

2023/24 – Alberta Community Partnership Intermunicipal Collaboration Grant Application

Managing Partner: Village of Rycroft

Participating Municipalities: Municipal District of Spirit River

Project Title: Regional Infrastructure Master Plan

Project Timeline: Project Start Date (DD-MMM-YY) – Defaults to “01-Apr-23”

Project Completion Date (DD-MMM-YY) – Enter “31-Dec-26”

PROJECT OVERVIEW

1. This project produces (*check all that apply*):

- A regional service agreement, plan, framework, strategy, or model
- A study (e.g., shared service feasibility study, etc.)
- An amended Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework and/or a new or amended Intermunicipal Development Plan
- Other (please specify) (*maximum 100 characters*):

2. a. Provide a description of the project.

- What is the purpose of the project?
- What activities will the partnership undertake to complete the project?
- What are the project's outputs and expected concrete results?

(Max 4,000 Characters)

The Village of Rycroft and the Municipal District of Spirit River have an established history of collaboration for the shared delivery of municipal services in areas such as emergency management, transportation, regional land use, wastewater and water management. The village is known as the “Hub of the Peace”, serving an expansive trading area that supports the agriculture, oil and gas, and transportation industries. As such, municipal service delivery infrastructure is integral to municipal and regional sustainability, and particularly important for regional growth and attracting investment to the region. The partnership acknowledges the importance of well-maintained municipal infrastructure for the enhanced delivery of regional services and want to ensure we are positioned to address future operational and infrastructure requirements through the development of a regional infrastructure master plan (IMP).

The importance and value of regional cooperation was highlighted throughout the regional Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework (ICF) and Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP) processes. A robust assessment and comprehensive representation of infrastructure would align with ICF and IDP

ideals, and would provide the partners with a tool for the planning and collaborative delivery of vital services such as water, wastewater, stormwater, transportation network, land use and facility management.

The IMP project is focused on obtaining and analyzing data related to the condition of municipal infrastructure systems extending to the shared boundaries, identification of deficiencies and plans to address those deficiencies, identification of upgrades for potential land use development services, and updating the 10-year capital plans. The primary focus of the IMP is an infrastructure condition assessment and energy assessment of the water system, wastewater collection and treatment system, stormwater management system, transportation system, and municipal facilities. This information will establish a framework to guide informed decisions on required local and joint infrastructure improvements and upgrades.

The partnership will undertake the following activities:

1. Data collection and review of related infrastructure reports, data, plans, drawings, digital base maps, air photos.
2. Review of water distribution system facilities, pipe capacity, hydrants, historical flow data and fire flow capacity, and develop projected growth rate models.
3. Review of wastewater facilities and collection system, pipe capacity, and level of compliance with provincial standards and guidelines.
4. Review of stormwater management system, drainage basins and catchment areas, historical flooding, and identify capacity issues.
5. Complete a visual inspection and condition assessment of roads, sidewalks, curbs and gutter, and swales.
6. Review of municipally owned facilities, visual inspections, and develop maintenance and upgrade cost models.
7. Stakeholder consultation throughout the project.
8. Incorporate recommended upgrades into capital plans.

The expected project outputs are:

1. Water distribution system data collection and analysis summary report, WaterCAD and growth models, and recommended upgrades and improvements cost models.
2. Wastewater facilities and collection system data collection and analysis summary report, computer model, and recommended upgrades and improvements cost models.
3. Stormwater system data collection and analysis summary report, computer model, and recommended upgrades and improvements cost models.
4. Transportation system data collection and analysis summary report, rating system, and recommended upgrades and improvements cost models.
5. Municipally owned facilities data collection and analysis summary report and recommended upgrades and improvements cost models.
6. Updated 10-year capital plans.

7. Stakeholder consultation summary report.

2.b. Describe how benefits will be shared among the participating municipalities.

- How does the project address municipal and regional needs?
- Does the project benefit stakeholders beyond the partnership?

(Max 4,000 Characters)

Existing infrastructure is aging, and demand continues to grow for new or enhanced municipal infrastructure. The health and safety of the region's residents is a primary consideration for the partnership, with a focus to avoid disastrous health and safety impacts through a comprehensive approach to infrastructure management beyond the municipal boundaries. The IMP enables the partnership to meet new demands within a fiscally responsible and environmentally sustainable framework with regional benefits such as:

- Understanding the condition and identification of required improvements to water, wastewater, and stormwater systems is key to ensuring a sustainable and safe water supply. This is especially critical as it relates to water services and adequate supply to meet basic human needs, bulk water station, fire service response, agriculture and food production, and security of property and land. Other IMP benefits include:
 - water service delivery that is safer and more cost effective;
 - wastewater management that lessens the risk of contamination impact to humans, the environment, and wildlife; and
 - stormwater management that mitigates the detrimental effects to land and property.
- Residential, commercial and industrial development in the partnership's urban growth and rural development areas is integral to the village and municipal district, but has also contributed to growth pressures and increased stress on existing infrastructure. The IMP will be integrated with land use, financial and strategic plans that will guide efficient, economic, sustainable and coordinated development.
 - This is especially valuable as development areas are adjacent to major highways and rail; sensitivity to infrastructure and asset management that will impact and enhance economic corridors is necessary and will be of benefit to related stakeholders.
- A joint approach to infrastructure and service sharing promotes efficient planning and cohesive decision-making. Current funding levels are insufficient to meet infrastructure needs, therefore a regional collaboration and planning tool will be of benefit to both the village and the municipal district to recognize and collaborate on land use concerns, promote efficient planning, and develop cost management strategies.

Reliable infrastructure is a priority for the partnership and is integral to supporting economic growth and attracting regional investment. In addition to a positive impact on regional economic growth, the IMP will foster ongoing relationship building between the partnership, will potentially identify future

opportunities for the delivery of new and enhanced regional services, and will promote collaboration and cooperation in planning matters of mutual interest.

PROJECT PRIORITY

3. Why are the project and the grant needed?

3.a. Describe how and why this project is a priority for the region. (Max 4,000 Characters)

The regional ICF planning process identified a significant gap in comprehensive municipal infrastructure asset details. The absence of a significant prioritization and planning tool such as an IMP prevents the partnership from making strategic and fiscally responsible infrastructure and planning decisions that would be mutually beneficial. A condition analysis will guide and inform the partnership and respective councils in planning for regional service delivery and other potential opportunities for sharing or enhancing services.

The condition of assets required to delivery services is a critical consideration in the regional water, wastewater, emergency, transportation, land use, and growth management planning processes. The asset condition provides budgetary impact awareness, especially if municipal infrastructure enhancements are required in support of regional initiatives like shared water, wastewater, stormwater and emergency service delivery and land use development.

The IMP will provide critical data in support of existing regional plans and initiatives including the Regional Water Utility Initiative, Regional Transportation Services, Intermunicipal Development Plans, and the Peace Region Economic Development Alliance. These plans guide the regional vision for water management, land use, emergency service delivery, and economic development and sets policy direction for municipalities to achieve strong emergency response, environmental, economic, and social outcomes.

This project supports provincial and ministry objectives that include:

Municipal Affairs – Outcome 1: this project provides the framework for encouragement of economic growth through future construction projects that will employ Albertans, joint administration that could potentially reduce red-tape, and land use planning.

Municipal Affairs – Outcome 2: this project will provide critical data and a framework for the intermunicipal collaboration and enhanced delivery of regional land use, emergency management, transportation, and water management.

Transportation and Economic Corridors – Outcome 1: this project supports the planning for a sustainable road and rail transportation network that includes Highway 49 which affects both municipalities.

Environment and Protected Areas – Outcome 1: this project includes water management data that will inform environmental resource stewardship and policy direction that may inform the Regional Water Utility Initiative amongst G5 regional partners, and the development of the Upper Peace Region Plan.

3.b. What is preventing the partnership from undertaking the project in-house or from obtaining the resources or expertise needed for the project? How will the grant be used to resolve these barriers?

(Max 4,000 Characters)

Each municipality has committed to work with the consultant to provide direction and details on their infrastructure information.

Beyond this involvement, there are several factors affecting the partnerships' ability to undertake this project that include:

- Requirement for specialized knowledge and expertise that is not available within the municipalities related to professional engineering analysis. The grant will be used to obtain technical experts capable of completing the required work.
- Use of municipal funding for this project would place additional financial strain on municipal resources that are struggling to balance lower revenues and delivery of vital municipal services.
- The municipal employees already have strained time commitments and high workload expectations with the ongoing delivery of day-to-day municipal operations and do not have the capacity to engage in the learning curve and time expectations this project requires.

This project is of critical importance and the consequence of not going forward would mean that the partnership does not have a planning tool that would provide guidance to decision-makers and a framework for working cooperatively. The IMP is vital to identifying infrastructure condition and requirements for the enhanced and efficient delivery of water management services, emergency management, regional land use, transportation, realizing service delivery efficiencies, and identifying cost saving opportunities.

PARTNERSHIP AND PROJECT READINESS

4. a. Provide a brief description of each partner's roles and responsibilities with respect to the project.

- How will each participating member be involved in project planning, administration, and decision making?
- What arrangements and processes are in place or will be established to ensure the interests of each member will be met in project outcomes?

(Max 4,000 Characters)

The Village of Rycroft is the managing partner on this grant application for the sole purpose of grant submission and future grant administration and reporting if grant is approved.

The partners have had preliminary meetings to discuss project specifics and how each will be involved in the IMP process. The grant project itself will be a fully collaborative process as it relates to project planning, administration, and decision making. This grant project will be guided by the IMP working team that has representatives from each municipality. Administration and technical advisors from both municipalities will also be involved throughout the process.

Both municipalities will be actively engaged in project progress and will have input and influence on project outcomes. Both municipalities will have an opportunity to review IMP data and recommendations to determine the relevant issues, and alignment with local goals and objectives.

Mechanisms that will support an inclusive process for the development of comprehensive infrastructure condition inventory includes frequent discussions to ensure agreement on data collection methods, input from senior administration, acknowledgement of shared values (e.g., reliable infrastructure for water management and emergency service delivery, agriculture and agri-business, environmental stewardship, economic diversification, and growth) and an agreed upon voting model.

4.b. How will conflict be resolved to ensure a successful outcome which meets the interests of all project participants?

- Provide details of any dispute resolution mechanisms in place or that will be established between the partners.

(Max 4,000 Characters)

The partnership will follow the resolution process that is part of the ICF structure.

It is imperative that the infrastructure condition inventory be of use for both municipalities so check points to confirm clarification of process will be imbedded in the project planning process.

The intent of the dispute resolution process is to maximize opportunities for discussion to resolve areas of disagreement early in the process. If conflict occurs all efforts will be made to resolve the issue administratively. If required, the issue will be elevated in the following sequence: IMP working team, senior managers, joint meetings of both councils, provincial mediation.

4.c. Provide a concise overview of the project workplan and timeline.

(Max 4,000 Characters)

The partnership is proposing to hire a consultant to complete the following project workplan:

1. Consultant conducts a preliminary assessment and data collection and analysis in conjunction with municipal partner's input.
2. Consultant conducts a technical water, wastewater, stormwater, transportation, and municipally owned facility infrastructure condition and site assessment review and analysis.
3. Consultant conducts an energy efficiency analysis.

4. Consultant develops recommended water, wastewater, stormwater, transportation, and municipally owned facility upgrade and improvement cost models.
5. Consultant updates the 10-year capital plans.

The following timelines are high level estimates and may overlap and be modified as the project proceeds:

1. Stakeholder consultation (ongoing)
2. Water, wastewater, stormwater, transportation, and municipally owned facility infrastructure data collection and analysis (April 2024 – October 2025)
3. Water, wastewater, stormwater, transportation, and municipally owned facility infrastructure condition and site assessment, and energy efficiency analysis (November 2025 - March 2026)
4. Water, wastewater, stormwater, transportation, and municipally owned facility infrastructure upgrade and improvement cost models and updates to 10-year capital plans (April – December 2026)

4.d. Describe risks and risk mitigation strategies that may impact progress of this project if funded by an ACP grant.

(Max 4,000 Characters)

Risks associated with this project include:

1. Weather impact and timely collection of data – this will be mitigated through the inclusion of an ample amount of time in the project timeline.
2. Availability or completeness of municipal input and asset data – this will be mitigated through clear communications between the consultant and municipal representatives to ensure project data needs are managed effectively and solutions to address data gaps are addressed in a timely manner.
3. Municipal support and cooperation – this will be mitigated through targeted communications with partnership, impacted stakeholders, and community groups to determine and coordinate needs, develop strategies on addressing these needs, and identify potential impacts to the regional IMP.
4. Asset condition may create an increased funding pressure for asset repair or maintenance – this will be mitigated through the detailed asset condition data that will provide councils critical information when deliberating over annual budgetary considerations.

5.a. What are the expenditure estimates provided under the Project Budget section based on?

- Include details on the anticipated project resources, service providers, or contractors.

(Max 4,000 Characters)

The partnership has collaborated with MPE Engineering Ltd. to identify high level project requirements. MPE Engineering has the technical and local expertise and have provided a preliminary quote in support of this project. Cost are estimates based on similar regional projects.

5b. Provide a comprehensive, *itemized breakdown* of all your estimated project costs and expenditures in the table below. Insufficient or incomplete project cost information will impact the evaluation of your grant application.

- Use the [+] button to add line items to specifically identify the types of consultant activities and vendor costs (advertising, printing, venue rental).
- Only list the project cost information associated with the scope of work under this grant request.
- Capital expenditures are not eligible under the IC component.

Item Description	Estimated Item Cost
Water, Wastewater, Stormwater, Transportation, and Municipally Owned Facility infrastructure data collection and analysis	\$55,000
Water, Wastewater, Stormwater, Transportation, and Municipally Owned Facility infrastructure condition and site assessment, and energy efficiency analysis	\$65,000
Water, Wastewater, Stormwater, Transportation, and Municipally Owned Facility infrastructure upgrade and improvement cost models	\$60,000
Updates to 10-year capital plans	\$20,000
Total Project Costs	\$200,000.00

**The grant maximum under the Intermunicipal Collaboration component is \$200,000.*

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING PROJECT INFORMATION

6. Provide any other additional project details not included in the responses that will further inform ministry staff in understanding the benefits of your project. (Max 4,000 Characters)

A big part of the regional IMP is to properly assess infrastructure needs and form the basis for strategic long-term infrastructure planning.

The funding is critical, and especially now with additional challenges we are facing with responding to uncertain fiscal pressures like ever increasing operational costs and supply chain issues. The focus on regional cooperation that is supported through this grant will strengthen the partnership and put us in a stronger position to face these circumstances together.

This project supports the provincial economy and would create an estimated 4-6 jobs during the course of the project, and secure approximately 6-10 full time direct or indirect regional municipal operations and related jobs. This partnership is being proactive to ensure sound and reliable infrastructure is in place which is vital to ensuring we are positioned to grow and respond to Alberta's economic renewal.

The partnership is making a significant commitment to this high priority project and support for this project would be a clear indication that the Government of Alberta is truly committed to supporting economic growth and sustainability in rural areas.