MUNICIPAL COAL TRANSITION ASSISTANCE FUNDING CRITERIA

About the Municipal Coal Transition Assistance Funding

The Municipal Coal Transition Program (the "Program") was developed by the South Saskatchewan Ready (SSR) partnership and the Province of Saskatchewan as part of its plan to support communities while they transition from coal-based industries to other economic possibilities.

Municipalities and businesses in the south-central transition region of Saskatchewan are eligible for support through this program which is designed to attract investment and advance economic development and diversification opportunities in the area.

Applications will be reviewed by the SSR committee, which is comprised of representatives from the following nine (9) communities: Town of Rockglen, Town of Coronach, Town of Willow Bunch, Town of Bengough, RM of Poplar Valley No. 12, RM of Hart Butte No. 11, RM of Willow Bunch No. 42, RM of Bengough No. 40, RM of Happy Valley No. 10

Criteria

Organizations may apply for funding if they contribute to the economic development and investment attraction of the region in at least two of the following ways:

- Advancement of economic development and diversification activities and opportunities;
- Improvement of business conditions to enable long-term economic growth; and
- Net new job creation and either tax base expansion or tax base maintained.

Who is eligible?

- Existing businesses in the region expanding with clear net new job creation and either tax base expansion or tax base maintained;
- New businesses locating or expanding to the region; and
- Not-for-profit organizations that employ individuals in the region and can show a **demonstrable return on investment** within the region.

Targeted Eligibility Sectors

Businesses and organizations engaged in the following sectors will be considered priority for available funding:

- **Natural Resources Value-added Processing** includes the processing of natural resources in the energy and mineral sectors that adds value to primary products/raw materials.
- **Value-added Agriculture** includes activities that result in the physical transformation or upgrading of any raw/primary agricultural product(s) or any agricultural byproduct or waste into a new or upgraded product.

- **Manufacturing** is defined by the development and adoption of innovative technologies to create new products.
- **Resource Development** involves transitioning from traditional resource economy to innovative approaches that drive economic and environmental competitiveness in the energy, mining, and forestry sectors and leverage Estevan and Coronach's natural resources.
- **Innovative Technology** refers to advanced processes, products or services that reduce environmental impacts, optimize costs, meet new regulatory requirements, and improve global competitiveness.
- **Digital Industries** includes a combination of information and communication technology (ICT), digital and interactive media, and content industries, as well as manufacturers and service companies that creatively capture, transmit and display information electronically in innovative ways.
- **Health/Bio-sciences** encompasses a wide range of companies, from the developers and manufacturers of pharmaceuticals, medical devices and biomedical innovations to producers of digital health solutions and technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), data analytics, 3D printing, robotics and nanotechnologies.
- **Tourism** includes organizations that employ individuals and can **clearly demonstrate a return on investment** to the region.

This list is not exhaustive.

What Projects are Eligible?

Eligible projects, activities and associated costs include, but are not limited to:

- Feasibility studies;
- Business analysis;
- Market/product research;
- Engineering or other professional technical services;
- Capital construction;
- Building purchase;
- Leasehold improvements;
- New or used equipment;
- Land servicing costs for businesses locating or expanding in the region;
- Information & communications technology investments that increase employment; and
- Innovation and research initiatives that foster technological advancement and business growth in the region.

This list is not exhaustive.

Evaluation Criteria

Factors that must be considered during evaluation of applications will include but not limited to:

- Job creation and tax base expansion will be the priority in allocation of funding;
- Level of investment from other sources to be secured by the applicant;
- Strength of the applicant's funding application;
- Does not unreasonably impact existing regional businesses; and
- Net economic benefits for the region.

Other business activities that will result in an economic development advantages and job creation for the region may be considered by the municipal committee/Board of Directors.

Exceptions to eligibility criteria may also be considered for projects that address a priority economic need in the region.

Funding

Funding is provided as a conditional contribution on a case-by-case basis, based on the net economic benefit to the region, up to a maximum of $350,000 per project. This amount may be increased depending on the size of the investment, the return on investment, the number of jobs created and the project's viability and sustainability, subject to CIC approval. Capital construction, leasehold improvements and building purchases may cover up to 25% of costs, to a maximum of $100,000.

- Funding may be provided in full or in part based on the merits of the application.
- Applicants may submit one application per project.
- If approved, all conditions must be met. If funding is provided in stages, conditions must be met to receive the next stage of funding as outlined in the funding agreement.
- All regulatory requirements (e.g., environmental, building codes, permits, licenses) must be met to receive funding, along with the submission of a business case, feasibility studies, and other relevant documentation.
- If a project requires a change or variation, the applicant must submit a "Project Change Request" detailing the change in writing.
- All information requested in the application must be provided, otherwise, the application will be considered incomplete. Information such as permits, drawings and designs, engineer reports, licenses, business plans, feasibility studies, financial statements, detailed cost estimates, quotes and resolutions will be considered mandatory if requested.
- Not all applications or projects meeting eligibility criteria will receive funding.

What is Not Eligible?

Ineligible projects, costs and activities include but are not limited to:

- Expenditures incurred prior to project approval date
- Paying down municipal debt
- Providing labour transition assistance or support
- Home occupations
- Ongoing operating costs including maintenance
- Restructuring or refinancing of existing business operations
- Land purchase/lease
- Rolling stock
- Administration costs
- Working capital
- Cost of inventory
- Cellular projects
- Capital projects/purchases or leasehold improvements to residential or personal properties
- Acquisitions and buy-outs of existing businesses
- Storefront enhancements
- Trail development
- Swimming pools

- Campgrounds
- Businesses or corporations using funds to pay or subsidize owner or employee salaries
- Demolition or debris removal

This list is not exhaustive.

Exceptions to eligibility criteria may also be considered for projects that address a priority economic need in the region.

Application, Evaluation, Funding and Reporting Requirements

Application Requirements: Applicants must complete and sign a funding application form. All expenses identified in the application must be supported by quotes, which must be submitted as part of the application. Applications will not be assessed until all required quotes have been received.

Evaluation and Adjudication: All applications will be evaluated by the South Saskatchewan Ready Board of Directors. The Board may request additional information or clarification at any point during the evaluation process. Applicants are required to provide the requested information in a timely manner to avoid delays in the adjudication of their application.

Additional Information and Verification: South Saskatchewan Ready reserves the right to request additional information or supporting documentation as necessary for grant processing, verification and auditing purposes. Requests for additional information may extend processing timelines and result in delays.

Funding Agreement: Successful applicants will be required to enter into a Funding Agreement with South Saskatchewan Ready. The Funding Agreement will outline the terms and conditions of the approved funding including the responsibilities and obligations of the recipient, approved project activities and expenses, funding disbursement requirements, project timelines, progress reporting requirements, final reporting deadlines and any other conditions associated with accepting the funding. Applicants must agree to and comply with all requirements outlined in the Funding Agreement.

Funding Disbursement: Funding for approved projects will be disbursed upon receipt and verification of proof of payment and confirmation that the approved work has been completed.

Reporting Requirements: Applicants are required to submit progress reports throughout the duration of their approved project, in accordance with the timelines and requirements outlined in the Funding Agreement. Progress reports must provide updates on project activities, milestones, and measurable outcomes, including, but not limited to: Number of jobs created; Expansion of the municipal and/or regional tax base; Value of investments made; Other measurable outcomes or benefits resulting from the project. Upon completion of the project, applicants must submit a final project summary report by the deadline specified in the Funding Agreement. The final report must include supporting documentation demonstrating the outcomes and impacts of the grant-funded project, including a summary of results achieved against the measures identified in the progress reports.