



## Town of Onoway Request for Decision

Meeting:	<b>Council Meeting</b>
Meeting Date:	November 23, 2023
Presented By:	Gino Damo, Director of Corporate and Community Services
Title:	Northern and Regional Economic Development Grant Program

### **BACKGROUND / PROPOSAL**

#### Description

The Northern and Regional Economic Development (NRED) Program funds initiatives led by Alberta municipalities, Indigenous communities and non-profit organizations that promote regional economic development and diversification.

The NRED Program funds initiatives that support economic development and will achieve tangible and impactful results in one or more of the following priority areas:

- Investment in economic development infrastructure
- Business supports
- Labour force attraction and retention
- Tourism planning, capacity building and infrastructure
- Economic development capacity building

#### Funding

NRED will provide successful applicants **up to 50% of total Eligible Project Costs**.

- Total Eligible Project Costs must be a **minimum of \$40,000** (after eligibility assessment by the program), and the Program will provide a **maximum of \$200,000** in funding to any project.
- Applicants must be able to match the funding requested at a **minimum of 50%** of the total Eligible Project Cost.
- Establishment and staffing of a **new** Economic Development Officer role or equivalent is **eligible up to \$12,500**.

#### Eligible Projects

- Allowable travel expenses within Alberta:
  - Airfare, restricted to return economy airfare with allowance for the first single piece of checked personal luggage and one carry-on;
  - Intercity bus fares restricted to economy;
  - Accommodation restricted to a standard room (or equivalent), up to \$300 per person, per night;
  - Mileage restricted to \$0.505 per kilometre travelled; and

- Rental vehicle charges for an appropriate non-luxury vehicle and fuel for the rental vehicle.
- For workshops, seminars or other similar events, the costs for the provision of meals for participants when the meal falls within the duration of the event, to per participant/per day maximum of \$42.00.

The establishment and staffing of a new Economic Development Officer (EDO) role or equivalent. NRED specifically covers the costs involved in:

- remunerating this position for the initial three-month period;
- costs associated to the recruitment process, such as advertising or a recruitment firm, but does not include the applicant’s own human resources staff.
- Up to \$12,500 portion.

Submission Deadline

- December 20, 2023 – 11:59 p.m. MST.

**DISCUSSION / OPTIONS / BENEFITS / DISADVANTAGES**

Administration is proposing to apply for a project as follows:

- Establishing and staffing a new Economic Development Officer role based on the following for a total project cost of \$27,255:

	Hourly Wage	Hours (Annual)	Total (Annual)	NRED Portion	Municipal Portion	Property Tax % Increase
Contract @ 17.5 hrs/week @ 6 months	\$ 59.90	455	\$ 27,255	\$ 12,500	\$ 14,755	0.86%

- Attending workshops, seminars or other similar events and allowable travel expenses within Alberta for a total project cost of \$12,745. Allocation shown below:

Total Project Costs	NRED Portion	Municipal Portion	Property Tax % Increase
\$ 12,745	\$ 6,373	\$ 6,373	0.37%

Administration recommends applying for the grant and requests a letter of support from Council.

A workplan has been created by the Economic Development Committee which included a part time Economic Development Officer as a future opportunity. With this grant application there would be a need to match budget (as shown above), which is not included in the 2024 operating budget, at this time. As this is a new initiative, this would

mean an increase in tax dollars however sustainable Economic and Business Growth are important and one of Council's strategic goals which include business retention.

**STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT**

Economic & Business Growth

**COSTS / SOURCE OF FUNDING**

None, at this time as project will only proceed if grant is approved.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION**

- 1) THAT Council authorize Administration to letter of support for the Northern and Regional Economic Development Program.
  
- 2) THAT Council authorize Administration to submit an application for the Northern and Regional Economic Development Program.

**ATTACHMENTS**

- Northern and Regional Economic Development Program Guidelines 2023/2024.