

Request for Expression of Interest – Municipalities to participate in asset management capacity-building cohort

Asset management is growing in importance for municipalities across Alberta and Canada, but the costs and work associated with integrating asset management into municipal decision-making and operations is often too great for small municipalities. To support small municipalities in embracing asset management, the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA), Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA), and Infrastructure Asset Management Alberta (IAMA) are organizing an asset management capacity-building cohort.

The cohort, funded through the FCM’s Municipal Asset Management Program (MAMP), will support a small group of six to ten municipalities in collaboratively improving their asset management capacity, and sharing lessons learned with other municipalities.

Using a “group learning” approach, this asset management capacity-building initiative has been developed with the following objectives in mind:

OBJECTIVES	OUTCOMES
Educational	Building greater awareness of asset management
Collaborative	Leveraging collective skills and resources
Suitable	Approach and solutions tailored toward smaller communities
Partnering	Building on regional knowledge and building our network
Capacity Building	Strengthening capacity internally and collectively
Timely and Efficient	Creating meaningful progress in a short period of time
Forward-Looking	Providing tools for updating and improving asset management over time, with a focus on implementation

It is expected that there will be varying levels of asset management maturity and capacity within the cohort. Group learning content will be designed for all participants to advance their asset management knowledge and capacity, regardless of their starting point. At a minimum, by the end of this process each municipality will have achieved the following:

- Establishment and development of an internal Asset Management Team
- Development of an Asset Management Policy
- Development of an Asset Management Strategy

Participation in the cohort is free aside from travel expenses and is a great opportunity for municipalities to learn the basics of asset management and receive support from asset management experts in developing the tools to get started on their asset management journeys! Read on for more details and how to apply.



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Project Timeline

Cohort applications will be accepted until December 21, 2018, with the cohort selected in early January 2019. In-person group learning activities will likely commence in late January or February 2019. Participants will be required to complete some individual tasks in January 2019, such as the completion of a municipal self-assessment on the MAMP Asset Management Readiness Scale. Targeted cohort completion is summer 2019, though depending on the progress being made and the preferences of the cohort, the process **may** be extended to fall 2019.

Participant Commitments

This project will include periodic in-person workshops, to be hosted on a rotational basis by participating municipalities, as well as more frequent conference calls. Participants will operationalize learnings within their municipality throughout the project period by engaging others in their municipality in the development of asset management policies, internal teams, etc.

Participants will be expected to report on their progress through completion of an asset management self-assessment using the MAMP Asset Management Readiness Scale prior to the project's commencement and upon completion of the project, as well as (potentially) at other points throughout the project. Participants are also expected to engage with the project team and one another through phone, email, and/or other means as needed to share challenges, ideas, concerns, etc., as such regular engagement supports an effective group learning process.

Participants will be asked to sign an acknowledgement of the participant commitment expectations, and council will be required to pass a motion endorsing the municipality's participation. This will ensure that participants are well-supported in their time commitment and have organizational support to implement the learnings from the cohort.

Participant Characteristics

This project seeks municipalities with little to no current asset management uptake, but with an interest in developing asset management processes and capacity. Any type of municipality (town, village, municipal district, etc.) may apply. Preference will be given to the following:

- Population of 10,000 or below
- Little to no asset management processes in place, but a willingness to develop them
- A willingness to commit two to three representatives (ideally from different departments within the municipality) to participating throughout the project term
- Demonstrated council support for participation in the cohort, ideally through a formal council motion (see attachment for optional motion template)
- Preference will be given to municipalities within a common region of the province (see following section)

Municipalities who do not meet all the above characteristics are still encouraged to apply.



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Cohort Characteristics

This project will prioritize the development of a cohort within a specific region of the province. A regional cohort is preferred for the following reasons:

- Intermunicipal collaboration (through the development of ICFs and IDPs) is a priority for many municipalities in Alberta. Extending a regional focus to asset management will strengthen regional relationships for participants and support the consideration of asset management processes into intermunicipal or regional decision-making.
- Municipalities within a region are more likely to have similar infrastructure and service delivery priorities and challenges than those from different areas of the province.
- Project logistics are much simpler with a regional approach. Travel distances are shorter, and travel costs are lower, both for the participants and for the project team.

A regional cohort **is not** mandatory, but is preferred. The attached application form provides the option for multiple municipalities to apply as a group. Individual applications will be considered, and depending on the applications received, a regional cohort may not be possible.

Regional partners could include municipalities with a shared boundary, or municipalities from a similar area of the province (example southwest, Foothills, Peace region, capital region, etc.).

Participant Costs

There is no fee to participate in the cohort. Group learning activities and support from the project team and asset management experts are provided free of charge for the duration of the project.

For in-person meetings, food and refreshments will be provided free of charge, though travel and accommodation costs **will not be reimbursed**.

Participants will be expected to work with the project team to provide at least one meeting space to hold a meeting or workshop at some point during the project. Ideally, participants will alternate hosting duties to allow for a similar cost and travel commitment among all cohort members.

Application Process

To apply, complete the application form and provide the attachments referenced in the application form. Applications must be submitted no later than **December 21, 2018**.

Questions

Any questions about the application process or project may be directed to Ryan Osterburg, Policy Analyst, AUMA, by email at rosterburg@auma.ca or by phone at 780-989-7426, or Wyatt Skovron, Policy Analyst, RMA, by email at [wyatt@RMAAlberta.com](mailto:w Wyatt@RMAAlberta.com) or by phone at 780-955-4096.



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