

COUNTY OF TWO HILLS Agri-Food Growth & Investment Readiness

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NRED application draft and PrairiesCan CEDD co-funding strategy
11 October 2026

DRAFT FOR COUNTY REVIEW • FUNDING AND PARTNERS NOT COMMITTED

Recommended decision

Advance a 12-month, \$220,000 initiative that identifies commercially credible agri-food opportunities, prepares candidate investment sites and helps local businesses expand. Seek \$110,000 from NRED and explore an \$88,000 CEDD contribution, with a target County cash contribution of \$22,000. All amounts are planning assumptions pending quotations, Council decisions and funder approval.

Funding source	Target CAD	Project share
Alberta NRED	\$110,000	50%
PrairiesCan CEDD	\$88,000	40%
County cash	\$22,000	10%
TOTAL	\$220,000	100%

Can NRED and CEDD be combined?

Potentially, but the proposed combination is not yet confirmed. CEDD accepts municipalities and normally seeks at least 50% of project funding from other sources, including other governments. The proposed 60% from NRED and the County meets that general preference. It does not establish NRED acceptance of CEDD as matching funds or either program's final assistance ceiling. [1–4]

Obtain written confirmation of the current NRED matching/stacking rules, CEDD's total-government assistance limit, common eligible costs and whether CEDD funding would remain non-repayable. Historic NRED guidance allowed federal matching funds, but it is not a substitute for the 2026–27 rules. County cash is government funding too: this model is 100% government-funded and both programs must permit that level.

Application timing is the main constraint

NRED closes November 19, 2026 at 4:00 pm Alberta time. Its current application companion requires matching funds to be committed or secured when applying. A pending CEDD request is not a funding commitment. If CEDD is not committed in time, Council/partners would need to commit the full \$110,000 match or reduce/defer the proposal. Any later replacement of County funds requires funder consent. [1–2]

Funding priorities by municipal contribution

These are selected priorities from the companion 201-record register. Percentages apply to eligible costs before grant caps and other approved sources. They are not a promise of minimum County cash. Closed programs and loan packages are separated in the register.

Program / use	County or other-source balance	Status / action
LGFF capital/operating; BCSF Community stream	No fixed match within allocation	Annual allocations; check unused balances
Water for Life: qualifying regional feasibility	0% eligible study cost	Prior approval; submit by Nov 30
Water for Life: new regional pipelines	10% eligible cost	Regional partnership; Nov 30
FCM Rapid Adaptation	20% assumed small/rural; potentially 0–10% with incentives	Open to Nov 10; grant <=\$75k
FCM climate-ready planning	20% assumed small population; potentially 0–5% with incentives	Confirm Alberta availability and population cap
FCM adaptation feasibility	20% base; enhancements may apply	Open to Dec 15; grant <=\$70k
STIP bridge / airport rehabilitation	25% eligible cost	Open to Nov 30
FCM adaptation implementation	30% assumed small/rural; potentially 0–20% with incentives	Open to Nov 24; eligible phase <=\$1m
Resiliency & Public Trust: non-capital	40% applicant balance	Continuous; grant <=\$250k/year non-capital
NRED	50% other-source match	Nov 19, 4 pm; explore CEDD stack
CEDD	Typically 50% other sources	Continuous EOI; County cash share negotiated
STIP resource roads	50% municipal/industry combined	25% County + 25% industry encouraged

FCM incentive assumptions require confirmation of the County's census population or rural qualification and the proposed project's partnership/equity criteria. Each extra incentive must be earned and approved. The County pays ineligible costs and amounts above award ceilings. [5–9]

Agriculture and business referrals

OFCFAF's October 15 intake is restricted to virtual fencing and soil testing/mapping. CAAIN also lists an October 15 intake subject to remaining funds. Value-Added and On-Farm Value-Added close November 9: producer/processor match is 50% for non-capital and 75% for capital expenses. Those are applicant contributions, not mandatory County contributions. [10–12]

Draft application narrative

Applicant and project summary

Proposed applicant: County of Two Hills. Signing authority and project manager: to be designated by County Administration. Proposed duration: 12 months after authorized commencement, provisionally April 2027 to March 2028, adjusted to signed agreements. No current County employee or officer is identified on behalf of the County in this draft.

The County of Two Hills proposes Agri-Food Growth & Investment Readiness to convert agricultural and rural business opportunities into practical expansion and investment prospects. The project will establish an asset and business baseline, assess three market opportunities, screen three to five candidate sites or service areas, support business retention and expansion, and prepare two investor packages and a prioritized action plan.

Need and opportunity

The County maintains agricultural and environmental services, including ALUS Two Hills, which supports stewardship projects on working farmland. Its website also publishes an August 31, 2026 agricultural disaster declaration. These provide a relevant setting for longer-term diversification and resilience planning. They do not establish quantified market demand, losses or an entitlement to disaster funding. [13]

The proposed project will test opportunities such as food processing, agricultural services and supply-chain value addition against feedstock availability, market demand, labour, transport, utilities and development constraints. Sector choices will be validated through interviews and market evidence before the County promotes any specific investment opportunity. The County will not claim land is investment-ready until ownership, zoning, servicing and regulatory constraints are documented.

Alignment with funding objectives

For NRED, the project combines investment readiness, business retention and expansion, and feasibility work that informs future enabling investments. For CEDD, it will respond to a documented regional economic opportunity through incremental capacity, business connections and measurable diversification outcomes. Construction, land acquisition, routine County operations and direct payments to private businesses are outside the proposed scope.

Stakeholder involvement and inclusion

Proposed participants include the County Agricultural Service Board, local producers and processors, interested neighbouring municipalities, Alberta HUB, Community Futures and relevant training or research organizations. These are prospective partners only. Obtain letters defining contributions, decision-making and deliverables before naming any as committed partners.

Invite women, youth, Indigenous entrepreneurs, newcomers and entrepreneurs with disabilities through accessible outreach. Track voluntary participation without assuming identities or promising representation. Interviews and events should accommodate farm schedules and rural travel, with remote options where useful. Commercially sensitive business information will be reported in aggregate or released with consent.

Long-term use

The County will retain reusable data, site profiles and an implementation roadmap. Administration should assign an owner for annual updates and follow-up with businesses and investors. Any ongoing operating budget must be approved separately and will not be assumed to be covered by these time-limited grants.

Workplan, deliverables and outcomes

Timing	Work and deliverables	Proposed lead
Months 1–2	Launch; confirm procurement, partners, data permissions and interview sample; establish baseline.	County project manager
Months 2–4	Complete 40 producer/business engagements; build agriculture, business and infrastructure asset inventory.	Consultant + ASB liaison
Months 3–6	Assess 3 market/value-chain opportunities with demand evidence, competitors, costs and go/no-go criteria.	Market specialist
Months 4–7	Screen 3–5 sites/service areas for ownership, zoning, access, utilities, constraints and indicative servicing costs.	Planner / engineer
Months 6–9	Identify expansion barriers; prepare business referrals and 2 investor packages with substantiated data.	Economic development lead
Months 9–11	Targeted investor/industry engagement; record qualified leads and business follow-up actions.	Project team
Month 12	Finalize ranked roadmap, data handover, outcomes report and reconciled grant claims.	County finance + manager

Performance measures for approval

Measure	Proposed target	Evidence
Businesses/producers engaged	40 unique participants	Dated engagement log; avoid double counts
Opportunity assessments	3 completed	Market evidence and ranked recommendations
Sites/service areas assessed	3–5	Constraint register and servicing screen
Investor packages	2	County-approved briefs and release records
Expansion opportunities advanced	10 action/referral plans	Documented barriers, referral and follow-up
Qualified investor/business leads	5	Named organization, opportunity and next step
Implementation roadmap	1 approved roadmap	Owners, cost ranges, priorities and Council review

Targets are proposals, not existing results or guarantees. Do not promise jobs or capital investment without supporting commitments. Track jobs, sales and investment as longer-term outcomes at six and twelve months after completion, distinguishing verified results from projections and attributing only the project's contribution.

Delivery controls

Appoint a County sponsor, accountable project manager and finance reviewer. Use competitive procurement under County policy, written scopes, milestone acceptance and conflict-of-interest controls. The County retains approval over investor claims and use of its name. Quarterly reviews should compare cost, delivery progress and outcomes with each funder's agreement.

Illustrative project budget and funding options

All amounts are CAD, estimates only, and exclude recoverable GST. No contingency is claimed as an eligible CEDD cost. Quote each work package and obtain funder rulings on incremental staffing, marketing, events and taxes. County funds must cover any disallowed or excess costs.

Work package	Total	NRED 50%	CEDD 40%	County 10%
Engagement / consultation	20,000	10,000	8,000	2,000
Inventory and GIS	38,000	19,000	15,200	3,800
Site / service feasibility	42,000	21,000	16,800	4,200
Market / value-chain analysis	45,000	22,500	18,000	4,500
Business retention interviews	30,000	15,000	12,000	3,000
Investor packages / marketing	22,000	11,000	8,800	2,200
Incremental coordination	13,000	6,500	5,200	1,300
Reporting / investor event	10,000	5,000	4,000	1,000
TOTAL	220,000	110,000	88,000	22,000

If co-funding is not secured

Option	External request	County / partners	Condition
Preferred conditional stack	NRED \$110k + CEDD \$88k	\$22,000	Both programs approve funding, eligible cost base and stacking
NRED-only fallback	NRED \$110k	\$110,000	All matching funds documented by application
CEDD-only alternative	CEDD \$110k	\$110,000	Officer accepts project; non-PrairiesCan match secured

A 50% NRED / 50% CEDD / 0% County arithmetic scenario must not be represented as available funding. Government-assistance ceilings, NRED match rules and project merit may prevent it. The 10% County target is also conditional and is not a published program entitlement.

Separate phases if the same-project stack is declined

One possible redesign is a \$140,000 NRED planning phase (\$70,000 NRED and \$70,000 committed County/partner funds), followed by a distinct \$80,000 CEDD implementation phase (\$40,000 CEDD and \$40,000 other sources). This leaves \$110,000 total County/partner exposure. Re-scope deliverables and obtain agreement that the phases are substantively distinct; relabelling invoices does not avoid stacking rules.

Cash-flow requirement

CEDD usually reimburses costs already paid. County bridge financing can therefore exceed its final \$22,000 share. Prepare a monthly cash forecast after payment schedules are known, including any holdbacks, taxes and delayed claims. Do not start project spending merely because an application has been filed. [3]

Approvals and application preparation

Written questions for the program officers

Recipient	Confirmation requested
NRED program	Can CEDD cash count toward the 2026–27 municipal match? Is a 50% NRED / 40% CEDD / 10% County split permitted? Which other Alberta-source funds are prohibited? What form of committed federal funding is acceptable by November 19?
PrairiesCan CEDD	Is this incremental, noncommercial project competitive? What maximum total-government share applies, including municipal funds? Will support be non-repayable? Can NRED count in confirmed other funding? What is the realistic decision sequence?
Both funders	Confirm eligible costs and dates; invoice allocation, tax treatment, amendment process, reporting, payment schedules and any restrictions on replacing committed County match.

NRED contact: NRED.Program@gov.ab.ca; 1-833-538-6733. PrairiesCan: 1-888-338-9378. These are contact points for County-authorized follow-up; no messages have been sent. [2–4]

County authorization and federal-agreement process

For the proposed \$88,000 CEDD agreement, Alberta’s municipal-sector guidance identifies an exception for agreements with less than \$100,000 in federal funding, but requires submission after execution for the exception to apply. If the final federal amount reaches \$100,000 or another exception does not apply, obtain the required provincial approval before signing. Have Administration confirm the complete agreement’s treatment with Municipal Affairs. [14]

Documents needed to turn this draft into an application

- Council-approved scope, maximum County financial exposure and authorized signatory; designated project manager and finance lead.
- Quotations and detailed work packages, eligible cost calculations, procurement schedule and cash-flow forecast.
- Current County strategies, business/producer evidence and letters showing market demand; baseline data with sources.
- Signed partner and funding commitment letters with amounts, timing and conditions. Do not label pending requests as secured funds.
- For CEDD: two years of financial statements, recent interim statements, signing authority and evidence of other funding as required by the current EOI process.
- Written matching/stacking decisions, federal-agreement process confirmation, and final portal responses reviewed by Administration.

Illustrative Council direction — not adopted

Sample Motion: That Council authorize Administration to develop the Agri-Food Growth & Investment Readiness initiative with a proposed eligible budget of \$220,000; seek up to \$110,000 in NRED support and explore \$88,000 in CEDD support; and return with confirmed eligibility, quotations, financing commitments and the maximum County contribution for approval before submission. No grant request, project expenditure or \$110,000 fallback commitment is authorized by this draft.

Sources, coverage and remaining verification

The accompanying register contains 201 records: programs, funding streams, financing mechanisms and historical entries. It separates County opportunities, producer/partner opportunities, closed/watchlist entries and financing. A refreshed official-source finding exists for 112 records; this can be limited to a directory listing. The other 89 are explicit carry-forward leads, not independently verified current opportunities. No claim is made that 201 grants are open or that the list captures every private or invitation-only fund.

The three requested Gazette editions returned access errors during this review. Earlier extracted leads remain in the register with their source links, but subscriber-only entries were not verified. The current NRED application guide and program page were accessible; the detailed 2026–27 program guidelines were not. Written confirmation is needed before relying on a NRED–CEDD stack.

- [1] Alberta NRED — current intake, applicant and funding rules
- [2] NRED 2026–27 Application Companion — match evidence and portal questions
- [3] CEDD — funding, eligible costs and non-repayable/repayable treatment
- [4] CEDD — applicant guide and application process
- [5] Alberta municipal funding directory
- [6] Water for Life — new regional systems
- [7] STIP — cost-sharing and annual deadline
- [8] FCM GMF — funding catalogue and linked stream conditions
- [9] Alberta Resiliency and Public Trust Program
- [10] RDAR OFCAF — restricted September–October 2026 intake
- [11] CAAIN Clean Agtech Validation and Integration
- [12] Sustainable CAP — program directory and linked Value-Added streams
- [13] County of Two Hills — agriculture, ALUS and public notices
- [14] Alberta Provincial Priorities Act — Municipal Sector

Proposal readiness

The narrative and budget are prepared for County consideration. Before submission, complete demand evidence, cost quotations, partner commitments, Council authorization and both funders' eligibility/stacking decisions. The final application must use approved dates, real commitments and the current portal's required fields.

Appendix A – example of a Agrifoods success project

- **[Town of Coaldale — NewCold’s \\$222 million investment](#)**

May 1, 2024. The best overall project description: a 30,000-square-metre automated cold-storage facility, projected construction and permanent jobs, rail connectivity, and the municipality’s role in attracting the investment. [Town of Coaldale](#)

- **[NewCold — Coaldale project and operating results](#)**

June 5, 2026. The follow-up confirms operating activity. NewCold reports 70 full-time jobs, nearly 99% hired locally or from the surrounding region, a new rail spur, and distribution to Canadian and international markets. These are company-reported results. [NewCold](#)

- **[PrairiesCan — CEDD project spotlight on Economic Development Lethbridge](#)**

Search the page for “Economic Development Lethbridge.” It describes almost \$700,000 in support for the regional agri-food initiative and explicitly credits regional collaboration with helping identify the location for NewCold’s investment.

Appendix B – Next steps after council motion

1. County strategies and policy support

Source	What to use in the proposal
Municipal Development Plan, including amendments	Printed pages 29–30 support agricultural diversification and protection of productive farmland. Page 63 , policies 14.2.2, 14.2.6 and 14.2.7 , supports agricultural business diversification, promotion of underused industrial land and development connected to Highways 36, 41 and 45. These directly support the proposed opportunity assessments and site-readiness work.
County Agricultural Service Board	Supports the producer-engagement component: the ASB’s stated role includes improving producers’ economic viability and developing policies that meet agricultural needs. Ask for its latest approved business plan, annual report and an endorsement of the project. Directors / Agricultural Fieldmen: Elden Kozak and Sara Miller
County planning and development documents	Use the MDP, applicable intermunicipal plans and land-use rules to demonstrate how candidate sites will be screened before promotion.

These are documented policy connections, rather than assumptions about Council’s priorities. thcounty.ab.ca

Check the strategic-plan version: the [March 26, 2026 Council minutes](#) show that the **2026 Strategic Plan was postponed for amendments**. Obtain the subsequently adopted version and approving resolution from Administration before describing it as current. I have not verified a later adoption. thcounty.ab.ca

2. Baseline data to include

Use [Alberta HUB’s Two Hills County Agriculture Profile](#), page 2:

County indicator 2021 baseline

Farms	541
Farm operators	685
Land in crops	324,051 acres
Gross farm receipts	\$182,517,255
Canola	112,719 acres
Wheat	88,149 acres
Barley	48,065 acres
Cattle and calves	64,564

The profile attributes these figures to Statistics Canada’s Census of Agriculture and community information. Label them **2021 figures**, not current production or available supply. albertahub.com

Add two supporting sources:

- [Alberta HUB Regional Agriculture Profile](#): regional context—6,006 farms, approximately 3.28 million cropped acres and \$1.885 billion in gross farm receipts in 2021. It also identifies grain handlers, seed-cleaning infrastructure and research organizations. Keep these regional figures separate from County totals. albertahub.com

- [Alberta HUB's County resource page](#): links to investment, transportation and lifestyle profiles, community data and property listings. Use these to assemble the initial site and workforce inventory, with current ownership and servicing confirmed separately. [Alberta HUB](#)

3. Letters and business evidence I recommend obtaining

The websites identify useful organizations and businesses, but **they do not establish that those parties support this project or intend to invest.**

Proposed letter or evidence	What it should specifically establish
Alberta HUB support letter	Regional strategic fit; assistance with data, investor referrals and promotion; specific staff participation or other contributions it can commit.
County ASB endorsement and producer survey summary	Problems producers want addressed, such as transportation costs, limited processing options, storage, labour or market access. Include actual survey/interview findings.
Willingdon and Myrnam seed-cleaning operators	Current throughput, seasonal capacity constraints, customer catchment, service gaps and willingness to participate.
Highland Feeders or other livestock/feed businesses	Actual input, handling, logistics or service needs; potential expansion barriers; interest in evaluating a specific opportunity.
Three to five grain/oilseed producers	Crops and typical volumes, existing marketing arrangements, willingness to explore new outlets and conditions affecting participation.
Two or three prospective buyers/processors	Product specifications, indicative purchase volumes, delivery requirements and interest in evaluating County supply or a location. These are the strongest letters for demonstrating market demand.
Site owners and utility providers	Permission to assess land, availability, servicing constraints and capacity information—not simply proximity to infrastructure.

The County agriculture profile identifies the seed-cleaning plants and Highland Feeders as existing agricultural assets; their current circumstances and participation must be confirmed directly. albertahub.com

My recommendation is to frame the application as **turning an established agricultural production base into verified investment opportunities**. The public documents establish the starting point; producer interviews, buyer letters and site assessments establish which opportunities are commercially credible.