

Canada Community Revitalization Fund

ISSUE

The Government of Canada is accepting applications for the Canada Community Revitalization Fund (CCRF). The Administration is providing the Governance and Priorities Committee details on the project applications that will be submitted for possible funding and welcomes any redirection from Committee.

BACKGROUND

The Government of Canada is providing an investment of \$500 million over two years for the CCRF. The fund is to be administered by Canada's regional development agencies, which for Saskatchewan is Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD). WD will work with communities to identify and provide funding to selected local projects to help rebound from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

CURRENT STATUS

As a normal course of business, the Administration looks for additional funding opportunities to leverage and optimize the use of the City of Saskatoon's (City) funds. This allows for City reserves to fund and complete additional projects that would otherwise not be possible without additional funding sources.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

The CCRF supports communities to build and improve community infrastructure as they rebound from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Recipients can receive up to \$750,000 per project to a maximum of 75% of eligible costs. Eligible projects are prioritized in the following order:

1. Revitalize downtown core and main streets;
2. Reinvent outdoor spaces;
3. Create green infrastructure; and
4. Increase the accessibility of community spaces.

Eligible expenditures must be incurred between April 19, 2021 and March 31, 2023. The deadline for the scheduled intake stream is July 23, 2021, and applicants are strongly encouraged to submit by this date. Details of the program can be found on the Government of Canada's [website](#).

The Administration is preparing applications on the following six projects ranked in order of priority, which considers the likelihood of eligibility under the Federal program criteria, as listed on page 1 of this report, as well as each project's direct or indirect social-economic benefits:

1. Farmers' Market Building Renewal Project – This project will help to revitalize the River Landing and Riversdale Business Improvement District areas in the south Downtown area of the city. The Farmers' Market Building involves the redevelopment of the interior of the building; however, the site also includes an outdoor Market Square which will provide a seasonal farmers' market in conjunction with the interior farmers' market. This work will also lead to an outdoor winter/Christmas market on the outdoor space associated with this building. The completed project will become a key gathering place for the community. There are plans to develop spaces within the building that could be used for classes, with some programming geared towards area schools. The project will provide an economic benefit to the community by providing opportunities for farmers' market vendors as well as small-independent food related businesses to sell their products. More information is provided in Appendix 1.
2. Sustainable Food Pilots – Working with community partners, this initiative involves planning and implementation of public green spaces and gardens for local food production and green infrastructure, including food forests, indigenous and/or traditional food, native species re-establishment, and other beneficial green infrastructure. The project will re-use and revitalize vacant and degraded spaces in urban areas, prioritizing those with:
 - proximity to the core neighbourhoods or areas flagged for corridor growth and densification;
 - a deficit of Municipal Reserve or public green space;
 - poor quality or inaccessible green spaces; and
 - community partnership opportunities.

This project will address a need that was highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic for additional high-quality green spaces that the community can access, as the allocation of park space in these neighbourhoods is not always adequate. More information is provided in Appendix 2.

3. Street Gardening – Saskatoon's Boulevard Garden program is expanding to include revitalization of centre medians and other rights-of-way. Resident gardening activities would be encouraged, including use of wildflowers and native plants and accessible gardening through an expanded Street Garden Program. The project includes research, engagement with the community, exploration of community partnerships, and analyzing the feasibility for program options building on work that has already been completed as part of the Boulevard Garden Guideline update completed earlier in 2021. This preparatory work leads

to the implementation of demonstration gardens on rights-of-way that showcase best practices for gardening in these spaces. Communications, education, and incentives are included in this scope of work to encourage the community to broadly consider and utilize available rights-of-way and participate in street gardening. More information is provided in Appendix 3.

4. LED Conversion – This project will convert 1,280 light fixtures from high-pressure sodium to LED along streets in the Downtown core, along river valley trails and in various parks. The LED fixtures will replace ones that are 30 to 40 years old and improve reliability of the lighting system and the safety of drivers and pedestrians in those areas. More information is provided in Appendix 4.
5. Natural Area Management Plans – This project will create and implement Management and Restoration Plans for high priority natural areas that are currently degraded, facing incompatible land uses, and lack infrastructure for community use. The Management and Restoration Plans will define site specific management techniques that include land protection, conservation, restoration, interpretation, and education, as well as use the City's asset management framework to define services provided by natural areas and set levels of service. This project will implement early priority restoration work that will improve ecosystem function and community access. A concurrent Traditional Land Use and Knowledge Assessment will identify cultural and ceremonial features to be incorporated into these sites to provide space for ceremony, community building, access to nature, and traditional foods and medicines. More information is provided in Appendix 5.
6. Fire Station 5 – The New Fire Station No. 5 (FH5) project is to be constructed on the east side of Preston Avenue North. As part of good governance, choosing the new FH5 station location allows Saskatoon Fire Department (SFD) to meet national standards for response times, promote community safety, and improve the quality of life for residents and visitors. Primary users of the facility will be SFD, with two active units with full crews of four firefighters and one officer per unit (ten persons), 24 hours per day. In addition, there will be daytime use for one or two Fire Inspectors. Included is an area for drop-in use for SFD led health initiatives, University of Saskatchewan, local community groups and the Saskatoon Police Service. The building will also act as a community refuge facility. More information is provided in Appendix 6.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The CCRF program will cover up to 75% of eligible costs up to \$750,000. The Sustainable Food Pilot, Street Gardening, and Natural Area Management Projects may be able to utilize funding from the Sustainability Reserve to cover the City's portion of costs.

The City's portion of costs on the LED Conversion project would be funded through the Utility.

A portion of the Farmers' Market project (approximately \$300,000 - \$500,000) falls within the scope of the Civic Building Comprehensive Maintenance Reserve, with the remainder of the project unfunded.

Fire Hall 5 is funded through the Civic Facilities Funding Plan.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no privacy, legal, social, or environmental implications identified.

NEXT STEPS

The Administration will report back if any of the above projects are selected for funding, requesting an adjustment to the budget for the existing capital project using funds from the CCRF.

APPENDICES

1. Farmers Market Building Renewal Project
2. Sustainable Food Pilots
3. Street Gardening Program Expansion
4. LED Conversion
5. Natural Area Management Plans
6. New Fire Station No. 5

REPORT APPROVAL

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