expenditure item relates to the proposed regional service planning or development activities, the expenditure may be deemed ineligible.

b) Ineligible Project Costs

Capital expenditures, such as project expenditures associated with the construction, purchase, or betterment of capital assets or equipment; and

Costs associated with the direct implementation or existing and ongoing operational costs related to the delivery of regional or municipal services, including costs associated with:

- ongoing or regular salary expenses;
- overhead expenses;
- office set-up;
- hardware or software purchases, installation, or upgrades;
- training;
- operational service pilots;
- routine or regularly occurring data gathering;
- system updates or maintenance; and
- municipal reimbursements (e.g. travel, meals, per diem).

4. Application Process

Applications under the IC component are due January 20 of the current program year. No applications will be accepted after the due date.

Only one application per managing partner per program year will be considered. If an applicant submits more than one grant application as a managing partner, the first submitted application will be evaluated for funding.

Applicants are now required to submit applications, amendment requests and reporting through ACPO (see main guidelines section 4).

Ensure that all relevant sections of the application form are completed prior to submission, as incomplete applications may result in a lower score relative to other submitted grant applications. The evaluation of your grant application will be based only on the information submitted on the application form. Supplementary documentation will not be reviewed and will not impact the application evaluation and ranking.

IC applications will be accepted until January 20, 2020 without all council resolutions yet in place. However, a follow-up email to acp.grants@gov.ab.ca that confirms all council resolutions are in place must be received by March 2, 2020 in order for the grant application to be considered for funding.

5. Grant Amounts

The maximum grant available per project is \$200,000.

6. Component Conditions

Applications under the IC component must involve a partnership of two or more eligible entities, as defined in the Eligible Entities section.

Eligible entities may participate in multiple project partnerships but may only be the managing partner on one IC project per program year.

The managing partner is the partnership member that submits the grant application on behalf of the partnership, enters into the grant agreement, receives and manages the grant funds on behalf of the partnership, and reports to the ministry on project expenditures and outcomes. All other formal partners are referred to as project participants. The managing partner and project participants must confirm their project involvement through council resolutions or motions. The

resolutions or motions should confirm support for their involvement in the project and designate a managing partner.

The managing partner must certify that the resolutions or motions are in place on the grant application form and retain copies of the resolutions. Resolutions or motions do not need to be submitted with the application unless requested by Municipal Affairs.

An IC application can be submitted by January 20, 2020 even though all resolutions or motions are not yet in place. **However, a follow-up email to acp.grants@gov.ab.ca that confirms all council resolutions are in place must be received by March 2, 2020 in order for the grant application to be considered for funding.**

7. Payment of Funds

ACP funds will be paid following legislative approval of the provincial budget and is contingent on a Conditional Grant Agreement (CGA) being duly executed.

8. Time Period to Use Grant Funds

Grant recipients can retroactively apply grant funds towards approved projects effective April 1 of the program year unless otherwise stipulated in the CGA. No costs incurred prior to April 1 of the program year may be attributed to the grant.

Typically, a default 2 year project completion date will be specified in the CGA to allow sufficient time for the partnership to complete the project. This is the date by which all eligible project costs must be incurred and the use of grant funds expire. If the partnership experiences unforeseen delays that will impact the timely completion of the project, a time extension request for the CGA may be considered.

Funding that is not expended by the project completion date in the CGA must be returned to the Government of Alberta.

9. Reporting Requirements

The grant recipient must submit an SFE (see main guidelines section 13.2), and may be asked to provide additional reporting on the outcome of the grant.

SFEs must be submitted within 60 days of the project completion date, or sooner if the project is completed prior to the Project Completion date.

Schedule 1B – Evaluation of IC Applications

IC grant applications will be scored using the following evaluation criteria to establish a primary ranking of projects based on merit and alignment with current program priorities.

Final decisions on funding recommendations will be made by a panel of program staff and may incorporate additional relevant factors such as geographic distribution of funds, past initiative funding, or distribution of funds across service areas.

PROJECT OUTCOME

1. Project results in a regional service delivery framework.

Maximum points: 25
Corresponding application questions: 1 & 2

- High score: project directly produces a regional service delivery framework.
 - E.g., shared service agreements, regional service governance models, regional service delivery plans, cost-sharing models, new or updated intermunicipal development plan (IDP).
- Low score: project produces information that is valuable but may or may not result in establishing a regional service delivery framework.
 - E.g., best practice research.

2. Project produces an IDP or an intermunicipal collaboration framework (ICF).

Maximum points: 25
Corresponding application questions: 1 & 2

- High score: project produces an ICF or an IDP for municipalities that do not yet have one in place.
- Low score: project produces an updated IDP.

PROJECT PRIORITY

3a. Project will help to address outstanding regional service gaps.

Maximum points: 15
Corresponding application question: 3a

- High score: project directly addresses an existing service gap through a regional solution.
- Low score: project provides other benefits for the partnership but may not be related to resolving an existing service gap or issue.

3b. Project funding will help the partnership to resolve capacity-related barriers in order to undertake the project.

Maximum points: 10
Corresponding application question: 3b

- High score: the need for project funding is clear. Funding support will enable the partnership to undertake a regional initiative that requires additional expertise or resources beyond the existing capacity of the municipalities.
- Low score: grant approval will have a minimal impact on the partnership's current ability to undertake the project.

PARTNERSHIP AND PROJECT READINESS

4. Regional partners are actively engaged in project delivery and demonstrate a good working relationship to support project success.

Maximum points: 15
Corresponding application question: 4a & 4b

- High score: project is collaborative and all participating municipalities have the ability to influence project outcomes. Processes are in place to facilitate input into decision-making and resolve conflict.
- Low score: project delivery is driven by a third party and it is unclear how municipal partners will be involved.

5a. Project is well planned.

Maximum points: 5
Corresponding application question: 5a

- High score: project planning appears completed. There are no significant concerns regarding the partnership's ability to execute the project successfully and achieve the expected benefits.
- Low score: insufficient information was provided to determine extent of planning for project delivery.

5b. Project budget estimates are supported.

Maximum points: 5
Corresponding application question: 5b

- High score: the basis for the budget estimates and requested grant amount was identified, and project costs appear reasonable.
- Low score: insufficient information was provided to determine the basis of estimated project costs and requested grant amount.

Schedule 2 – Municipal Restructuring

1. Objective

The Municipal Restructuring (MR) component provides financial support to municipalities for projects associated with regional governance and municipal restructuring processes such as amalgamation, dissolution or viability reviews.

The objectives of MR funding are to assist municipalities with the cost of:

- completing studies that may result in municipal restructuring or regional governance;
- infrastructure studies for municipalities undergoing a viability review or following a dissolution;
- transition following a dissolution or amalgamation; and
- debt servicing and critical infrastructure upgrades following a dissolution.

2. Eligible Entities

The following entities are eligible for funding under the MR component:

- Municipalities (cities, towns, villages, summer villages, municipal districts, specialized municipalities, and special areas).

3. Eligible Projects

a) Restructuring Study Stream

The Restructuring Study Stream provides funding towards one of the following types of studies associated with municipal restructuring:

- regional governance study which must include the exploration of options that may lead to some form of municipal restructuring; and
- infrastructure study / asset management plan (during viability reviews).

b) Transitional Stream

For a municipality undergoing restructuring, the Transitional Stream supports eligible projects related to the administration, governance, and legislative costs of the receiving municipality to incorporate the dissolved municipality into its ongoing operations. For amalgamations, the Transitional Stream supports eligible projects related to the integration of municipal administration, governance and services of the municipalities involved in the amalgamation.

Examples of eligible projects include:

- financial audit of pre-restructured municipality/municipalities;
- community engagement activities including, but not limited to, advertising, public notices, and signage to communicate with residents, ratepayers and other stakeholders following restructuring;
- infrastructure study or asset management plan following dissolution;
- integration or migration of administrative systems including, but not limited to, accounting and financial, assessment, communications, geographic information systems, information technology, and records management and taxation systems;
- legal and legislative costs including, but not limited to, contracts review, land title fees, electoral boundaries review, conducting by-elections, and bylaw and policy reviews;
- library costs including, but not limited to, establishment of new municipal library boards in the receiving municipality or amalgamated municipality;
- organizational review to optimize the structure and processes of the municipality;
- personnel costs including, but not limited to, additional staff time associated with the post-restructuring transition, staff training, and severance for staff employed in the former municipality or municipalities; and
- relocation of municipal operations in the dissolved or amalgamated municipality.

c) Infrastructure/Debt Servicing Stream

For dissolved municipalities, the Infrastructure/Debt Servicing Stream supports upgrades to existing, municipally-owned capital infrastructure assets and equalization of any outstanding non-utility debt obligations of the dissolved municipality. The receiving municipality may apply for funds once needs are known and prioritized.

Examples of eligible projects include:

- repairs and upgrades for existing, municipally-owned infrastructure based on an infrastructure study, asset management plan, or supporting documentation from the past five years that identify the priority project(s) that needs to be addressed;
- work needed to meet infrastructure and environmental standards that directly affects the dissolved municipality or the health and safety of residents; and
- repayment of non-utility debt and the reduction of liabilities associated with the dissolved municipality.

4. Application Process

Applicants are encouraged to contact a Municipal Viability Advisor prior to completing the application. Municipal Viability Advisors can be reached by telephone at 780-427-2225 (toll-free in Alberta by first dialing 310-0000), or by email at viabilityreview@gov.ab.ca.

Municipalities are now required to submit applications, amendment requests and reporting through ACPO (see main guidelines section 4).

5. Grant Amounts

a) Restructuring Study Stream

The maximum amount available under the Restructuring Study Stream is \$120,000 for infrastructure audits and \$200,000 per regional governance study and/or amalgamation study.

In the case of an amalgamation study where an application is submitted by a municipality as managing partner, in cooperation with all municipalities jointly exploring amalgamation, the managing partner will be eligible for up to 100 per cent of the maximum grant.

In the case of an amalgamation study where an application is submitted by a municipality that wishes to initiate amalgamation proceedings with one or more other municipalities, the initiating municipality will be eligible to apply for up to 10 per cent of the maximum grant to use towards amalgamation activities. If all of the municipalities party to the amalgamation proceedings agree to request the remaining funding, then up to the remaining 90 per cent may be approved and the initiating municipality would continue as the managing partner for the grant.

b) Transitional Stream

The maximum amount available under the Transitional Stream is \$300,000 for post-dissolution transition. For post-amalgamation transition, entities are eligible for a maximum amount of \$1,500,000. Eligible amounts are based on a base amount of \$100,000 plus \$400 per capita up to the above-stated maximums.

c) Infrastructure/Debt Servicing Stream Post-Restructuring

The total amount available under the Infrastructure/Debt Servicing Stream is a base amount of \$500,000 plus a per capita amount of \$1,500 to a maximum of \$3,000,000 for post-dissolution infrastructure projects.

6. Component Conditions

General Conditions for all MR component grants:

- a) A council resolution from the applicant must be submitted with the application.
- b) Agreement from other municipalities that are participating in the project (e.g. regional governance study or amalgamation study) or from municipalities that may be directly affected by the municipal restructuring (e.g. receiving municipality) should be in place and a copy of that agreement (e.g. emails, council resolution or formal agreement) submitted with the application.
- c) Municipalities involved in the projects may not separately apply under the MR component for the same study or restructuring process.
- d) Unused transitional grant funds cannot be applied to infrastructure projects, and vice versa.
- e) Applicants that have received restructuring grants in support of municipal restructuring that occurred prior to January 2014 are not eligible for MR funding.

If the cost of a project exceeds the maximum grant amounts, the municipality or municipalities involved are expected to cost-share or use other grant sources for the remainder of the project costs.

Conditions Specific to the Restructuring Study Stream (Infrastructure Study):

- a) Applicants that receive funding are required to use the Viability Review Infrastructure Terms of Reference template as part of their procurement documentation. The template can be obtained by contacting a Municipal Viability Advisor by telephone at 780-427-2225 (toll-free in Alberta by first dialing 310-0000), or by email at viabilityreview@gov.ab.ca.

Conditions Specific to the Transitional Stream:

- a) If grant funding was applied for following dissolution, grant funds must be accounted for separately by the receiving municipality in accordance with the Order in Council that dissolved the former municipality.

Conditions Specific to the Infrastructure/Debt Servicing Stream:

- a) Funding to be used for existing, municipally-owned infrastructure projects is conditional upon the completion of an infrastructure study / asset management plan in the past five years, which assists with identifying and prioritizing critical infrastructure and municipal needs. If a recent infrastructure study, asset management plan, engineering study or related documentation does not already exist, eligible entities may apply for funds through the Transitional Stream to support an infrastructure study or an asset management plan.
- b) Infrastructure projects must be located within the geographic boundaries of the dissolved municipality, or if the infrastructure project is located outside the dissolved municipality, the project must directly benefit the residents and property owners of the dissolved municipality.
- c) Funding to be used for debt servicing requires receipt of audited financial statements of the dissolved municipality following restructuring.
- d) Debt reduction or debt servicing funds can only be applied to the debt of the former municipality that is transferred to the receiving municipality.
- e) If grant funding was applied for following dissolution, grant funds must be accounted for separately by the receiving municipality in accordance with the Order in Council that dissolved the former municipality.

7. Payment of Funds

ACP funding will be paid following legislative approval of the provincial budget and is conditional on a Conditional Grant Agreement (CGA) being duly executed.

8. Time Period to Use Grant Funds

Successful applicants can apply grant funds towards approved projects effective April 1 of the current program year unless otherwise stipulated in the CGA. Applicants determine the appropriate project completion date and should ensure that it allows sufficient time for all reporting activities to be completed. Infrastructure audits or studies funded through the Restructuring Study stream must be completed within nine (9) months from the grant approval date.

Projects occurring as a result of restructuring should be completed within two years following the municipal restructuring.

Funding that is not expended within the project completion date in the CGA must be returned to the Government of Alberta.

9. Reporting Conditions

The grant recipient must submit an SFE (see main guidelines section 13.2), and may be asked to provide additional reporting on the outcome of the grant. Municipalities are now required to submit their SFEs through ACPO.

Upon completion, a copy of the report or study funded under the Restructuring Study Stream must be submitted to the Municipal Capacity and Sustainability Branch of Municipal Affairs at municipalsustainability@gov.ab.ca.

Schedule 3 – Mediation and Cooperative Processes

1. Objective

The Mediation and Cooperative Processes (MCP) component provides support to municipalities to develop collaborative protocols and processes to proactively manage conflict, or to assist in the negotiation of service agreements, land use disputes, annexations, Intermunicipal Collaboration Frameworks (ICFs) and Intermunicipal Development Plans (IDPs).

This enables municipalities to rely on an agreed-upon process for collaboration. This component also supports municipalities in using mediation, facilitation, or other dispute resolution alternatives to resolve intermunicipal conflict as local solutions provide the ability to control the outcomes and create options in the best interests of residents. This component is comprised of a Mediation stream and Cooperative Processes stream.

2. Eligible Entities

The following entities are eligible for funding under the MCP component:

- Municipalities (cities, towns, villages, summer villages, municipal districts, specialized municipalities, and special areas);
- Improvement Districts;
- Metis Settlements; and the
- Townsite of Redwood Meadows Administration Society.

3. Eligible Projects

a) Mediation Stream

The Mediation stream funds a mediator or third party facilitator's fees and travels costs to support mediation or facilitative services to develop local solutions to conflicts municipalities may be having with their municipal neighbours, regional services commissions or other boards or agencies.

Eligible projects include:

- mediating conflict or facilitated negotiations between two or more municipalities; and
- mediating conflict or facilitated negotiations between a municipality and another entity.

b) Cooperative Processes Stream

The Cooperative Processes stream provides proactive support to municipalities for building relations and cooperative processes within and between municipalities through the Collaborative Governance Initiative (CGI). There are three types of cooperative processes within this stream.

- i. **Protocol Development** funds a consultant or an appropriate expert's fees and travel costs to assist in creating collaborative principles, processes and protocols using consensus. This may involve an internal process with one municipality or an external process between multiple municipalities.
 - An internal process example for a single municipality is when a municipality has a lack of consensus so a consultant is hired to help with the development of council and staff protocols and procedures regarding meeting management, roles and responsibilities, and strategic direction.
 - An external or multi-party example for groups struggling to work collaboratively would be to hire a consultant to facilitate discussions between multiple municipalities to assist with the development of cooperation protocols.
- ii. **Protocol Implementation** funds the implementation of the principles, processes, and protocols created in the Protocol Development. That is, piloting, testing, and adjusting the protocols to achieve the desired objective.
- iii. **Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework Negotiation** funds a mediator or third party facilitator's fees and travel costs to assist in the negotiation of service agreements pertaining to ICFs and/or IDPs. For example, neighboring municipalities with contentious or complex negotiations who require a third party in order to proceed with ICF negotiations.

The objective of IDP and ICF funding support offered through the MCP component is to help municipalities access third party facilitators or mediators if they have a **demonstrated need** for such services in their negotiations.

Applicants seeking grant funds to assist with contracting technical resources and expertise to develop an IDP or ICF, and who do not need additional negotiation support, should consider the IC component (see Schedule 1A).

4. Application Process

Applications are typically completed after discussion with Ministry staff. Contact Intermunicipal Relations staff at 780-427-2225 (toll-free in Alberta by first dialing 310-0000) prior to completing the form.

Applicants are now required to submit their applications, amendment requests and reporting through ACPO (see main guidelines section 4).

For all funding streams under this component, an applicant is required to complete an application that is supported by council resolutions or motions from all project participants. In the absence of council resolutions, an application may be submitted with a letter from the requesting municipality (with a copy to the partnering municipalities) that demonstrates support for the project and is signed by the Chief Elected Official.

All MCP component applications will be considered throughout the year up until February 3 of the current program year.

Decisions will be based on information provided in the ACP application form regarding the project's complexity and the immediacy of need. The degree of complexity will consider the number of issues, services, or factors that need to be negotiated and the number of municipalities involved. The immediacy of need for facilitation or mediation assistance will be based upon the following factors but not limited to:

- Degree of conflict or disagreement;
- History of conflict between the municipalities;
- Capacity to facilitate or resolve the issues or to collaborate; and
- Likelihood of the conflict to escalate.

5. Grant Amounts

The MCP component has funding maximums as follows:

- Mediation Stream: \$15,000
- Cooperative Processes Stream:
 - Protocol Development: \$50,000
 - Protocol Implementation: \$30,000
 - Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework Negotiation: \$50,000

The Minister may vary these maximum amounts and cost share contributions (see section 6 below) in extraordinary or highly contentious projects, and may consider such applications outside of the quarterly application review periods.

6. Component Conditions

For projects involving cost-share or matching municipal contributions, the following verifiable in-kind expenses are eligible:

- Costs to rent space for project-related meetings or stakeholder consultations; and
- Overtime hours for municipal staff dedicated to the project.

Conditions Specific to the Mediation Stream:

The Mediation stream grant of up to \$15,000 provides one-third of the cost of mediation and is conditional on the municipal partners contributing two-thirds of the total costs. For example, to receive a maximum mediation grant of \$15,000, the municipal partners would need to contribute an additional \$30,000, reflecting a total project cost of \$45,000.

Conditions Specific to the Cooperative Processes Stream:

Cooperative Processes stream grants are conditional upon the municipalities matching the grant funding, and can include verifiable in-kind contributions. For example, to receive a maximum ICF Negotiation grant amount of \$50,000, the municipal partners would need to contribute an additional \$50,000, reflecting a total project cost of \$100,000. The matching amount must be expended proportionately to the grant funding amount.

Municipalities must complete all reporting requirements under Protocol Development prior to submitting an application for funding under Protocol Implementation. Reporting must demonstrate the progress in the project and that all funding has been fully expended prior to submitting a Protocol Implementation application.

7. Payment of Funds

Funding will be paid following legislative approval of the provincial budget and is conditional on the following:

- a Conditional Grant Agreement (CGA) being duly executed; and
- for the Mediation stream, by way of installment upon receipt of a copy of the mediator's invoices submitted that demonstrates project costs; or
- for the Cooperative Processes stream, by way of lump-sum payment.

8. Time Period to Use Grant Funds

Successful applicants can apply grant funds towards approved projects retroactive to April 1 of the current program year unless otherwise stipulated in the CGA. Applicants determine the appropriate project completion date and should ensure that it allows sufficient time for all reporting activities to be completed (typically one to two years). If the funding will not be expended by the agreed to project completion date, a time extension request must be submitted (see main guidelines section 9.2). Any grant funds unexpended upon completion or termination of the project shall be returned to the Government of Alberta.

9. Reporting Conditions

The grant recipient must submit an SFE (see main guidelines section 13.2), and may be asked to provide additional reporting on the outcome of the grant. Municipalities are now required to submit their SFEs through ACPO.

A copy of the report or study funded under the Cooperative Processes stream must be submitted to the Municipal Capacity and Sustainability Branch of Municipal Affairs upon completion.

Schedule 4 – Municipal Internship

1. Objective

The Municipal Internship (MI) component provides support to municipalities and planning service agencies to recruit, train, and retain competent municipal employees who can progress into leadership positions in Alberta municipalities. The intent of this program component is to help train interns so that they may pursue careers in municipal administration, finance, or land use planning and help build the capacity of Alberta's municipal sector.

2. Eligible Entities

The following entities are eligible under the MI component, including:

- Municipalities (cities, towns, villages, municipal districts, and specialized municipalities);
- the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board and Calgary Metropolitan Region Board (Land Use Planner Stream only); and
- municipally-controlled planning service agencies (Land Use Planner stream only).

Applicants requesting funding under the MI component must meet specific population thresholds to be eligible (based on Municipal Affairs official population figures in effect at the time of application):

Program Stream	Population Range
Administrator	Between 700 and 75,000
Finance Officer	Between 2,500 and 125,000
Land Use Planner	Between 5,000 and 125,000

3. Eligible Projects

The MI component has three streams:

a) Administrator

The Administrator stream allows for the hosting of an intern for a one-year period. Host organizations help train and develop interns by providing them with learning opportunities across the key functional areas of municipal operations and management.

b) Finance Officer

The Finance Officer stream allows for the hosting of an intern for a one-year period. Host organizations help train and develop interns by providing them with learning opportunities in the finance department and exposure to other key functional areas of municipal operations and management.

c) Land Use Planner

The Land Use Planner stream allows for the hosting of an intern for a two-year period. Host organizations must undertake the majority of land use planning activities in-house and have a senior planner on staff to supervise the intern. Interns in the Land Use Planner stream are expected to work towards attaining the Registered Professional Planner accreditation by documenting their education and responsible professional experience in the logbook under the Alberta Professional Planners Institute, the affiliate of the Canadian Institute of Planners.

For all streams, host organizations are expected to provide their intern with experience across the key functional areas of municipal operations and management. Municipalities that are not able to offer an intern experience in all of the functional areas are encouraged to collaborate with another municipality. Collaborations can be arranged so that the intern spends small blocks of time with each host (e.g. two or three months on a rotating basis) or the term may be split into two six-month blocks. Program staff can provide recommendations on collaborative hosting arrangements.

Having the opportunity to work closely with staff, council, and senior management in a municipality or a planning service agency is a valuable experience for new professionals pursuing a career in the municipal sector.

4. Application Process

Applications for the MI component were due by October 1 of the funding year, with the internship to commence the following April / May. Interns start their employment between April 15 and May 25 (as negotiated between the candidate and host municipality).

MI applications are evaluated after the October 1 deadline. Funding is awarded based on information provided in the ACP application form up to the maximum number of internship positions available in the program year.

5. Grant Amounts

The amounts available under the MI component vary by host type as follows:

- Administrators: \$43,000
- Finance Officers: \$43,000
- Land Use Planners: \$66,000

6. Component Conditions

Just as interns are expected to demonstrate certain attributes, host organizations are also expected to meet certain criteria, including:

- The municipality must meet the population thresholds as outlined in section 2 of this schedule to be eligible for grant funding. Municipally-controlled planning service agencies are eligible for the Land Use Planner stream;
- For the Land Use Planner stream, host organizations must undertake the majority of their planning in-house and have a senior planner on staff;
- A strong council-administration relationship must exist and there must be strong commitment from both groups to have an intern;
- There must be an organizational commitment to the MI program's vision and goals;
- A dedicated supervisor is appointed for the intern. The supervisor is to be the Chief Administrative Officer or a senior manager (Administrator stream); senior financial officer (Finance Officer stream); or a senior planner (Land Use Planner stream);
- A sufficient commitment of resources, both financial and staff, must be made; and

- There must be an ability to provide training in a wide range of municipal functions, and interest in sharing knowledge and experiences with the intern.

An eligible municipality or organization can apply under any or all of the streams of this program component in a program year; however, the applicant must complete separate applications as each stream is evaluated separately.

Collaboration with another municipality is not required to host an intern if the municipality has the capacity and desire to host on its own. A municipality may wish to partner with another municipality if it is not able to provide an intern with experience in the major functional areas of municipal operations and management. Refer to the Internship Program website at www.alberta.ca/municipal-internship-program.aspx for information on these functional areas and program expectations.

If choosing to collaborate, one municipality is to be named the managing partner. This municipality must meet the minimum population requirement for the stream being applied for and is responsible for submitting the application. Informal collaboration is also encouraged; however, such an arrangement is not considered a partnership as just one of the municipalities is considered to be the host.

7. Payment of Funds

Funding will be paid following legislative approval of the provincial budget and is subject to a Conditional Grant Agreement (CGA) being duly executed.

8. Time Period to Use Grant Funds

Successful applicants can apply grant funds to eligible project expenditures effective January 1 of the hosting year. **Note that interns may start their employment between April 15 and May 25.** Administrator and Finance Officer internships are to be completed one year from the intern start date; Land Use Planner internships are to be completed two years from the intern start date. Any grant funds unexpended upon completion or termination of the project shall be returned to the Government of Alberta.

9. Reporting Conditions

The grant recipient must submit an SFE (see main guidelines section 13.2). Applicants are now required to submit their SFEs through ACPO. Additionally, supporting documentation is required and includes a Workplan, an Interim Report, a Year 1 Report (Land Use Planner), and a Final Report, as per the CGA.

Schedule 5 - Strategic Initiatives

1. Objective

The Strategic Initiatives (SI) component provides grants for initiatives in which the project outcomes are of ministry or provincial strategic significance and do not align with the other program components.

2. Eligible Entities

The following entities are eligible for grants under the SI component:

- the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board and the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board;
- Municipalities (cities, towns, villages, summer villages, municipal districts, specialized municipalities, improvement districts, and special areas);
- Metis Settlements; and the
- Townsite of Redwood Meadows Administration Society.

3. Eligible Projects

Eligible projects include:

- support for the operations of metropolitan growth management boards; and
- projects of provincial strategic significance that are deemed a ministry priority.

4. Application Process

Contact a Grant Advisor to discuss any proposed SI projects. Application forms for the SI component will be provided after discussion with Ministry staff. Grant Advisors can be reached at 780-422-7125 (toll-free in Alberta by first dialing 310-0000).

5. Grant Amounts

The maximum amount of funding available under the SI component is a ministry determination.

6. Component Conditions

All projects funded through the SI component will need to demonstrate the strategic significance of their project and how it aligns with ministry or provincial priorities.

The Minister may modify any program criteria such as eligibility and application requirements to respond to Government of Alberta and Municipal Affairs priorities.

7. Payment of Funds

Funding will be paid following legislative approval of the provincial budget and is subject to a Conditional Grant Agreement (CGA) being duly executed.

8. Time Period to Use Grant Funds

Successful applicants can apply grant funds towards approved projects effective April 1 of the program year unless otherwise stipulated in the CGA. Applicants determine the appropriate project completion date to be specified in the CGA and should ensure that the project completion date allows sufficient time for all reporting activities to be completed. If the funds will not be expended by the agreed to project completion date, a time extension request should be submitted (see main guidelines section 9.2). Any grant funds unexpended upon completion or termination of the project shall be returned to the Government of Alberta.

9. Reporting Conditions

The grant recipient must submit an SFE (see main guidelines section 13.2), and may be asked to provide additional reporting on the outcome of the grant.