



REQUEST FOR DECISION

MEETING DATE: March 27, 2023

TITLE: Alberta Community Partnership Grant - Mid-sized Cities Initiative

DIVISION: Corporate Services

SUMMARY:

To provide Council with information on the Mid-Size Cities Mayors' Caucus and the "Unlocking the Full Potential of Alberta's Mid-sized Cities" initiative, and to seek a Council resolution in support of the grant application to access Alberta Community Partnership grant dollars.

PROPOSED MOTION:

THAT the application by the Mid-Size Cities Mayor's Caucus to access Alberta Community Partnership grant dollars for the "Unlocking the Full Potential of Alberta's Mid-sized Cities" initiative be endorsed.

BACKGROUND / ANALYSIS:

The Alberta Mid-Size Cities Mayors' Caucus (MCMC) represents 24 urban centres, nearly 35 Provincial constituencies and a total population of approximately one million people. The purpose of the MCMC is to strengthen the significance and position of Alberta's mid-sized cities as a relevant and important voice within the province-wide framework, and to collaborate to come up with creative ways to address matters that directly impact mid-sized cities and advocate for recognition of an Alberta urban agenda.

In Spring 2022, the MCMC completed a strategic planning session that focused the work of the Caucus to:

- Recognize the unique needs and interests of the membership and develop strategies to respond and advocate for such;
- Provide a forum for information and best practice sharing and developing creative solutions to issues that are of mutual interest;

- Advocate for the needs and interests of mid-size cities through ongoing communication with other levels of government, Alberta Municipalities, and other groups/organizations; and
- Support the enhancement of members through networking and information sharing.

Subsequent planning identified the need to better understand the significance of Alberta mid-sized cities, and the common challenges that mid-sized cities face. To aid in advancing this work, MCMC developed the Unlocking the Full Potential proposal consisting of the following four interconnected phases:

1. Fiscal Sustainability
2. Economic Impact
3. Mapping the Road Ahead
4. Developing a Common Dashboard

The proposal funding request to the Province of Alberta is for \$400,000. Each member municipality is expected to provide in-kind support by collecting and providing data and participating in project workshops, interviews, and sessions (approximately 30 hours per municipality). Project oversight will be provided by the MCMC Executive, of which Spruce Grove is a member. Any associated project oversight expense will be covered by existing financial contributions from member municipalities to the MCMC.

The Unlocking the Full Potential of Alberta's Mid-sized Cities Initiative meets the criteria of the Government of Alberta's Alberta Community Partnership (ACP) Grant - Special Initiatives Grant. This grant has no stated maximum funding amount or specific deadline. Each grant application under this category is reviewed on a case-by-case basis and is subject to approval by the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Matching municipal funds are not required.

The Town of Cochrane has offered to take the lead for the grant application and the subsequent administration and will work in partnership with the MCMC to complete the study.

On February 15, 2023, the MCMC supported the application, in principle, and asked member municipalities to forward a request to their respective councils to pass a resolution supporting the grant application.

OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES:

Council could choose to not support the ACP application. Alternatively, Council could choose to request Administration provide more information on this ACP application.

CONSULTATION / ENGAGEMENT:

The MCMC Executive will work closely with other MCMC member municipalities to project manage the initiative.

IMPLEMENTATION / COMMUNICATION:

As a member of the MCMC Executive, Spruce Grove will work alongside other members of the executive to provide project oversight for this initiative.

IMPACTS:

As a mid-sized city in Alberta, Spruce Grove will benefit as the MCMC works to strengthen the significance and position of Alberta's mid-sized cities as a relevant and important voice within the province-wide framework and collaborates and strategizes to come up with creative ways to address matters that directly impact mid-sized cities.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Any associated project oversight expense will be covered by existing financial contributions from member municipalities to the MCMC, which are included in the respective municipalities approved budgets.