

Topic: Grant funding for energy reduction projects at County Facilities

Introduction:

This administrative report outlines three (3) grant opportunities that have been applied for. Two have been successful, and we expect to receive a decision on the third within the next month. The grants will support several projects in line with the County's energy management work, the background of which is included in this report. The two approved funding applications cover the full cost of the projects. The third (not yet approved) will come in the form of a rebate for a percentage of the total project cost. Matching funds are already allocated in the Facilities budget, as these projects were planned in the facilities life cycle plan.

Facts (Background Information):**Background/Context**

As per the County Initiatives (Climate Mitigation & Adaptation) section in the Municipal Development Plan, Parkland County plans to measure and reduce operational greenhouse gas emissions to achieve net-zero by 2050.

At a Strategic Planning Session in March 2024, Council indicated preliminary support for corporate emissions reductions.

In response, at the Council meeting on June 25, 2024 (refer to RFD 24-177), the design and implementation of a facilities energy management plan was proposed with the following details;

A Facilities Energy Management Plan would implement cost and energy savings as well as GHG reductions for County buildings. It would provide funding, coordination, and capacity to complete work that is already planned and budgeted in building lifecycles, in a more efficient way.

This approach was approved by Council (including the approval of Council contribution dollars necessary to apply for two grant programs to progress the energy management work). The Agriculture and Environment Services team were successful with the grant applications (outlined in Table 1 below).

Table 1

| Program | Grant amount | County contribution | Key Deliverables |
|---|--------------|-----------------------|---|
| Government of Alberta Municipal Climate Change Action Centre Municipal Energy Manager Program | \$180,000 | \$54,000 over 2 years | Two-year temporary employee. Facility energy use measurement, analysis and tracking. Energy audit Staff education and behavior change programs Energy Management Plan 10% GHG reduction. |
| Federal Government Green Municipal Fund Community Buildings Retrofit Initiative GHG Reduction Pathway Feasibility | \$134,880 | \$34,000 over 1 year | Energy audits on 13 County Facilities. 2 Stakeholder Workshops GHG reduction pathway feasibility report. |

Progress

Recent federal and provincial grants secured in late 2024 and early 2025 have enabled the County to:

- Hire a temporary Municipal Energy Specialist (2-year contract) to lead energy reduction initiatives.
- Complete baseline energy use assessments
- Engage a consultant to assess emissions reduction opportunities at the County's 13 highest energy-consuming facilities and coordinate:
 - Grant reporting deliverables
 - Internal stakeholder workshop to assess and provide guidance on initial findings and recommendations from site energy audits
- Complete an Energy Management Assessment to evaluate the current state of energy management practices and policies in the municipality
- Facilitate internal education and extension activities
- Capitalize on additional grant funding opportunities:
 - Additional funding secured to date;
 - Alberta Ecotrust Retrofit Accelerator program - \$44,090 to cover a percentage of the GHG reduction pathways study, allowing for the implementation of additional energy reduction work

- Climate Ready Infrastructure Service - \$35,000 to add a climate adaptation analysis to one of the 13 sites receiving an energy audit and conduct solar feasibility studies on up to 3 sites

New Opportunities

1. Provincial Government Municipal Climate Change Action Centre Community Energy Conservation (CEC) Program. Status - Applied

The CEC program provides financial rebates to municipalities to help implement energy retrofit projects in municipally owned facilities.

Working in collaboration with the facilities team, 4 energy retrofit projects across 3 County facilities were identified as a good fit for this grant program. These projects were already included in the facilities lifecycle plan. Grant funding will add value to these projects by supporting the purchase of higher efficiency options, accelerating implementation by completing more than one phase of a project at a time and/or completing a project/s ahead of schedule.

The total estimated costs to implement these projects is \$229,428 . If successful with the grant application, a percentage of the total cost will be provided based on as assessment by the program managers. The funding program covers up to a maximum of 50% (\$114,714). Matching funds are already allocated in the facilities budget, as these projects were planned in the facilities life cycle assessment.

Outlined in Table 2 below are the projects that have been submitted for funding support.

Table 2

| Project | Total cost | Grant funding | Energy reduction/ year | GHG (tCO2e) reduction/ year | Cost reduction/ year |
|---|-------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| County Services Building rooftop unit heaters upgrade | \$45,900 | \$22,950 | 24,986 kWh | 5.87 | \$2,998 |
| County Services Building lighting upgrade and controls | \$75,578 | \$37,789 | 29,956 kWh | 14 | \$3,595 |
| Jubilee Hall replacement of Make Up Air unit with rooftop unit and kitchen Make Up Air unit upgrade | \$80,000 | \$40,000 | 26,300 kWh | 5.4 | \$3,156 |
| Acheson Fire Station lighting upgrade | \$27,950 | \$13,975 | 22,271 kWh | 10 | \$2,673 |
| Total | \$229,428 | \$114,714 | 103,513 kWh | 35.27 | \$12,422 |

2. Provincial Government Emissions Reduction Alberta Strategic Energy Management for Industry (SEMI) Program. Status - Approved

The SEMI program is designed to provide industrial and manufacturing facilities with knowledge, expertise, and training in energy management. The program offers 100% funding to municipalities (as a not-for-profit) for energy audits and capital retrofits.

Working in collaboration with the Manager, Water, Wastewater & Solid Waste Services, 4 water/wastewater facilities (outlined in table 3) were identified as a good fit for this grant program (based on high energy usage and aging infrastructure).

We have been successful with an application for the energy audit stage of this program (as outlined in Table 3 below). The recommendations from the energy audits will be used to apply for the capital retrofits stage of the SEMI program (up to \$1 million per facility, again 100% project funding for municipalities).

Table 3

| Site | Grant funding for energy audit |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Acheson Zone 4 Reservoir Ranchers – 26217 Township Rd 530A | \$6,100 |
| Highlands Sanitary Lift Station – 8685 279 St, Parkland County | \$6,100 |
| Sewage Lift Station, Wabamun – 4809 51 Ave, Wabamun | \$6,100 |
| Water Treatment Plant, Wabamun – 5120 53 St, Wabamun | \$12,000 |
| Total | \$30,300 |

3. Fortis Alberta Save Energy Grants. Status - Approved

The Fortis Save Energy Grants provide funding to support communities, municipalities, schools and Indigenous communities to make upgrades or improvements that result in energy savings.

Neighboring municipalities (Spruce Grove and Devon) made us aware of this grant opportunity as they were successful in gaining funding from this program to set up energy efficiency kits for residents to borrow through their libraries.

The Agriculture and Environment team manage several environmentally themed kits that can be borrowed from Parkland County libraries. Most of these are targeted at children. After consultation with the Director, Parkland County Libraries, it was decided that an energy-efficiency kit will add to this already valuable community service.

The kits will contain easy to use tools such as thermal leak detectors, energy meters and thermometers and will empower residents to better understand and manage household energy use. Information on actions that can be taken to reduce energy use will be included, leading to savings on energy bills and reduced emissions.

Notification of a successful outcome was provided mid-November. The \$7,500 grant will be used to put together 5 energy-efficiency kits and set up the borrowing systems in collaboration with the libraries.

Analysis:

Results

Having a role focused on energy management for the County has already raised more money than the position's yearly salary as shown below in Table 4. In the past nine months, the Municipal Energy Specialist has secured \$116,890 in funding, with potential to exceed \$230,000 if the latest application is approved. The Community Energy Conservation Program could provide up to \$250,000 for emissions reduction projects, with cost-sharing based on projected GHG reductions. Table 4. does not account for the dollars saved from energy reduction after project implementation.

Table 4

| Program | Funding | Status |
|--|------------------|-------------------------|
| Alberta Ecotrust Retrofit Accelerator | \$44,090 | Confirmed |
| Climate Ready Infrastructure Service | \$35,000 | Confirmed |
| Strategic Energy Management for Industry | \$30,300 | Confirmed |
| Fortis Save Energy | \$7,500 | Confirmed |
| Community Energy Conservation Program | \$114,714 | Application In Progress |
| Total | \$231,604 | - |

Next Steps

The Municipal Energy Specialist will continue to manage, implement and look for new opportunities for energy reduction projects. Longer term strategic planning will start in 2026 as we move into the second year of work. Analysis, tracking and documenting of the impact of the work will be ongoing. Cross department cooperation has been very successful in the role out of this work. Further collaboration is planned with the Public Works team to start incorporating energy management principles for new builds and existing facilities.

For the "New Opportunities", the next steps will be to;

- Execute funding agreements
- Implement project deliverables
- Complete grant reporting requirements

Conclusion/Summary:

We recommend:

1. That Council receive this update for information
2. That Council approve the addition of up to \$152,514 in the Agriculture and Environment Services 2026 Budget to be funded as follows
 - a. Provincial Community Energy Conservation Program - \$114,714
 - b. Provincial Strategic Energy Management for Industry Program - \$30,300
 - c. Fortis Save Energy Grant - \$7,500

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