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## **Manitoba Municipal and Northern Relations**

Manitoba **G**rowth, **R**enewal and **O**pportunities  
for Municipalities

Program Guide

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## 1. Program Overview

The Manitoba Growth, Renewal and Opportunities for Municipalities (Manitoba GRO) is a one-time application-based program designed to help Manitoba municipalities address critical infrastructure needs under the investment themes of Renewal, Innovation, and Climate Resiliency:

- **Renewal** – To renew, renovate, expand, or replace existing infrastructure beyond its current service life
- **Innovation** – To build or enhance capital infrastructure that better responds to current and anticipated future needs, and utilize proven technology to increase efficiency and effectiveness
- **Climate Resiliency** – To build infrastructure to withstand or mitigate the effects of climate change, including severe weather events

This program will see an investment of up to \$42 million under the \$73.8 million Rural Strategic Infrastructure Basket delivered under the Strategic Municipal Investment Fund in 2024.

Manitoba GRO is intended to align with municipal planning, design, and engineering efforts under a wide range of core infrastructure needs. Advancement of such projects will help municipalities address key capital projects that advance strategic planning including asset management to support growing and sustainable communities.

Manitoba GRO will also build upon existing water and wastewater programming delivered through the Manitoba Water Services Board, and previously approved federal-provincial projects supported under the \$73.8 million Rural Strategic Infrastructure Basket.

## 2. Eligible Recipients

All incorporated Manitoba municipalities outside the City of Winnipeg are eligible for Manitoba GRO funding. Separate funding is allocated to Winnipeg projects for prioritization.

Ineligible applicants include for-profit corporations, not-for-profit organizations, First Nations, Northern Affairs communities, and individuals. Other funding mechanisms exist for these entities, while municipal infrastructure in Manitoba is owned and operated by local governments.

## 3. Eligible Investment Categories

Manitoba GRO aims to provide targeted funding to municipalities under the following investment categories:

- A. **Public Safety** – projects that support or build a safe and climate resilient environment
  - Disaster Prevention, Mitigation and Climate Resiliency
  - Fire Stations and Major Equipment

- B. **Roads, Bridges and Active Transportation** – projects that connect people and communities, and enhance the movement of goods, and products, services across municipalities
- C. **Recreational Infrastructure** – projects that encourage physical activity, active living, and foster health benefits for the community
- D. **Multi-modal Transportation** – projects such as airports, bus and other ground transportation hubs to support the movement of goods, products and people
- E. **Solid Waste Management and Organic Diversion** – projects that improve waste management and waste reduction to enhance environmental sustainability, including the effective diversion of organic materials and recyclable materials

A comprehensive listing of sample eligible projects under each of the above categories is listed under **APPENDIX A**.

**Note:** Municipalities may submit up to two applications under any of the investment categories. If a municipality is requesting funding for more than one project, applications must be ranked in order of priority (i.e. first and second priority). A separate application form must be submitted for each project to be considered.

Joint applications are permitted, but one municipality must act as the primary applicant.

#### Ineligible Projects

Water and wastewater projects are ineligible under Manitoba GRO. The [Manitoba Water Services Board](#) (MWSB) provides funding support for municipal water and sewer initiatives. Municipalities are encouraged to apply directly to the MWSB for funding.

#### **4. Eligible Funding**

Municipalities are expected to:

- a. Demonstrate their commitment towards the delivery and completion of the project through cost-shared funding. Manitoba GRO will fund **up to 50%** of total eligible project costs.
- b. Provide a financial commitment towards the project of **up to 50%** of total eligible project costs.
- c. Secure leveraged funding (where possible) from external and other sources (e.g. federal contributions; partner municipalities, private sources) to support total project costs or offset provincial or municipal contributions towards the project and ensure project success.

There is no cap to the amount of funding that can be requested through Manitoba GRO. However, funding consideration will be based on the relative quality of each application submitted, viability, and alignment with Manitoba GRO's program criteria and investment themes.

## 5. Eligible Project Costs

Eligible project costs include expenses directly related to, and incurred during the actual work on a project. **Note:** *Project costs incurred prior to the launch date of Manitoba GRO shall be considered ineligible.*

A list of eligible and ineligible costs are provided under **APPENDIX B**. Please note that terms and conditions under individual project contribution agreements may list additional eligible/ineligible costs.

## 6. Application Process and Deadline

Municipalities can access the Manitoba GRO program guide and application form through [Manitoba Municipalities Online](#) (MMO).

All submissions must include a completed application form, a scanned copy of a resolution from Council approving the project and request for provincial support under Manitoba GRO, and other supporting documents relevant to the application, including confirmation of other funding sources.

Once completed, please submit the application through MMO under the heading "Submit/View Municipal Report," and selecting 2024 Manitoba GRO Grant Application.

The deadline for submitting a complete Manitoba GRO application with supporting documents through MMO is **November 15, 2024**.

## 7. Evaluation Process and Criteria

Applications will be evaluated against key criteria and assessed to maximize available funding under Manitoba GRO. The evaluation team will include Municipal and Northern Relations program staff, with consultation from other departments for technical and subject matter expertise (including Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure, Environment and Climate Change, and Office of Fire Commissioner). Projects must comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including federal, provincial, and municipal policies and regulations.

All complete and eligible project applications will be evaluated on their own merit based on the following criteria:

- Project readiness – municipalities must demonstrate the ability to initiate, implement, and be substantially completed within three (3) years from the date of signing the agreement. Applications should outline specific activities, realistic timelines (e.g. project start and end dates), and have tangible project milestones to measure progress.
- Strategic planning – project addresses or is aligned with municipal strategic plans, such as an asset management plan, local development plan, regional plan, master transit plan, active transportation plan, climate change and resiliency plan, fire prevention plan, water management plan, other strategic plans, and/or work undertaken by Planning Districts and Watershed Districts, etc. Applications are expected to demonstrate how the project aligns with existing plans and priorities.
- Regulatory compliance – project seeks to achieve or is aligned with all applicable federal, provincial, and municipal laws and regulations.
- Regional benefits – Projects that serve a region (i.e. more than one municipality and multiple communities) and/or involve partner municipalities to achieve regional benefits are strongly encouraged. Municipalities are also encouraged to indicate in their application their commitment to service delivery in both official languages and communications with the public or how their initiative supports the advancement of any other Association of Manitoba Bilingual Municipalities Municipal Maturity Model (3M) activities within their community as it relates to their capital project (e.g. signage), where applicable.
- Leveraged funding – municipalities must present a realistic budget with leveraged funding from other sources. This includes a municipal contribution towards the project (of up to 50% of eligible project costs), and where possible, funding through Federal grants (e.g. Federation of Canadian Municipalities, Canada Community-Building Fund), private investments, or from other partners (e.g. municipal partnership contributions).

*Note: Municipalities will not be able to stack provincial funding received under this program with other existing provincial funding.*

- Key outcomes – projects must align with Manitoba GRO’s investment themes of Renewal, Climate Resiliency, and Innovation, and have clear outcomes that are consistent with Manitoba GRO’s investment categories. For example:
  - Project addresses climate resiliency such as reducing Green House Gas (GHG) emissions, preventing disasters, mitigating impacts; and/or innovation that involves employing new designs, technology, and systems to increase the resiliency of communities, economics, and ecosystems.

Sample projects under eligible investment categories are listed under **APPENDIX A.**

## **8. Approvals and Reporting Requirements**

**Notification** – all applicants (both successful and unsuccessful) will be notified of the outcome of their application through formal correspondence.

**Advanced funding** – successful applicants will receive advanced provincial funding for approved eligible projects costs on or before **March 31, 2025** once a project contribution agreement has been signed by both the municipality and the Government of Manitoba. The contribution agreement will outline the terms and conditions of the funding, which include reporting requirements and a stipulation that funds be placed into a segregated interest-bearing account until they are needed to cover approved project costs. Any interest earned over the term of the agreement shall form part of the provincial contribution.

**Project completion timeline** – approved projects must be substantially completed within three (3) years. Provincial funds not used prior by the end of the three year period must be returned to the Government of Manitoba, or if agreement conditions are not adhered to by the recipient municipality.

**Reporting** – Municipalities will be required to report annually on the progress of the project, including objectives, activities, milestones achieved, and outcomes. A financial report will be submitted with each annual report, until funds are fully expended, along with a reconciliation of funding upon project completion.

**Project cost overruns** – Should an approved project incur cost overruns, these costs shall be borne by the municipality and other project partners; no additional Manitoba GRO funding will be available.

## **9. Contact Information**

Should you require additional information or have any questions about Manitoba GRO, please contact the Municipal Funding Policy and Programs Branch of Manitoba Municipal and Northern Relations at [MFPP@gov.mb.ca](mailto:MFPP@gov.mb.ca).

## APPENDIX A

### Manitoba GRO Investment Categories

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#### 1. Public Safety

##### **A. Disaster Prevention, Mitigation and Climate Resiliency**

Projects that result in the construction, material enhancement or renewal of infrastructure that reduces or eliminates long-term impacts and risks associated with natural disasters.

Eligible projects under this category include (but are not limited to):

- Building drains, dams and dikes to reduce the risk of flooding.
- Restoring wetlands and other natural infrastructure to reduce the risk of drought.
- Constructing firebreaks to limit the spread of wildfires.
- Installing retaining walls, gabions, and revetments to control erosion.
- Increasing water permeable surfaces and capture structures like rain gardens or swales to control and reduce overland flooding.
- Upgrading municipally owned community facilities to provide shelter during extreme events (wind, heatwaves, smoke or evacuation).

##### **B. Fire Stations**

Projects that result in the construction, material enhancement or renewal of fire halls and fire station infrastructure.

Eligible projects under this category include (but are not limited to):

- Constructing a fire station.
- Renovating a fire station.
- Expanding a fire station.
- Fire trucks if the acquisition or replacement is to meet new safety standards or part of a broader project involving the construction, renovation, or expansion of a fire station.
- Construction of new water supply wells or securing of existing wells to shorten response times within municipalities.

#### 2. Recreational Infrastructure

Projects that result in the construction, material enhancement or renewal of recreational infrastructure that provides significant community benefits, fosters physical activity, and enhances public spaces.

Eligible projects under this category include (but are not limited to):

- Large-scale construction, renovation, and expansion of multi-use recreation or sports centres, sports fields, amateur sports spaces, aquatic centres, swimming pools, and splash pads.
- Ineligible projects include:  
Facilities whose primary function is as a place of assembly for religious purposes/worship (e.g. church, mosque, synagogue, temple, chapel, shrine etc.)



### 3. Road, Bridges and Active Transportation

Projects that result in new road construction, expansion or major renewal and rehabilitation of roads, which extend the useful life of the road; replacement or major rehabilitation of municipal bridges; and construction of active transportation infrastructure.

Eligible projects under this category include (but are not limited to):

- Widening and resurfacing local roads.
- Replacing bridges and culverts.
- Installing active transportation infrastructure (e.g. municipal owned bike lanes and hiking trails).
- Installing sidewalks, street lights and traffic signals (if done at the same time as the road project).
- **Note:** Ineligible projects include ongoing and routine repairs to roads and bridges.

#### Roads

The following additional criteria may be used to evaluate and prioritize road applications:

- Physical state of the road (closed, reduced weight restriction, etc.).
- Type and volume of traffic using the road.
- Length of detour if the road is closed.
- Regional significance of the road with respect to commercial activity.
- Whether the road provides the single point of access to a community.

#### Bridges

Municipalities may also apply for cost-shared funding for preliminary or detailed design/engineering for bridges. If municipalities have completed both of these required steps, they may apply for funding for bridge replacement or major rehabilitation work:

- **Preliminary Design / Engineering (including Environmental Assessments)** – municipalities may submit an application for preliminary design and engineering costs including environmental assessments with a quote for these services from a Professional Engineer (P. Eng.) registered or licensed to practice in Manitoba with the appropriate scope of practice in bridge engineering.
- **Detailed Design / Engineering** – municipalities may submit an application for detailed design and engineering costs with a quote for these services from a P. Eng. Registered or licensed to practice in Manitoba with the appropriate scope of practice in bridge engineering. A copy of the preliminary design and engineering report for the proposed project, sealed by a P.Eng. must accompany this application.
- **Bridge Replacement / Major Rehabilitation (Design-Bid-Build Option)** – municipalities may submit an application for all construction costs for the project with a detailed cost estimate prepared by a P.Eng. registered or licensed to practice in Manitoba with the appropriate scope of practice in bridge engineering. A copy of the preliminary design and detail design report for the proposed project, sealed by a P.Eng. must accompany the application.

- **Bridge to Culvert Replacement (Design-Build Option)** – municipalities may submit an application for all detailed design and construction costs for the project with a detailed cost estimate prepared by a P.Eng. registered or licensed to practice in Manitoba with the appropriate scope of practice in bridge engineering. A copy of the preliminary design and engineering report for the proposed project, sealed by a P.Eng. must accompany the application.
- **Bridge Rehabilitation (Design-Build Option)** – municipalities may submit an application for all detailed design and construction costs for the project with a detailed cost estimate prepared by a P.Eng. registered or licensed to practice in Manitoba with the appropriate scope of practice in bridge engineering. A copy of the structural engineering assessment report for the proposed project, sealed by a P.Eng. must accompany the application.

The following additional criteria may be used to evaluate and prioritize bridge applications:

- Physical state of the bridge (closed, reduced weight restriction, etc.).
- Type and volume of traffic using the bridge.
- Regional significance of the bridge with respect to commercial activity.
- Length of detour if the bridge is closed.
- Whether the bridge provides the single point of access to a community.

#### 4. Multi-modal Transportation

Projects that result in the construction, material enhancement or renewal of infrastructure that supports a shared passenger ground or air transport system that is available for public use.

Eligible projects under this category that aligns with a municipal public transit plan or determined through a study include (but are not limited to):

- Constructing designated public transportation surfaces, stations, stops and terminals.
- Renovating transportation maintenance facilities.
- Purchasing new zero or low emission public transit buses.
- Compliance with air transport regulation.
- Implementing Intelligent Transportation Systems.

#### 5. Solid Waste Management and Organic Waste Diversion

Projects that result in the design, construction and/or modification of solid waste management facilities that also divert more material from landfills by using expansion to establish composting areas to divert waste and extend landfill life.

Eligible projects under this category include (but are not limited to):

- Landfill construction costs to resolve capacity challenges through expansion of composting capacity and organic waste diversion.
- Designing and constructing a materials recovery facility.
- Installing a leachate collection system and other environmental compliance features in a landfill.

- Regional landfill expansion with the above noted parameters.
- Feasibility studies to inform implementation of innovative organic waste diversion efforts in municipalities (e.g. waste to energy technology).

## APPENDIX B

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### **ELIGIBLE COSTS**

Eligible costs include the following types of costs incurred to implement the project:

- a) the capital costs of acquiring, renewing, renovating, expanding, upgrading, constructing, rehabilitating, improving, or replacing an asset;
- b) the costs related to surveying, engineering, design, supervision, testing, and management services, including fees paid to professionals, technical personnel, consultants and contractors;
- c) the costs related to insurance and bonding;
- d) the costs of installing signage for directional purposes, safety warnings, or regulatory compliance in both official languages; and
- e) the costs of environmental assessments as required by federal or provincial legislation.

### **INELIGIBLE COSTS**

The following types of costs are ineligible costs:

- a) ongoing operating expenses or regularly scheduled maintenance work;
- b) purchase of tools and machinery to carry out the project;
- c) costs related to acquiring land, or leasing land, buildings and other facilities;
- d) financing charges, loan costs and loan interest payments;
- e) any overhead costs not related to the actual project, including salaries and other employment benefits of any employees of the municipality,
- f) taxes for which the municipality is eligible for a tax rebate and all other costs eligible for rebates.

**Note:** *Project costs incurred prior to the launch date of Manitoba GRO shall be considered ineligible.*

*Please note that terms and conditions under individual project contribution agreements may list additional eligible and ineligible costs.*