

Edmonton Economic Action Plan Grant

Edmonton

PROGRAM GUIDE

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Introduction

This document describes how to qualify for an Economic Action Plan Grant and provides details about the grant program. Funding is limited and grants will be awarded based on availability of funds. The program will be managed on a first come, first served basis where the first applicants to meet all criteria and fully execute a grant funding agreement will be awarded funding.

Any questions can be directed to the Grant Manager - businessinfo@edmonton.ca

Who Can Apply

Local Business and **Business Associations** are eligible to apply.

- **Local Businesses** A legal entity that is carrying on a business within the city of Edmonton including a physical address and operations, that will have or will have obtained a City business licence to operate a business in the city of Edmonton by the time it enters into a Funding Agreement for an approved project under the Grant. If a business is located within the city of Edmonton and the legal entity carrying out this business is exempt from obtaining a business licence to operate a business within the city of Edmonton, they may request approval to be considered as a Local Business for the purposes of this Procedure from the Grant Manager, which approval may be arbitrarily and unreasonably withheld;
- **Business Associations** must have a mandate for economic development and be a legal entity.

Third-party sellers, non-Resident Business Licence holders, government organizations, and religious or other organizations who do not have an Economic Development Mandate are not eligible to apply.

If the applicable Local Business or Business Association has previously received funding from another City program or another grant stream of the Edmonton Economic Recovery Grant Program, it may still be eligible for an Economic Action Plan Grant. Eligible applicants may access the grant more than one time for additional projects that meet eligibility and align with the EAPG actions.

How Much Is the Grant?

The Economic Action Plan Grant is a **matching grant** of up to **\$50,000** for eligible projects or programs. The **minimum grant amount** that can be requested is **\$10,000**.

This means:

- The City and the applicant will pay equal portions of the total cost. The City's matching portion is up to \$50,000. Costs incurred beyond this will be paid for by the applicant.
- The **total cost of the proposed project must be no less than \$20,000**.
- Where feasible, split payout of grant funds to up to 50% upfront after the agreement has been signed and 50% upon completion of the project and final reporting

Please note that not every eligible project that applies, will receive funding as funds are limited.

Eligible Projects/Programs

The program supports projects developed by local businesses and Business Associations that align with the following actions from the Economic Action Plan:

Action 3: Support building capacity and access for entrepreneurs from marginalized communities, such as newcomers and Indigenous entrepreneurs.

Action 5: Support projects aimed to strengthen or eliminate gaps within existing local supply chain networks.

Action 6: Leverage Edmonton's digital infrastructure, including Open Data, fibre optic network and the innovation corridor, to link research, educational and technology organizations.

Action 10: Develop tools and strategies to attract commercial, residential and mixed-use development in nodes and corridors.

Action 11: Support enhanced experiences by encouraging opportunities for low impact businesses to operate in parks and public space.

Action 12: Develop tools to facilitate growth in green economic sectors.

Action 13: Work together to support emerging made-in-Edmonton technology solutions.

Action 14: Support emerging off-shoots of the energy sector.

Action 15: Advance a coordinated approach to growing the local food economy.

Action 16: Develop Edmonton's competitive advantage as an international logistics hub and hub to Northern Alberta, the Northwest Territories and beyond.

Action 17: Promote affordable, accessible, high-quality, and inclusive early learning and child care.

- *Please note this action is reserved for Provincially licensed/accredited child care providers.*

Action 20: Promote and support academic programs that advance the local economy.

Action 24: Utilize the City of Edmonton's [event strategy](#) and [Explore Edmonton Tourism Master Plan](#) as tools to support investment by creating awareness about local opportunities for businesses and people through event-related projects.

This program will expire when the budget is fully allocated.

Eligibility

This grant supports the diversification and expansion of Edmonton's economy. Projects that are eligible for grant funding will align with at least one Action listed above. Additionally, the Business Case of the application package must demonstrate how the project accomplishes one or more of the following:

- Create new jobs.
- Increase revenue for new and existing businesses.
- Diversify the economy.
- Attract investment.
- Supporting new festivals or events

This grant is not meant to:

- Provide funding for wages or payroll.
- Support organizations with operational funding for rent, mortgages, bills, debt servicing, or fees for memberships or professional associations.
- Provide funding for permit or licensing fees.
- Fund individual marketing plans and projects solely focused on marketing.

See the [Economic Action Plan Grant Procedure](#) for the full list of ineligible costs (Section 5.3).

Please see the [Additional Guide for Actions](#) section for examples of projects and programs that would be supported. Please see the Project Specific Eligibility section below for industry-specific considerations and ineligible costs.

If you are unsure if a project or program is eligible for funding, please contact the [Grant Manager](#) for more information.

Eligibility Checklist

For reference while completing an application:

In order to be eligible for an Edmonton Economic Action Plan Grant, all of the following criteria must be met:

- The applicable Local Business (as defined in the [Procedures](#)) must have a City of Edmonton business licence at the time of submitting documentation for potential funding (ie. at the time of project completion).
- The applicable Business Association (as defined in the [Procedures](#)) must have a mandate for economic development and be an active legal entity.
- The applicable Local Business or Business Association cannot be a third-party seller, non-Resident Business Licence holder, or government organization.
- The applicable Local Business or Business Association cannot be a religious organization that does not have an Economic Development Mandate.
- The proposed project is a new initiative and not a continuation of an existing initiative.
- Funding will not be used for those costs deemed as Ineligible Costs in the [Procedures](#). The items below are listed again so as to highlight that these are some of the Ineligible Costs.
 - Funding will not be used for wages and/or payroll.
 - Funding will not support organizations with operational funding for rent, mortgages, bills, debt servicing, or fees for memberships or professional associations.
 - Funding will not support ongoing initiatives or events.
 - Funding will not be used for permit or licensing fees.
 - Funding will not be used on individual marketing plans and projects solely focused on marketing.
- All other eligibility requirements as outlined in the Program Guide and the [Procedures](#) will be adhered to.

Project-Specific Eligibility

This section highlights industry-specific considerations for the grant program. Regardless, all applications must still demonstrate the outcomes of the Economic Action Plan actions, listed above, are being met. Please refer to the [Additional Guide for Actions](#) section for a list of action-specific ineligible costs.

Tenant Improvements

Non-compliant work will not be issued grant funding. If a proposed project includes building modifications, upgrades or construction, the following applies:

- The property owner must always sign the Funding Agreement.
- It is the applicant's responsibility to obtain all relevant permits and approvals for the work.
- It is the applicant's responsibility to pay all contractors and subcontractors.

Festivals / Events

Applications must demonstrate:

- This is a new event in Edmonton.
- The event has the potential to draw in tourism.
- Support for the Economic Action Plan outcomes.
- The ability to be a recurring or ongoing, and sustainable event.
- The event will not be concurrently City sponsored, or sponsored by an organization primarily funded by the City of Edmonton.
- The economic impact of the event to Edmonton's local economy (i.e. economic boost to the accommodation, hospitality & food industries and impact to other Edmonton businesses).

Restaurants

Restaurants would be eligible if they are diversifying into new markets. Examples could include offering packaged food goods for resale or adding a new retail component attached to the restaurant. This grant will not support the expansion of nor the opening of restaurants. This includes leasehold improvements to an existing or new restaurant.

Action Specific Ineligible Costs

Action 3: ineligible costs include start-up costs and operational costs for a new business.

Action 5: ineligible costs include inventory purchases.

Action 6: ineligible costs include costs associated with upgrading internet connections for businesses.

Action 10: ineligible costs include leasehold improvements or renovations, construction costs for new buildings, and new business start-up costs.

Action 11: ineligible costs associated with Environmental Impact Assessments and mobile food vendors.

Action 12: ineligible costs include purchasing and installing solar panels or other alternative energy generators for individual businesses, EV charging stations.

Action 15: ineligible costs include new or expanding food services (i.e. opening new restaurants or expanding existing restaurants, ghost kitchens, and similar food service businesses).

Action 17: ineligible costs include any operating costs associated with opening new childcare facilities.

Action 20: ineligible costs include funding for existing academic programs and duplication of funding available from other levels of government.

Action 24: ineligible costs include funding for one-time events, events/projects not concurrently sponsored by the City of Edmonton or an organization primarily funded by the City of Edmonton.

Application Process and Timelines

Please be aware that timelines are subject to change and are dependent upon program volumes and resource needs. Please ensure your application is up to date and complete. Incomplete applications add additional time to the review period. Contact the [Grant Manager](#) if you have any questions about the application.

Applications may be submitted at any time, there is currently no application window throughout the year.

Applicants may apply for the grant by filling in a grant application and submitting this to the City. Complete applications should be sent to businessinfo@edmonton.ca. If a paper copy is required, an applicant may contact the Grant Manager.

Applications will be reviewed on a biweekly, rolling basis. As evaluations for this grant are done manually, it may take up to 6 weeks from the time of application for approval decisions to be communicated to applicants. Additionally, 2-3 weeks will be required after that time for a funding agreement to be entered into.

After reviewing the application, the City may require an applicant to provide additional information to determine whether the grant should be approved. Approval decisions will be communicated via email, and may add additional time to the review period.

How to Calculate In-kind Contributions (qualifying Business Associations ONLY)

Qualifying Business Associations may contribute up to 25 percent of the matching portion of the grant as in-kind contributions. In-kind contributions are goods, services or time donated to a program or project. In-kind contributions include volunteer or unpaid labour, donated space or equipment, or other unpaid resources. Qualifying Business Associations are defined as: the lead applicant that is a legal entity or a member of a partnership and has an Economic Development Mandate to support the business interests and commercial success of their Edmonton-based members. This does not include individuals or community groups.

In-kind labour is calculated based on the following:

- Professional/Technical Volunteer - \$30/hour
- General Volunteer labour - \$20/hour

The following examples describe how the maximum in-kind contribution would be calculated for an applicant that is a qualifying Business Association.

Example #1 - Business Association

Total Project Cost	\$73,000
Requested Grant amount (up to \$50,000 or 50% of project costs, whichever is less)	\$36,500
Matching Requirement	\$36,500
Max In-kind Contribution (Business Association only)	= \$36,500 * 25% = \$9,125
Minimum Cash Contribution	= \$36,500 - \$9,125 = \$27,375

In the above example, where the total project cost is \$73,000, an applicant must demonstrate their ability to contribute at least \$27,375 in cash to the project. The maximum value of all in-kind contributions to the project would be \$9,125.

Example #2 - Business Association

Total Project Cost	\$35,000
Requested Grant amount (\$50,000 or 50% of project costs, whichever is less)	\$17,500
Matching Requirement	\$17,500
Maximum In-kind Contribution	= \$17,500 * 25% = \$4,375
Minimum Cash Contribution	= \$17,500 - \$4,375 = \$13,125

In the above example, where the total project cost is \$35,000, an applicant must demonstrate their ability to contribute at least \$13,125 in cash to the project. The maximum value of all in-kind contributions to the project would be \$4,375.

Example. #3 - Business Association

Total Project Cost	\$100,000
Requested Grant amount	\$25,000
Matching Requirement	\$25,000
Maximum In-kind Contribution	= \$25,000 * 25% = \$6,250
Minimum Cash Contribution	= \$25,000 - \$6,250 = \$18,750

In the above example, where the total project cost is \$100,000, an applicant must demonstrate their ability to contribute at least \$25,000 in cash to the project. The maximum value of all in-kind contributions to the project would be \$6,250.

Application Review

The review process is generally described below:

- Submit the application.
- Applications are reviewed as they are received.
- The Grant Team will review the applications for alignment with the Grant Actions, the Policy, project or program's feasibility, the project or program's proposed outcomes and the Eligible Costs.
- The Grant Team may recommend to the Director that applications be approved, not be approved, be conditionally approved (meaning approved pending changes to the proposed project or plan), or the Grant Team may recommend to the Director that applicants need to submit additional information.
- Additional information provided will be reviewed as it is received.
- Approved projects/programs will enter into a Funding Agreement.

- The applicant will do the work.
- The applicant will submit their final report, invoices, receipts, etc.
- Funding will be issued in the form of a cheque and sent by mail.

Requested funding amounts are not guaranteed and lesser amounts may be given at the discretion of the City.

An applicant will not be eligible to receive a grant until they have entered into a Funding Agreement with the City.

Funding Agreement

The funding agreement shall outline how grants shall be calculated and paid, and indicate any conditions on the grant. The funding agreement will also indicate that grants may be required to be repaid to the City if the agreement is breached, a condition of the grant is not met, or it is discovered that the applicant has provided inaccurate information when applying for reimbursement for their project.

Up to 50% of the approved funding will be issued within a reasonable time after the Funding Agreement has been fully executed between the City and the successful party. The remaining approved funding will be issued upon the following conditions being met:

- The approved project is completed and a written request for funding has been submitted to the [Grant Manager](#) within the required time frame.
- The successful party is able to prove that they incurred all of the eligible costs and that they have met or exceeded the matching requirements of the grant.
- All necessary documentation and information have been submitted to the City as outlined in the Funding Agreement and grant procedures.

Reporting Requirements

Within 30 days of completing the project or program, the successful party must submit to the City all of the necessary documentation required to meet its reporting requirements as set out in the Funding Agreement. After the final report is reviewed and approved by the Grant Manager, the remaining 50% of the approved funds will be disbursed to the applicant.

The final report will generally include the following information:

- Proof the applicant incurred the Eligible Costs
 - Note - an applicant may NOT use any other City of Edmonton funding source towards their matching component.
- Final calculations of actual in-kind contributions applied to the project
- A valid City of Edmonton business licence, or written proof that they are operating legally if exempt from the City's licensing requirements.
 - In most cases where a business is exempt from requiring a City of Edmonton business licence it is because the applicant is a member of a professional organization such as professional engineers, doctors or other professional healthcare workers, lawyers, etc. If a local business or Business Association is unsure about an exemption, they may contact the [Grant Manager](#) to determine eligibility requirements.
- A completed final report template. This template will be available on the City of Edmonton Economic Action Plan Grant webpage.

The City may request additional information to verify a project has been completed as detailed in the funding agreement.

Grant Audit

- The City may audit all financial and related records associated with the funding agreement including expenditures on construction costs and the use of the grant funding. This audit may include a review of all documentation associated with the project.
- The applicant shall fully cooperate with any audit that is conducted by the City and provide whatever documentation is requested by the City to complete the audit.
- A failure to co-operate with an audit will mean that no additional grant payments will be made and prior grant payments may be required to be repaid.
- Audits may occur within a period specified within the funding agreement after the final grant has been issued and documentation must be preserved for that period of time.

Failure to Comply with the Terms of the Grant

If it is determined that the applicant is found to have made any misrepresentations in the application or the funding agreement, or has failed to comply with the terms of a funding agreement, the City may request the full grant amounts be paid back.

Additional Guide for Actions

This section contains examples of the types of projects that may contribute to the outcomes of the Economic Action Plan.

Action 3: Support building capacity and access for entrepreneurs from marginalized communities, such as newcomers and Indigenous entrepreneurs.

- A project to reduce barriers to employment and business opportunities for marginalized communities, such as Indigenous people and newcomers.
- Project is directly focused on supporting or benefitting a specific marginalized entrepreneurial group (i.e. Indigenous entrepreneurs).
- Project is directly focused on building business or employment capacity and access for entrepreneurs from marginalized communities.

Action 5: Support projects aimed to strengthen or eliminate gaps within existing local supply chain networks.

- Combining product/services awareness with ability to distribute products.
- Equipment purchases, including renovations to support new equipment (i.e. upgrading electrical to support new manufacturing machinery).
- Additions to fleet.
- Software development or purchase to support distribution, such as e-commerce.
- Project improves market access and/or speed to market for multiple businesses.

Action 6: Leverage Edmonton's digital infrastructure, including Open Data, fibre optic network and the innovation corridor, to link research, educational and technology organizations.

- Developing a tool to help with measuring the impact of the recovery efforts on the BIA mainstreet areas.
- A project to help provide statistical analysis of the economic development potential of our commercial areas.

- Incorporating Edmonton's Digital infrastructure into the curriculum of Edmonton's universities, trades schools and colleges.
- A recruitment and marketing project to attract specific, innovation-focused talent to Edmonton, for example, software engineers.
- A place branding project that supports a main street area, node or corridor, such as a place branding and marketing project for a BIA that highlights innovation within this area.

Action 10: Develop tools and strategies to attract commercial, residential and mixed-use development in nodes and corridors.

- A research project to assess the market demand for certain business types in the nodes and corridors.
- Developing a business attraction and retention plan for a specific node or corridor.
- Developing tenant strategies to cluster similar businesses within a node or along a corridor.

Action 11: Support enhanced experiences by encouraging opportunities for low impact businesses to operate in parks and public space.

- A business plan to launch a service or goods based product in parks or public space.
- Development of an experience based business to help commercialize destination areas in the City (ie. downtown, rivervalley, etc.).
- Purchase of mobile, transportable and low-impact equipment, materials, etc. for the business to operate in the park.
 - Items that would be eligible:
 - canoes, paddleboards, bikes, etc.
 - Items that would not be eligible:
 - vehicle purchases, food trucks or carts - i.e. trucks used to tow/transport the equipment.

Action 12: Develop tools to facilitate growth in green economic sectors.

- The development of new green technology software and/or strategies.
- Development of strategies to support the green economy.
- This action does not support green upgrades for an existing business.

Action 13: Work together to support emerging made-in-Edmonton technology solutions.

- Financial support for tech start-ups that are piloting and/or beta-testing a new project within Edmonton, for example: in artificial intelligence, health, biotech, renewables and software development.
- Technology equipment purchases made by small start-up businesses (i.e. high-end computing equipment, sensors, software, etc.).

Action 14: Support emerging off-shoots of the energy sector.

- Financial support for emerging energy sector business start-ups, pivots or expansions, including renewables, carbon capture and hydrogen sectors.

Action 15: Advance a coordinated approach to growing the local food economy.

- Creating or growing value-added products and services (changing the physical state of a product, i.e. milling grain into flour).
- Equipment purchases, including renovations to support new equipment (i.e. upgrading electrical).
- The addition of a new retail component to a restaurant (eg. development of packaged food products for resale).

- Creating capacity for value-added processing.
- Software development relating to the food economy.

Action 16: Develop Edmonton's competitive advantage as an international logistics hub and hub to Northern Alberta, the Northwest Territories and beyond.

- Retrofitting transportation equipment or facilities to improve business operations in the transportation and logistics industry.
- Hiring skilled workers to support operations management.
- Software development, such as inventory management solutions.

Action 17: Promote affordable, accessible, high-quality, and inclusive early learning and child care.

- Supporting the opening of **new** child care facilities. Start up costs (ie. capital investments) could include items such as kitchen equipment, desks, outdoor/playground equipment, toys, etc.

Action 20: Promote and support academic programs that advance the local economy.

- Supporting programs operated by a business and post-secondary partnership (i.e. training or research and development, etc.)

Action 24: Utilize and coordinate the City of Edmonton's event strategy and Explore Edmonton Tourism Master Plan as tools to support investment by creating awareness about local opportunities for businesses and people.

- Supporting economic development, promotes tourism, job creation, and brings diversity to the local economy.

Program Definitions

Throughout the Economic Action Plan there are several terms that are defined below. Note - any definitions present within the Economic Action Plan and Economic Action Plan Grant Procedures supersede these definitions.

Business Association - The lead applicant that is a legal entity or a member of a partnership and has an Economic Development Mandate to support the business interests and commercial success of their members. This does not include individuals or community groups.

Business Case - The justification for a proposed project/program on the basis of its alignment with one or more of the Grant Actions and its expected commercial and/or economic benefit (for example, expanded markets and increased employment);

Business Plan - The standardized application form template, which will be supplied by the City as part of Grant application materials, that will allow the applicable Local Business or Business Association to provide their business case and a cost summary of their anticipated expenses in support of their application for the Grant.

Economic Development Mandate - A mandate related to economic development, commercial success and/or economic growth.

Economic Resiliency - An increase in the ability of Local Businesses to adapt to changing economic conditions.

Green Economic Sectors - Consists of businesses that are engaged in activities aimed at reducing environmental risks and energy consumption, and that aim for sustainable development and production without degrading the environment.

Innovation - Making something new or improved that better serves a business or businesses. This can include a new product or service or a workflow improvement.

Local Business - A legal entity that is carrying on a business within the city of Edmonton including a physical address and operations, that will have or will have obtained a City business licence to operate a business in the city of Edmonton by the time it enters into a Funding Agreement for an approved project under the Grant. If a business is located within the city of Edmonton and the legal entity carrying out this business is exempt from obtaining a business licence to operate a business within the city of Edmonton, they may request approval to be considered as a Local Business for the purposes of this Procedure from the Grant Manager, which approval may be arbitrarily and unreasonably withheld;

Local Economy - Economic activity that takes place within the city of Edmonton.

Local Food Economy - Business and entrepreneurial activities that involve producing, processing, preparing, selling, marketing, transporting and/or distributing food within the city of Edmonton.

Marginalized Business Communities - Communities that include entrepreneurs who self-identify as belonging to a marginalized group (including but not limited to women, racialized groups, people with disabilities or mental health concerns, and people in poverty).

Non-Resident Business Licence Holder - A person (as defined in the Interpretation Act, RSA 2000, c I-8, as amended from time to time) that has a business licence from the City but does not reside or maintain a permanent business within the city of Edmonton.

Local Economic Conditions - External factors that have a significant negative effect on the City of Edmonton's local business economy.

Local Products - Goods manufactured and packaged within the City of Edmonton, either wholly or in part.

Offshoots of the Energy Sector - Businesses applying sustainable innovation and technology solutions to emerging opportunities related to renewables, carbon capture, hydrogen sectors and other energy sectors.

Reliability of Goods Movement - An increase in revenue or market reach (actual and potential customer base) year-over-year as a result of addressing gaps in the supply chain. This does not include increase in revenue or market reach due to marketing or advertising.

Speed to Market - The time required from conception to consumer availability for a product or service.

Supply Chain - The sequence of processes involved in the production and distribution of a commodity.

Tech - The research, development and distribution of technologically based goods and services. This includes software development, hardware development, health technology, artificial intelligence, and other similar industries and endeavors.

Maps of Nodes and Corridors

(continued on next 3 pages)