

Edmonton Economic Recovery Grant - Phase 1 Metrics

The June 8, 2020, Urban Form and Corporate Strategic Development report CR_8331 *Edmonton Economic Recovery Grant Policy* set out the proposed metrics to measure the performance of the Edmonton Economic Recovery Grant (EERG).

Administration has reported on the current status of the metrics as of March 30, 2021 in the tables below. This includes data from 116 survey responses from City Stream grant recipients.

Measuring Core Criteria

Core Criteria	Definition	Metric	Target	Data Source
Jobs	Supporting return to work potential and the creation of new positions.	Number of new jobs created as a result of the grant. Number of employees returning to work as a result of the grant.	50 percent or more of successful applicants report that the grant helped create new jobs or helped employees return to work.	Survey of successful applicants.
<p>Results as of March 30, 2021</p> <p>City Stream:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 66 percent said the grant helped employees continue to work. • 26 percent said the grant enabled employees to return to work. • 8 percent said the grant enabled them to hire new employees. <p>Making a direct connection between the grant and job creation is not possible, however, survey respondents reported the creation of 39 new jobs (a mix of full and part-time) since COVID-19 began.</p> <p>Business Association Stream:</p> <p>Pending survey results. Projects are given one year to complete their work from time of signing. Final reports are due three months after that.</p>				

Core Criteria	Definition	Metric	Target	Data Source
Financial Sustainability	Creating short-term financial impacts that help keep businesses open.	Number of businesses that are still in operation 1 month / 3 months / 6 months / 1 year after grant is awarded.	50 percent or more of successful applicants report that the grant helped to keep their business open. 80 percent of businesses that receive funding are open 1 year after grant awarded.	Survey of successful applicants. Business license data.
<p>Results as of March 30, 2021</p> <p>City Stream</p> <p>The majority of businesses indicated the grant helped to keep their business open:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 82 percent indicated the grant helped keep their business operational, with 29 percent saying the grant was essential to keep their business open. ● 4 percent said their business would have been OK without the grant. ● 5 percent said the grant did not help their business. ● 9 percent were unsure whether the grant helped to keep their business open. <p>Survey results indicate an increase in the number of businesses operating at full hours. When comparing operations at the time of survey completion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 63 Businesses report they are operating at full hours, up from 44 when they applied for the grant. ● 47 Businesses report they are operating at partial or online only, down from 57 when they applied for the grant. ● 5 Businesses report they remain closed, down from 15 when they applied for the grant. 				

Core Criteria	Definition	Metric	Target	Data Source
COVID-19 Impact	Activities that counter the negative impacts of COVID on businesses during the relaunch and recover stages.	<p>Number of businesses that reopen as a result of the grant.</p> <p>Funds contributed to PPE, building modifications or other types of mitigation strategies to keep employees and customers safe.</p>	<p>30 percent or more of successful applicants report that the grant helped them to reopen.</p> <p>50 percent or more of businesses report that staff felt safer/more secure returning to work as a result of this grant.</p> <p>A decrease in amount of funding spent on PPE, building modifications or other physical mitigation strategies between Phases 1 and 2, demonstrating businesses moving from a “reaction” to “action”*</p>	<p>Self-reported by applicants</p> <p>Invoices/receipts demonstrating funding spent on PPE/other mitigations to keep employees and customers safe.</p>
<p>Results as of March 30, 2021</p> <p>City Stream</p> <p>40 percent of grant recipients, who said their business was closed or only partially open when they applied for the grant, indicated the grant helped their business to reopen.</p> <p>61 percent of grant recipients indicated they would use grant funding on personal protective equipment (PPE). This includes short-term PPE such as masks and gloves, and long-term PPE such as plexiglass barriers.</p> <p>The majority of businesses also reported their staff felt safer returning to work as a result of what they were able to do with the grant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 79 percent indicated their staff felt safer. ● 8 percent indicated their staff did not feel safer. ● 13 percent were unsure if their staff felt safer. 				

Core Criteria	Definition	Metric	Target	Data Source
Partner Leverage	Opportunity to leverage funds from partner organizations to amplify impacts.	Estimated reach of each project or program Grant leverage: Financial or in-kind/time contributions vs. amount granted	Average number of businesses who benefit from a project or program: 50 50/25 grant funding to partner contributions	Application form For the Business Association stream: final reporting from applicant once the project or program is complete
Current Status - Pending final reports. Projects are given one year to complete their work from time of signing. Final reports are due three months after that.				

Core Criteria	Definition	Metric	Target	Data Source
Economic Diversification	Impact or contribution to diverse industries.	Number of businesses supported by Industry Dollar value of grants per Industry	80 percent of all Industries are represented. 80 percent or more of grant recipients report that the funds provided helped increase their resilience.	Application form Tracking funding by industry Survey of successful applicants
<p>Results as of March 30, 2021</p> <p>City Stream: 18 of 20 industries supported - measured by the North American Industry Classification System. Accommodation or Food Service; Other Services (except public administration); Health Care and Social Assistance; Retail Trade and Arts, Entertainment and Recreation industries account for 77 percent of grant recipients.</p> <p>Businesses report they believe the grant has made them more resilient.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80 percent said receiving the grant has made their business more resilient. • 7 percent said receiving the grant did not make their business more resilient. • 13 percent were unsure. 				

Core Criteria	Definition	Metric	Target	Data Source
Business Transformation	Support businesses as they identify and activate pivots to help them succeed.	Number of businesses supported through marketing, tech, online presence or other business pivots.	50 percent or more of successful applicants report that the funds helped them pivot their business. Increase in the number of applications that meet this criteria between Phases 1 and 2, demonstrating businesses moving from a “reaction” to “action”.	Application form. Survey of successful applicants.
<p>Results as of March 30, 2021.</p> <p>City Stream:</p> <p>Based on the applications received, Administration has determined:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 641 of 1,082 (59 percent) businesses identified as using the funds for Business Transformation Core Criteria. ● Successful applicants would pivot their business by primarily using grant funds to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Purchase new equipment - 137 businesses ○ Establish E-commerce - 71 businesses ○ Update or Establish their online presence - 182 businesses ○ Marketing or advertising efforts - 235 businesses ○ Pivoting to mobile services - 18 businesses 				

Core Criteria	Definition	Metric	Target	Data Source
Tangible Placemaking Benefits	Contribution to mainstreet vibrancy.	Number of businesses supported that deploy projects or programs to attract pedestrians to commercial areas	Increase in the number of applications that meet this criteria between Phases 1 and 2, demonstrating growing support for mainstreet activities	Application form.
<p>Results as of March 30, 2021. City Stream:</p> <p>Based on the applications received, Administration has determined 57 grant recipients (6 percent) indicated they would use grant funds to make Tangible Placemaking Benefits.</p>				

Core Criteria	Definition	Metric	Target	Data Source
Environmental Alignment	Supporting the transition to a low carbon future and resilience to a changing climate.	Number of projects or programs supported that include a climate resilience and/or energy efficiency lens.	10 percent or more of successful applicants report that the funds helped them or other businesses become more energy efficient or climate resilient.	Application form Survey of successful applicants.
<p>Results as of March 30, 2021. City Stream</p> <p>Based on the applications received, Administration has determined 39 grant recipients (4 percent) identified as using grant funds in a way that aligns with Environmental Alignment.</p>				

Core Criteria	Definition	Metric	Target	Data Source
Community Impact	Demonstrate benefits to members of marginalized communities that experience disadvantages (through a GBA+ lens).	<p>Number of businesses owned or operated by members of a marginalized community (City Stream).</p> <p>Number of projects or programs aimed at mitigating impacts to members of marginalized communities.</p>	<p>30 percent of funding goes to business owners who self-identify as member of a marginal community (City Stream).</p> <p>30 percent of funding goes to projects or programs that directly target businesses that are members of marginalized groups.</p>	Application form Survey of successful applicants.
<p>Results as of March 30, 2021.</p> <p>City Stream:</p> <p>Based on the applications received, Administration has determined:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 768 (76 percent) grant recipients identify as a member of a marginalized group. • 262 (26 percent) grant recipients identify their business supports members of marginalized groups. <p>Business Association Stream:</p> <p>Two Business Association Program grants will support a program that directly supports marginalized entrepreneur groups (Black Canadian Women in Action and the French Quarter Business Improvement Area), while five others incorporate some level of support targeted directly at marginalized entrepreneur groups. These are for projects that have signed Agreements; there are five at this time that have not yet signed.</p>				

Metrics to Evaluate Program Efficacy

Administration will continue to track the following metrics and targets to ensure that the Edmonton Economic Recovery Grant is delivering service efficiently and effectively. Changes to processes may be made during or between Phase 1 and Phase 2 in order to best meet these targets.

- Total number of applications to the program by phase
 - City Stream: 2,056
- Length of time between receiving application and notifying applicant of outcome
 - Target for City Stream: 1 week
 - Actual for City Stream: 1.5 weeks
 - Note: On September 15, 2020 the City pivoted the program so that interested parties could apply at any time. Some applicants may have to wait up to two weeks before they are notified by Administration. The City continues to disburse funding on a weekly basis.
 - Target for Business Association Stream: 2 weeks
 - Actual for Business Association Stream: 8 weeks
 - Note: Administration has been working with applicants one-on-one after they apply to confirm all information is submitted in order to properly review the project. This has taken more time than anticipated.
- All funding is granted in each phase
 - Target: 100 percent of funding is allocated in each phase of the program
 - City Stream Phase 1 as of March 30, 2021: 70 percent.
 - Business Association Stream Phase 1 as of March 30, 2021: 41 percent.
- Top 5 Uses of Grant Funding:
 - Short Term PPE/Cleaning (63 percent)
 - Marketing/ Advertising (15 percent)
 - Updating/Establishing Online Presence (11 percent)
 - Equipment Purchases (9 percent)
 - Longer Term PPE (eg. plexiglass dividers, air purifiers, etc.) (6 percent)

Additional Feedback from Businesses

The City Stream survey provided an opportunity for grant recipients to provide feedback about the program. Here is a summary of what we heard:

Positive

- Local Businesses felt supported by the City.
- It was fast and easy to apply.
- The grant was important for businesses to reopen, recover and become more resilient.
- Businesses reported that their staff felt safer returning to work as a result of projects completed using grant funding.
- Marketing and e-commerce projects enabled by the grant allowed businesses to engage their customer base during shutdown and restriction periods.

Negative

- Some applicants received less money than expected.
 - Administration notes this comment was related to our first intake period where we offered various grant amounts of \$1,000, \$2,500 and \$5,000. Some applicants received a smaller grant amount than they applied for because they did not score as high as other applicants. The number of grants available at each value were limited.
- Application intake limited to Mondays only was a barrier for some business owners.
 - On September 22nd, Administration pivoted the program to allow business owners to apply at any time. This eliminated this barrier to apply.

Critical

- A \$1,000 grant is not enough to make an impact for some businesses.
- Allow the grant to be used for rent relief and property taxes as these costs remain fixed while their revenue has decreased.

- Administration deemed expenses such as rent and property taxes to be ineligible expenses as these were covered by other programs and other orders of government (i.e. Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance (CECRA))
- Businesses still need help.
 - Administration continues to support businesses through various programs such as:
 - the One on One business support program
 - the Temporary Patio Program
 - Business Improvement Area Levy Rebate
 - Small Business Workshop Series
 - Partnerships with the Business Improvement Areas

EERG Accountability Audit Results

The EERG Accountability Audits were not performed by the Office of the City Auditor but were self-directed and performed by Administration. The Office of the City Auditor's role was limited to identifying plausible risks to the stewardship of taxpayers' dollars based on information provided as it related to the design of the selection, eligibility, and evaluation processes for the EERG grants.

Grant recipients are required:

- Under the City Stream, to submit copies of receipts and cost summaries to ensure accountability of funds provided within 90 days of receiving their grant; and,
- Under the Business Stream, to submit receipts and a final report within 90 days after completing the contemplated project or program.

Under the City Stream, Administration audited one in every ten receipt submissions received to date and found:

- 87 percent of grant recipients used the money in accordance with what was approved on their application.
 - Of those who did not spend the money on what was included in their application, 75 percent spent the money on eligible items.

- 80 percent of grant recipients appropriately matched the funding provided (spent the same or greater amount of their own money than was disbursed by the City)
 - Administration could not confirm matching funds for 20 percent of grant recipients due to receipts that pre-date the program, missing receipts or their business spent less money than the City disbursed. When the program was created, the risk of non-compliance was understood to exist in the program and this was seen as acceptable to help in the immediate need and distribution of the funds in the program. Administration kept the dollar amounts of the grant low to further mitigate this risk. In addition, under the future of the grant program, the funding will be provided as a reimbursement following the provision of proof of eligible spending.