
News Release

ALBERTA COMMUNITIES TO BENEFIT FROM \$264 MILLION IN INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

MEDICINE HAT (Alberta), April 19, 2006 – Urban and rural municipalities in Alberta will see an improvement and increase in their public infrastructure as a result of a \$176 million investment by the Governments of Canada and Alberta.

The federal and provincial governments will each contribute \$88 million to the Canada-Alberta Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (CAMRIF) – a joint initiative that will help contribute to a better quality of life for the people of Alberta by enabling communities to improve local roads, drinking water systems and other municipal infrastructure. With matching municipal contributions, the fund is expected to reach a total value of \$264 million.

Eighty per cent of CAMRIF investments will be directed to projects that benefit municipalities with populations of less than 250,000, with the remaining 20 per cent earmarked for Calgary and Edmonton projects. Eligible projects under the CAMRIF include water and sewage treatment, solid waste management, public transit and energy improvements to municipal buildings. The fund also supports better roads and bridges, cultural, recreational and tourism projects and improved broadband Internet access. Projects will be selected on a competitive basis from applications received from Alberta communities.

The fund was announced by the Honourable Monte Solberg, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, on behalf of the Honourable Lawrence Cannon, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, and Rick Casson, MP for Lethbridge, on behalf of the Honourable Carol Skelton, Minister of National Revenue and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, together with the Honourable Ty Lund, Minister of Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation and the Honourable Rob Renner, Minister of Municipal Affairs, with representatives from the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association and the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties.

“This agreement is based on collaboration among municipal, provincial and federal governments and will ensure that local communities have input into the decision-making process,” said Minister Solberg, on behalf of Minister Cannon.

“This investment will improve local roads, enhance water quality and waste management, and assist rural and smaller urban communities to better plan their futures. These investments will result in healthier communities and an improved quality of life for all residents,” added Mr. Casson on behalf of Minister Skelton.

“All Alberta communities, whether large, small or remote, will be able to share in the benefits of this new partnership,” said Minister Lund. “We welcome the opportunity to join once again with our federal and municipal partners – as we did under the Infrastructure Canada-Alberta Program – to provide enhanced infrastructure for this province.”

“We are pleased to be a partner in this unique initiative that supports Alberta’s rural and urban municipalities in responding to the needs of their residents,” said Minister Renner. “This is an important and significant investment that contributes to shaping sustainable communities where people want to live and work, now and into the future.”

“This is a significant announcement for our members, one we have been looking forward to for some time,” said Donald W. Johnson, President of the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties. “Progressive initiatives like CAMRIF will help to address the critical infrastructure deficit that currently exists in rural Alberta.”

“The Alberta Urban Municipalities Association is committed to developing financially sustainable, environmentally responsible, socially inclusive and culturally vibrant communities,” said AUMA President Bob Hawkesworth. “This funding will help Alberta municipalities continue to ensure a good quality of life for future generations of residents.”

CAMRIF builds on the Government of Canada’s \$5 billion over five years in gas tax funding across Canada. Other infrastructure funds include the \$4 billion Canada Strategic Infrastructure Fund and the \$600 million Border Infrastructure Fund. Investments through these funds have gone into many Alberta infrastructure projects.

For more information on the Government of Canada’s infrastructure programs, visit www.infrastructure.gc.ca. More details on the Government of Alberta’s infrastructure programs are available at www.infratrans.gov.ab.ca.

Municipalities seeking more information should contact:
Canada-Alberta Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund Joint Secretariat by phone (toll free) at 1-800-396-0214, by e-mail at: camrif@gov.ab.ca or visit the Web site www.camrif.ca.

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Backgrounder

Canada-Alberta Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (CAMRIF)

The Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (MRIF) is a \$1 billion national initiative that supports the Government of Canada's commitment to ensure that Canadian communities, large and small, are sustainable, economically competitive and great places to live.

The CAMRIF program will bring a total federal and provincial investment of up to \$176 million for municipal infrastructure in Alberta. Municipal contributions could bring the total value of the fund to \$264 million.

CAMRIF has set the following funding targets:

- Fifty-five per cent for green projects. Green projects include water, wastewater, solid waste, public transit and environment energy improvements;
- Eighty per cent will be committed to projects implemented in areas served by local governments having populations of less than 250,000;
- Twenty per cent will be committed to projects implemented in the City of Calgary and the City of Edmonton;
- At least twenty-six per cent will be allocated to water and wastewater projects, including joint and regional water and wastewater projects, in areas served by local governments having populations of less than 250,000;
- At least 26 per cent will be allocated to transportation projects which support tourism and commerce, specifically local roads and bridges, and specialized transit in areas served by local governments having populations of less than 250,000;
- Up to 26 per cent will be allocated to solid waste, environmental energy improvement, recreation, cultural, tourism, and connectivity projects;
- Other eligible project categories include cultural, recreational and tourism infrastructure; and
- Up to 1 per cent of the fund will be set aside to help municipalities improve and increase their capacity to manage their infrastructure assets and encourage a more efficient and sustainable approach to managing infrastructure.

Projects funded under CAMRIF should be completed by March 31, 2010.

Local input and collaboration

Municipalities can now visit the Web site www.camrif.ca to find all the information they need to apply for projects.

CAMRIF will be managed by a six member Management Committee consisting of two members appointed by Canada, two members appointed by Alberta, and two members representing Alberta's municipal associations — one to be appointed by the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association, and one to be appointed by the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties. The Management Committee will develop the Management Committee guidelines and oversee the project review and selection process.

Projects will be selected on a competitive basis from applications received from Alberta communities. It is expected that the deadline to submit applications for the first intake will be July 31, 2006.

Environmental Assessment

CAMRIF projects will be required to successfully complete applicable environmental assessment processes, and funding will be conditional on compliance with all applicable federal and provincial requirements.

The Canada-Alberta Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (CAMRIF) program is designed to operate within Alberta, alongside the Canadian Strategic Infrastructure Fund (CSIF), which addresses larger infrastructure needs, primarily in urban areas. The TransCanada Highway improvements at Banff National Park as well as the Calgary and Edmonton Ring Road projects are funded under the CSIF.