



Airport Management Council of Ontario (AMCO)

Program Outline for the Ontario Airport Capital Assistance Program

2024

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1. Executive Summary

Small and regional publicly available airports in Ontario are key drivers of economic development and vital to the provision of public services. These points of critical infrastructure facilitate air ambulance, forest firefighting, search and rescue, and law enforcement activities. Community airports are considered crucial assets when attracting tourism enterprises as well as major corporate investments. As such, the rehabilitation of airside assets is critical to ensure that small and regional airports remain operational; however, permanent airport-specific streams of government funding are unavailable in Ontario.

A review of funding opportunities underscores the gaps that small publicly available airports face in securing funding for capital projects. Transport Canada provides the Airports Capital Assistance Program (ACAP), but this is only available to certified airports with year-round scheduled passenger service serving between 1,000 to 525,000 passengers per year for three consecutive years. Secondly, the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario) and Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario (FedNor) have been additional sources for federal funding for small and regional airports; however, this funding is not airport specific, and places airports in competition with other economic development initiatives. A similar situation exists in provincial funding opportunities. Funding provided to small and regional airports as part of the Regional Development Fund and the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation is unreliable as it is not tailored to the needs of Ontario's airport industry.

It is clear that the Government of Ontario should provide a capital assistance program for small and regional airports. Three provinces continue to successfully implement permanent funding programs for community airports — British Columbia offers the BC Air Access Program; Alberta assists with the Community Airport Program; and Saskatchewan provides with the Community Airport Partnership Program. Based on the eligibility criteria for these precedent-setting provincial programs and requirements for ACAP funding, the Airport Management Council of Ontario (AMCO) strongly believes that the Government of Ontario should implement the Ontario Airport Capital Assistance Program through the oversight of the Ministry of Transportation on an annually funded permanent basis. AMCO opines that **\$8.5 to 10 million** should be allocated for this purpose.

It is the view of AMCO that publicly available airports that are ineligible for ACAP funding be entitled to provincial funding for airport infrastructure projects focused on safety and efficiency. Concurrently, it is suggested that that the Ontario Air Advisory Panel be reinstituted and airports be enshrined as critical infrastructure.

1. Background

1.1 Airport Environment in Ontario

A wide range of entities own airports in Ontario resulting in responsibilities for decision-making functions, the allocation of financial resources for operations, and establishment of overall strategic direction. Types of ownership include the federal and provincial levels of government,

municipalities, not-for-profit corporations, private individuals and/or corporations. Further, the airport environment in Ontario is denoted by the diverse activities occurring at these points of critical infrastructure. Passenger service, charter and cargo flights, air ambulance, assistance in forest firefighting, and other activities encouraging social value and economic development benefits reliably occur daily by virtue of safe airport infrastructure.

The foci of this programming ask are publicly available small and regional airports that do not offer passenger service and/or they are in the process of eventually attracting a provider to their airports in the future. Despite this variable, these community airports are critical infrastructure that provide public services to their surrounding communities and are considered as strong assets in economic development strategising.

For the most part, these airports note that their operations are stable, but securing funding for airside asset rehabilitation is a difficult undertaking. Municipally owned airports are reliant on funding from municipal budgets that are responsible for the provision of utilities and civic services which ultimately places a lower priority on airport projects. There is a risk that continued deterioration of airside assets at small and regional airports across Ontario will ultimately affect the provision of vital services and corporate investment if proactive political action does not occur.

Airport Management Council of Ontario research posits that 47 airports are municipally owned (a further 8 are eligible for the Airports Capital Assistance Program) and an additional 17 publicly serve their communities. (See Appendix A)

1.2 Financial Supports Available to Small and Regional Airports

a) Federal funding

Financial supports for small airports and aerodromes in Ontario are limited. As airports and aerodromes are under federal jurisdiction, seeking support from this level of government is often the first suggestion by policymakers. The most prominent and only permanent federal program focused solely on airports is the Airports Capital Assistance Program (ACAP) administered by Transport Canada. It has narrow standards for eligibility that do not apply to numerous airports in Ontario. To qualify for ACAP, airports must not be owned or operated by the Government of Canada; meet federal certification requirements; offer year-round scheduled commercial passenger service with a minimum of 1,000 passengers per year; and serve less than 525,000 passengers per year for three consecutive years.

In terms of project eligibility, ACAP focuses on safety-focused rehabilitation projects, and these are prioritised according to strict categorisation. Priority 1 allocates funding for approved rehabilitation projects and the need to purchase equipment for aircraft rescue and firefighting. These include runways, taxiways and aprons; lighting for runway, taxiway and apron lighting; visual aids; sand storage sheds; aircraft rescue and firefighting vehicles and equipment; and aircraft rescue and firefighting equipment shelters. Priority 2 distributes funds for heavy mobile equipment encompassing runway snowblowers; runway snowplows; runway sweepers and spreaders; winter friction testing devices; and mobile equipment shelters. Priority 3 focuses on

the delivery of projects that aim to improve the safety of air terminals, including the improvement of sprinkler systems; removing asbestos; and the creation of barrier free access.

The Government of Ontario is aware that dozens of small airports and aerodromes are ineligible for ACAP funding based on the criteria that they do not offer year-round passenger service. Nonetheless, these small and regional airports remain critical infrastructure as they are integral to the provision of public services and economic development.

The Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario) and the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario (FedNor) are two other avenues in which airports have received funding from the Government of Canada in recent years. Both agencies focus on economic and business development projects in their assigned regions of the province; however, they are recognisably not airport industry specific programming.

Examples of recent FedDev Ontario and FedNor grants to airports include:

- in August 2021, in one announcement, Sarnia Chris Hadfield Airport received \$1.9 million from FedDev Ontario for a new hangar, Plexiglas barriers, sanitation stations, signs and equipment to help reestablish regional scheduled service; St. Thomas Municipal Airport received \$1.1 million for 8,000 m² of additional ramp space to accommodate regional aircraft parking, fueling and servicing, and to help increase industrial clients at the airport and across the region; Tillsonburg Regional Airport received \$535,000 to expand their apron where aircraft are parked and maintained, extend its taxiway, build access roads and perimeter fencing.

- in March 2022, in one announcement, FedNor in conjunction with the now expired Regional Air Transportation Initiative (RATI), the Kenora Airport Authority received \$509,886; Red Lake Airport received \$341,462; and, the Township of Atikokan was granted \$90,000 for its municipal airport.

Infrastructure projects at applicant airports are approved based on their merit as drivers of economic development; however, this status places them in competition with other applicants from a variety of other industries.

b) Provincial funding

The Government of Ontario regularly emphasises the importance of air infrastructure as integral components for economic and social development in the province in policy statements. In terms of Ministerial portfolios, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and the Ministry of Health through its oversight of Orange air ambulance services are two high-visibility users of airports of all sizes across Ontario. Further, the Ministry of Transportation owns and operates 29 airports — 27 serving First Nations communities — as part of the Remote Airports Office. It is essential to note the Ministerial involvement and use of Ontario's airports because it stresses the importance of these points of critical infrastructure as well as demonstrates that the province has knowledge of the responsibilities inherent in the operation of community airports.

Certainly, the Government of Ontario has been active in funding airport infrastructure projects

through streams related to economic development. The Regional Development Fund (launched in 2019) allows airports (as well as other types of business endeavours) aiming to adopt innovative technologies; increase competitiveness, productivity, and growth; invest in new equipment to scale up; and increase exports, reshoring jobs and production to apply for funding through the Eastern Ontario Development Fund (EODF) and the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund (SWODF). In Northern Ontario, funding for airports may be considered under the Community Enhancement Program of the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC), which funds infrastructure investments aiming to upgrade and/or repair existing assets to improve quality of life; support economic development infrastructure; and fund strategic economic development initiatives. Literature explaining the purpose of these projects clearly states that they are for business supports.

Examples of recent funding allocation:

- in 2020, the Regional Development Program allocated \$1.5 million to the County of Simcoe to widen the runway at Lake Simcoe Regional Airport from 100 ft to 150 ft;
- in 2021, by way of the NOHFC, the Government of Ontario invested \$5 million in the Parry Sound and Area Municipal Airport to assist in runway expansion and increase the number of business park lots;
- in 2022, the NOHFC dedicated \$148,500 to the Fort Frances Municipal Airport for renovation and upgrades.

Once again, whilst these funds are especially needed to ensure that airport infrastructure remains operational and supportive of economic development activities, as well as being much appreciated by the recipient airports, this type of programming is not dedicated toward the airport sector. Small and regional airports find themselves in direct competition for funds with other entities focused on economic development with whom they should be collaborating in unison.

By extension, provincial monetary support of these airport infrastructure projects underscores two critical points — 1. acknowledgement of the importance of investment in airport facilities and 2. the financial need of airports in Ontario exists.

1.3 Provinces with Airport Capital Assistance Programs

The governments of British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan have each created provincial fundings programs to support the capital needs for airport infrastructure rehabilitation. These programs have set a precedence that permanent support for capital investment in small and regional airports is achievable. The following details eligibility criteria for applicants and projects.

a) British Columbia

In British Columbia, the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure facilitates the BC Air

Access Program (BCAAP). This is a cost-sharing program supporting the needs of airports, heliports, and water aerodromes with the percentage of government funding based on the type of project that is under consideration for a grant.

An overview of project types and cost share ratios is as follows:

- airside operating areas and avionics projects begin at 75% funding
- environmentally focused projects begin at 75% funding
- transitional projects begin at 60% funding
- groundside projects begin at 50% funding

Additionally, there are specific cases in which applicants are eligible to receive an additional percentage towards their grant (up to 15%). The opportunities are divided in terms of community, facility, and project considerations.

To be eligible for an increased percentage supported by the BCAAP, the following conditions must be met per category. 1. A **community** must be Indigenous, isolated, rural, or remote. 2. A **facility** has limited revenue streams available; has a greenhouse gas reduction plan in place; and has policies, procedures, or infrastructure in place to support active transportation. 3. A **project** is required for medevac operations; required for wildfire suppression activities; needed for emergency response/preparedness; required due to an extraordinary event (e.g. flooding); required to correct a non-compliance with federal aviation regulations; for climate change mitigation or adaptation; and likely to result in significant economic impacts and/or generate revenue for the air facility.

It is essential to note that the BCAAP has a funding cap of \$2 million for any one applicant during any given year regardless of the number of projects for which the applicant seeks support. Separate applications must be completed for each potential project. There are numerous types of projects that potentially qualify for funding through the BCAAP, but it is mandated that they attend to infrastructure and environmental needs. There are select cases in which the BCAAP provides funds for the completion of airport master plans.

Project types that are typically supported include:

- airside operating area projects such as those related to aprons and runways
- avionics such as hazard beacons and runway lighting
- air terminal building enhancements
- environmental projects such as the preparation of a greenhouse gas inventory (baselining)
- groundside projects such as parking facility enhancements

Small airports with a service area of 10,000 or fewer people are eligible for BCAAP assistance in the creation of their airport master plans. Airport master plan funding is capped at \$35,000.

Eligibility criteria for the BCAAP is clearly stated and uncomplicated. To qualify for funding, applicants must 1. operate a public use airport, heliport, or water aerodrome; 2. serve fewer than 1 million passengers annually; and 3. be the facility operator (local government, non-profit

operating society, or contracted operator). Private air facilities as well as those owned and operated by the federal government are ineligible for assistance.

According to 2024 data, the Government of British Columbia allocated \$11 million to cover 26 projects at 24 airports as part of the BCAAP. In 2023, the provincial government invested \$19.8 million for 40 projects at 29 air facilities. (See Appendix B) A press release by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure in 2023 noted that \$63 million in grants has been committed to 71 air facilities since 2017.

b) Alberta

In Alberta, the Ministry of Transportation and Economic Corridors manages the Strategic Transportation Infrastructure Program (STIP). The STIP has four streams of funding prospects that are categorized according to the type of critical infrastructure supported — Local Municipal Initiatives, Resource Road Program, Local Road Bridge Program, and the Community Airport Program (CAP). It is the objective of the Government of Alberta that the existing network of public-use community airports is maintained. Maintenance thus requires capital support. The CAP is a cost-sharing program in which the ratio shifts as it is determined by the type of project under consideration.

For runway extension projects, the follow formulae are used for the cost-sharing ratio:

- 1/3 provincial contribution for eligible projects costs
- 1/3 municipal contribution for eligible project costs
- 1/3 industry contribution for eligible project costs

For other projects focused on runways, aprons, and taxiways, the following ratio is applied:

- 75% provincial contribution for eligible project costs
- 25% municipal contribution for eligible project costs

Projects eligible for CAP funding are narrowly focused on the existing airport infrastructure of primary runways, aprons, and taxiways from main/terminal apron to runway. Runway lighting and major capital rehabilitation, including pavement rehabilitation, fog seals, slurry seals and overlays are considered eligible as well.

The CAP project eligibility framework notes that runway extension projects could potentially receive funding if they meet additional criteria. For example, a runway extension may be granted government funds if the project benefits contribute to the overall goals of CAP; the municipality/private industry provides a significant financial contribution to the project; and if funding is available.

Once a project meets the program criteria listed above, they are then rated on a competitive province-wide basis, and evaluated, until it is clear which eligible projects will receive funds. Deciding factors include basic need; safety; functionality; impacts on the overall transportation network; the current condition of the infrastructure; number of flights annually; number of

passengers annually; cost effectiveness and efficiency; collaboration or partnership with industry or other municipalities or Metis Settlements; economic, social, environmental or innovation benefits; and whether alternate sources to fund the project (federal or private investment) are utilised.

Eligibility criteria for applicants is narrow as only municipalities that own/operate community-owned, public-use airports can apply. Nevertheless, the types of qualified municipalities are diverse as towns; villages; summer villages; counties; specialized municipalities; municipal districts; Metis Settlements; and the special areas (rural areas in southeast Alberta established by the *Special Areas Act* of 1938) are included.

In 2023, the Government of Alberta devoted \$93.2 million over three years to local road bridges, community airports and local resource roads as part of the STIP. Out of this amount, \$4.6 million in provincial funding was allocated to 5 CAP projects. Public records provide data for both 2021 and 2022. In 2021, 2 CAP projects received approximately \$2.7 million and 4 CAP projects receive a little over \$2.5 million the year after. (See Appendix C for specifics)

c) Saskatchewan

In Saskatchewan, the Ministry of Highways offers the Community Airport Partnership Program (CAP). Available funding is specifically offered to the 71 regional community owned airports across the province. The objective of the CAP is the provision of stable and long-term capital assistance for the rehabilitation, construction, and capital improvements of airport infrastructure so that they remain safe and utilised. For this reason, safe airport operations; general aviation operations and commercial air charters; air ambulance and medevac operations; and local and regional economic development are important considerations in approved projects.

The CAP is a cost-sharing program in which 50% of eligible project costs may be contributed up to a maximum \$275,000 per fiscal year. Amounts allocated are contingent on project priority and budget capacity. In terms of cost-sharing, projects can include federal funding contributions if the applicant secures it prior, the applicant can contribute 33% of the total eligible cost of a project, and all streams of finance are demonstrated in the application to the Ministry of Highways.

Eligible projects are ranked according to priority.

1. Aviation safety and airport operations
2. Medical evacuations
3. Partnerships
4. Uses

Under this context, eligible projects include safety-related airside capital improvement projects that support aviation safety; air ambulance and medivac operations such as rehabilitation of runways, taxiways, and aprons; existing lighting, and navigational/weather reporting systems. More specifically, this includes pavement rehabilitations; slurry seals; overlay; GPS approach

designs; AWOS (Automated Weather Observing System); and security fencing around air infrastructure.

Extensions of existing runways may be eligible for funding if it can be demonstrated that safety, regional economic, and social development benefits exist. Projects related to secondary runways and taxiways will be considered as lower priority endeavours.

Projects seeking funds for engineering services that provide technical data needed to improve airport infrastructure are eligible as well. These services include pavement condition assessments and pavement load ratings; detailed construction specifications; site surveys; detailed plan drawings; geotechnical testing and others.

The eligibility criteria for applicable airports is simple. Only municipal governments submitting for community owned airports within the province may apply. Private, provincial, or military owned airports are ineligible.

The Government of Saskatchewan notes that over \$10.5 million has been granted to over 43 community airports since 2007-08. During the 2021-2022 fiscal year, 19 airports received \$1.5 million from CAP. For the 2022-2023 application cycle, 11 airports benefited from \$935,000 of CAP funding. More recently, for 2023-2024, 21 community airports received \$850,000 from the CAP. (See Appendix D for funded projects).

2. Problem — Lack of a Permanent Funding Program for Ontario's Airports

There are identifiable gaps in the funding of Ontario's small and regional airports. The lack of ACAP eligibility for airports that do not host regular passenger service coupled with the competition for funding with projects in other sectors — often prioritised over airport infrastructure spending — means that small and regional airports are unable to reliably source other funding opportunities for capital projects.

A lack of funding to rehabilitate airside assets means that their conditions will deteriorate to a point where affected airports become potentially unsafe and non-operational in the future. Such a development would have negative consequences on the provision of integral public services such as air ambulance, forest firefighting, search and rescue, security operations by law enforcement, and economic development activities.

The Government of Ontario, particularly the Ministry of Transportation, is aware that a cohesive and reliable funding arrangement for airports is an identified need for the sector.

3. Solution — Creation of the Ontario Airport Capital Assistance Program (OACAP)

The Airport Management Council of Ontario strongly recommends that the Government of Ontario implement the Ontario Airport Capital Assistance Program for eligible airports to fund approved airport infrastructure projects. Implementation of the OACAP would resolve the longstanding funding gap experienced by publicly available small airports that often delay infrastructure projects due to a lack of capital assistance sources. Establishment of a reliable

source of provincial funding for capital projects would ultimately ensure that critical public services remain available to Ontarians and municipalities are best placed to utilise their air infrastructure for economic development.

As demonstrated, there is precedence in three provinces for the creation of a similar initiative in Ontario. Airport capital assistance programs in British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan demonstrate that such programming can be successfully executed on a permanent basis as well as continually funded based on reasonable allocations in yearly provincial budgets. While the BCAAP, CAP (Alberta) and CAP (Saskatchewan) provide indispensable insight into eligibility criteria and funds dispersal, provincial airport environments are unique, thus a "Made in Ontario" solution is needed to support publicly available airports in the province. Investment in air infrastructure in municipalities strongly aligns with the Government of Ontario's "Open for Business" strategy.

Eligibility criteria for the OACAP (both for airports and projects) has been deduced from the parameters listed by programming offered in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and ACAP requirements. Pursuing funding based on these parameters means that the following asks are reasonable, able to be implemented, and will close the most prominent funding gap in the Ontario airport sector.

Funding for the OACAP could be sourced from the Aviation Fuel Tax. Recent data from the Government of Ontario is unavailable, but in 2005, it was reported that the province collected \$58.5 million. At that time, the rate was \$0.027 per litre; however, as of 1 April 2017, the aviation fuel tax stands at \$0.067 per litre. Using a portion of the aviation fuel tax for permanent airport capital funding would be considered a reinvestment in the provincial airport industry.

The following asks outline eligibility criteria for both airports and projects; a sum expected to cover programming asks; and two non-monetary asks related to the airport environment in Ontario.

3.1 Outline of Eligible Airports and Eligible Projects

a) Eligible Airports

Airports eligible for the OACAP must meet the following eligibility criteria:

1. publicly available registered aerodromes and certified airports that are ineligible for ACAP **or**
2. publicly available airports that support scheduled passenger air services up to 1,000 passengers but below 50,000 total passengers
3. **and** applicant is the facility owner (municipal government, non-profit operating society, etc.)

b) Eligible Projects

Capital funding should be provided to publicly available small and regional airports to enhance

the safety of their existing air infrastructure and boost the social and/or economic benefits of applicants. Additionally, capital assistance provided by the province should rectify the identified gaps in ACAP funding so that eligible airports continue to support a safe, efficient, and reliable air infrastructure network in Ontario.

It is recommended that the following types of projects be eligible for capital assistance under the OACAP:

1. the rehabilitation and reconstruction of existing airside assets and supporting aeronautical infrastructure (examples: rehabilitation of runways, aprons, and taxiways; avionics including runway lighting and hazard beacons; and pavement rehabilitation needs)
2. the procurement of replacement mobile equipment for maintenance (examples: runway snow blowers, runway snowplows, runway sweepers and spreaders, and winter friction testing devices)
3. to improve energy efficiency and/or decrease greenhouse gas emissions

Further, it is suggested that eligible projects are evaluated on the social and economic benefits supported by the applicant airport. These have been identified as:

1. Essential air service activity levels (for example, air ambulance, law enforcement, forest firefighting)
2. Commercial activity (for example, corporate and charter flights, flight training)
3. Demonstrated financial need
4. Unique circumstances such as the availability of limited alternative forms of non-aviation transportation to the airport's catchment area

3.2 Funding Requirements

It is suggested that the Government of Ontario, through the Ministry of Transportation, invest **\$8.5 to 10 million** on a permanent annual basis into the Ontario Airport Capital Assistance Program. In terms of scale, this is a median amount once compared to the financial investments made by British Columbia (high end), Alberta (median), and Saskatchewan (low end).

The Study of Municipal Airports in Ontario (2006) deduced that 85 non-ACAP eligible airports needed \$5.5 million of annual capital assistance. (Note: Some airports listed in that study have since been transferred to private ownership and/or closed.) At the time of publication, \$5.5 million was a conservative estimate. The current monetary ask is based off the 2006 number adjusted for inflation using Bank of Canada tools as well as recognition that the funding needs for capital assistance for small airports in Ontario is significant. At the current time, this sum is a conservative ask as well; however, ACAP ineligible small and regional airports across Ontario need a starting point to rectify their capital assistance concerns.

The 2006 study was partly funded by the then-Ministry of Economic Development and Trade (MEDT), the then-Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, and FedNor. While financial sponsorship does not equate to political support, the fact that this study was published with these

findings elucidates that the financial need for capital support for small and regional airports in Ontario remains a longstanding issue of which relevant Ministries have been aware.

a) Cost-Sharing Ratio and Funding Cap

It is strongly suggested that OACAP have a cost sharing ratio that is applied to approved projects at eligible airports. Based on precedence set in other provinces and the successful granting of capital assistance to numerous airports, it is prudent that the Government of Ontario cover 75% of eligible projects with a 25% contribution by the facility owner.

Nonetheless, publicly available registered aerodromes and certified airports should be provided with an opportunity to increase the percentage covered by the province by up to 15%. To be eligible for additional capital assistance, the facility owner must demonstrate:

1. the facility has limited revenue streams available
2. the facility has policies, procedures, or infrastructure in place to support active transportation
3. the eligible project is integral to medevac operations; required for wildfire suppression activities; needed for emergency response/preparedness; required due to an extraordinary event (e.g., flooding); required to correct a non-compliance with federal aviation regulations; for climate change mitigation or adaptation; and likely to result in significant economic impacts and/or generate revenue for the air facility.

Further, it is advised that the Government of Ontario implement a funding cap of \$2 million per applicant per year. Eligible airports should be entitled to submit separate applications for each capital project for which they seek assistance; however, they cannot receive any amount that surpasses the instituted cap.

For context, *The Study of Ontario's Airports and Aerodromes (2022)*, compiled data revealing that the average cost for a runway rehabilitation and reconstruction project at a community airport sat at \$1,868,000 almost three years ago. A similar project is expected to cost \$2.1 million from a contemporary perspective. In a scenario where a municipally owned airport submitted a successful application for such a project, the Government of Ontario would contribute between \$1,575,000 (at 75%) to \$1,890,000 (with an additional 15% factored in). These theoretical sums align with actual funding provided to community airports in British Columbia and Alberta for similar projects; therefore, a \$2 million cap is reasonable to all parties.

3.3 Non-Monetary Asks

a) The Airport Management Council of Ontario requests that the Ontario Air Advisory Panel be restored. This can be reestablished as a standalone measure. The intent of the Panel would be to advise the Ministry of Transportation and the Province of Ontario on matters of importance to airport operators and to ensure that airports are kept aware of developments at the provincial level that may be of importance. Membership in the Air Advisory Panel could include representatives from the airport sector, municipalities, key aircraft operators, and the Government of Ontario.

In the case that the Panel is reinstated alongside a capital assistance program, the Panel would act as an indispensable tool for decisionmakers to gather information, gain feedback related to the programming and/or witness the benefits of the funding program.

b) The Airport Management Council of Ontario strongly suggests that airports be enshrined as critical infrastructure by the Government of Ontario. This ask is complementary to the requests for the reinstatement of the Ontario Air Advisory Panel and the creation of the OACAP.

4. Conclusion

A case has been made through this program outline that a permanent, reliable, and committed source of funding from the Government of Ontario for small and regional airport capital supports is an essential yet achievable ask. Apparent gaps in funding for airport infrastructure are glaring and it is impractical to fill these gaps with provincial and/or federal economic development and business support grants. Ideally, a program created specifically for airport needs, such as the Ontario Airport Capital Assistance Program, would assist in the infrastructure and environmental needs of small and regional airports, allowing them to fulfill their essential roles as facilitators of public services as well as assist in community and/or regional economic growth.

Precedence-setting programs have been in place in British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan for quite some time. They have been established and managed efficaciously. It is the sincere opinion of AMCO that similar programming can be successful in Ontario and be instituted in a fiscally responsible manner. A focus on capital projects for small and regional airports ultimately means that they will operate more efficiently and thus be viewed as economic assets more fervently.

Small and regional airports continually express the need for capital assistance for airside rehabilitation projects. Their predicament has been routinely overlooked to a point where debates over the loss of airport infrastructure in Ontario have percolated to media and policy discussions. Now is the time to pursue programming that ensures that Ontario continues to enjoy a reliable network of airports that support business development in a province bursting with potential as well as public services like air ambulance and forest firefighting that keep Ontarians safe.

Appendix

Appendix A

Airports in Ontario

List of Municipal Airports

Atikokan Municipal Airport
Brantford Airport
Brockville – 1000 Islands Regional Tackaberry Airport
Chapleau Municipal Airport
Chatham-Kent Municipal Airport
Cochrane Municipal Airport
Cornwall Regional Airport
Dryden Regional Airport (*recently lost ACAP eligibility*)
Earlton-Timiskaming Regional Airport
Elliot Lake Municipal Airport
Fort Frances Municipal Airport (*recently lost ACAP eligibility*)
Goderich Regional Airport
Greenstone Regional Airports (*includes Geraldton and Nakina airports*)
Haliburton/Stanhope Municipal Airport
Hearst Rene Fontaine Airport
Hornepayne Municipal Airport
Huron Airport
Ignace Municipal Airport Iroquois
Falls Municipal Airport
Kapuskaing Airport
Kawartha Lakes/Lindsay Municipal Airport
Killarney Municipal Airport
Kincardine Municipal Airport
Kingston Norman Rogers Airport
Kirkland Lake Municipal Airport Lake
Simcoe Regional Airport Manitoulin
East Municipal Airport
Manitouwadge Airport
Marathon Airport
Muskoka Airport
Niagara Central Dorothy Rungeling Airport
Niagara District Airport
Oshawa Executive Airport
Parry Sound Municipal Airport
Pelee Island Airport
Pembroke and Area Airport
Peterborough Municipal Airport

Sarnia Chris Hadfield Airport
Saugeen Municipal Airport
Smiths Falls/Montague Airport
Stratford Municipal Airport St.
Thomas Municipal Airport
Tillsonburg Regional Airport
Tobermory Municipal Airport
Vermillion Bay Airport
Wawa Municipal Airport

Municipally Owned ACAP Eligible

Greater Sudbury Airport
Hamilton John C. Munro International Airport
Moosonee Airport
Red Lake Airport
Region of Waterloo International Airport
Sioux Lookout Airport
Timmins Victor M. Power Airport
Windsor International Airport

Other Public Airports

Arnprior Airport
Bancroft Airport
Brampton Airport
Burlington Executive Airpark
Carp Airport
Collingwood Airport
Edenvale Aerodrome
Gore Bay Airport
Grimsby Regional Airport
Guelph Airpark
Kenora Airport (*recently lost ACAP eligibility*)
Leamington Airport
Major-General Richard Rohmer Meaford International
Airport
Orillia Rama Regional Airport
South River/Sundridge Airpark
Toronto Billy Bishop City Airport
Warton Keppel International Airport
Wingham Airport

Other Public Airports ACAP Eligible

Sault Ste. Marie Airport
North Bay Jack Garland Airport

National Airport System Airports

London International Airport

Ottawa International Airport

Thunder Bay International Airport

Toronto Pearson International Airport

Appendix B

BC Air Access Program projects

Source: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure Press Release

2024-2025: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2024MOTI0043-000452>

2023-2024: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2023MOTI0068-000777>

Air facilities in the following communities have received funding through the BC Air Access Program for 2024-25.

- 100 Mile House – \$35,000 to develop an airport master plan
- Campbell River – \$996,100 to install new fuel storage systems
- Castlegar – \$1.6 million to rehabilitate the aviation apron
- Clearwater – \$19,000 for a medevac helipad feasibility study and construction plan
- Comox – \$220,000 to replace a diesel ground power unit with an electrical unit
- Creston – \$35,000 to create an airport master plan
- Dawson Creek – \$403,750 to upgrade a fuelling terminal and replace fuel pumps
- Dease Lake – \$918,652 to fence the airport perimeter
- Fraser Lake – \$29,012 to rebuild the runway's north side
- Invermere – \$17,100 for runway and apron improvements
- Kamloops – \$1.8 million for taxi-lane rehabilitation
- McBride – \$495,000 to upgrade fuel system for medevac, wildfire and other emergency services
- Metlakatla – \$567,000 for an emergency heliport upgrade
- Pemberton – \$121,500 for runway repairs and painting
- Pitt Meadows – \$520,000 for perimeter fencing and culvert replacement to improve emergency access
- Prince George – \$612,542 to purchase a fuel truck
- Prince Rupert – \$60,000 to upgrade security and communications systems
- Quesnel – \$272,000 to upgrade the terminal building
- Sechelt – \$24,500 to improve operations at night and in poor weather
- Terrace - \$2 million for runway rehabilitation and new lights and signage
- Tofino – \$271,700 for a back-up generator for emergency preparedness
- Trail – \$19,747 to cut tops off trees around the airport for safety
- Valemount – \$132,297 to replace a fuel tank to provide a larger storage capacity for wildfire suppression
- Vancouver Harbour Flight Centre– \$12,675 to purchase and train staff to use an adaptive aircraft passenger lift, which will allow passengers with mobility challenges to safely board seaplanes

Air facilities in the following communities have received funding through the BC Air Access Program for 2023-24.

- 108 Mile – \$2 million for runway rehabilitation
- Bob Quinn Lake – \$87,650 for an airport master plan and for a solar-powered weather camera with altimeter and satellite uplink
- Chilliwack – \$1.9 million to extend the runway and upgrade lighting
- Comox – \$374,550 to install solar power and provide electrification of ground support equipment and utility vehicles
- Courtenay – \$131,450 to pave an air ambulance patient transfer area and replace a floatplane dock
- Creston Valley – \$48,000 for an airport master plan and fuel cardlock system upgrade
- Dease Lake – \$88,200 for an airport master plan and new batteries for solar-powered hazard beacons
- Fairmont Hot Springs – \$64,000 for an airport master plan and washroom facilities
- Fort St. James – \$2 million for the runway end safety area, lighting improvements and a master plan
- Fraser Lake – \$55,650 for pavement markings and an upgrade to runway shoulders
- Golden – \$2 million for airfield pavement rehabilitation
- Kitimat – \$511,250 for a greenhouse gas emission audit, and taxiway and apron improvements
- Masset – \$26,550 for a temporary runway, taxiway and apron lights
- McBride – \$259,000 to rehabilitate runway and airside pavement
- Merritt – \$304,100 for airport security fencing
- Nakusp – \$25,000 for an airport master plan
- Nanaimo – \$2 million for runway instrument approach lighting
- Pitt Meadows – \$1.6 million to pave the runway and rehabilitate and resurface the taxiway
- Princeton – \$916,000 for airport lighting
- Qualicum Beach – \$289,300 for avgas fuel system replacement
- Revelstoke – \$772,100 to widen the runway
- Salmon Arm – \$1.2 million to rehabilitate the runway
- Squamish – \$63,250 to survey and clear obstacles and replace airfield signage
- Sun Peaks – \$950,000 for a new heliport
- Tofino (Long Beach) – \$737,100 for fire protection and fire pump system improvements
- Vanderhoof – \$330,984 for runway and apron lighting
- Victoria Harbour Heliport – \$986,850 for a fuel system upgrade
- Williams Lake – \$83,750 for an apron lighting upgrade and two automatic security gates
- Winter Harbour – \$27,300 for a helipad improvement project

Appendix C

Alberta - Strategic Transportation Infrastructure Program Community Airports Program

2021 Approved Projects

Drumheller	Airport Runway Overlay	1,507,000	1,130,250	Central
Wetaskiwin	Airport Runway, Taxi B, Apron 1 Paving	2,184,595	1,638,446	Central
Total:		3,691,595	2,768,696	

2022 Approved Projects

Hanna	Airport Runway Lighting	470,000	352,500	Central
Spirit River	Spirit River Airport Lighting Upgrade	429,880	322,410	Peace
Valleyview	Valleyview Airport Rehabilitation	1,756,971	1,317,728	Peace
Md Pincher Creek	Airfield Lighting Replacement	780,000	585,000	Southern
Total:		3,436,851	2,577,638	

2023 Approved Projects

Westlock	Westlock Regional Asphalt Overlay and Lighting Replacement	\$2,282,113	\$1,711,585	North Central
Stettler	Airport Runway and Taxiway Rehabilitation	\$1,975,930	\$1,481,948	Central
Md Fairview	Fairview Airport Overlay	\$1,157,365	\$868,024	Peace
Md Willow Creek	Main Runway Rehabilitation	\$636,700	\$477,525	Southern
Ct Vulcan	Runway Sealing	\$120,000	\$90,000	Southern
Total		\$6,172,108	\$4,629,081	

Source:

2021 - 2023 data: <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/strategic-transportation-infrastructure-program-projects>

Appendix D

Saskatchewan Community Airports Program

2021 CAP Funded Projects

- Carlyle: Runway slurry seal, repaint runway lines and numbers and add ceilometer to Automated Weather Observing System (AWOS), valued at \$33,911;
- Esterhazy: Crack seal and slurry seal on runway, valued at \$5,883;
- Estevan: New fence posts and wire, valued at \$37,750;
- Kindersley: Replace runway lighting and crack sealing on runway, valued at \$36,715;
- Kipling: Weather data instrumentation, valued at \$10,280;
- La Ronge: Drainage survey, culvert repair and assess surface condition, valued at \$105,000;
- Leader: Line markings and numbers on runway and aprons, valued at \$5,453;
- Luseland: Crack filling on runway and apron, valued at \$47,699;
- Maple Creek: Painting lines and numbers on the runway, valued at \$4,240;
- Melfort: Construction of two new taxiways, excavation of existing taxiway, valued at \$26,350;
- Moose Jaw: Rehabilitation of existing taxiways and a portion of the apron, valued at \$275,000;
- Moosomin: New paved, lit runway with new taxiway and apron and plans for Area Navigation (RNAV) and AWOS valued at \$275,000;
- Prince Albert (two applications): Runway windsock and end markers and addition of a buried wildlife fence to the airport perimeter fence, valued at \$106,650;
- RM of Eldon No. 471: Crack seal on runway, taxiway and apron, valued at \$5,664;
- RM of Snipe Lake No. 259: Crack seal and slurry on runway, taxiway and apron, valued at \$50,350;
- Shaunavon: Replacement of airport beacon light, valued at \$3,500;
- Swift Current: Runway rehabilitation and airfield signage upgrades, valued at \$167,500;
- Wynyard: Recapping taxiway and apron, valued at \$16,738; and
- Yorkton: Crack seal on pavement and new anchor stakes, valued at \$50,379.

2022 CAP Funding

- Big River - \$40,936 - Runway edge light repairs, windsock pole, main runway and aprons rehabilitation
- Carlyle - \$9,090 - Crack fill runway and tarmac
- Estevan - \$34,948 - Crack sealing and line painting
- Kindersley - \$46,614 - Runway lighting upgrade
- La Ronge - \$133,125 - Airport drainage system maintenance
- Melfort - \$256,715 - Replace underground wiring and lighting around runway, taxiway and apron
- RM of Browning (RM 34) - \$35,850 - Add turn pads and pavement marking
- RM of Eldon (RM 471) - \$18,582 - Crack sealing for taxiway and apron

- RM of Moosomin (RM 121) - \$256,715 - Continued work on Phase 3 including new navigation system
- Weyburn - \$97,500 - Taxiway repairs, crack sealing and pavement marking
- Yorkton - \$4,925 - Information broadcast transmitter and friction index equipment

2023 CAP Funded Projects

- Big River - \$30,596 - Repairs to runway edge lighting.
- Birch Hills - \$40,915 - Rehabilitate the main runway and taxiways and install new line markings and numbers on the main runway and 300 feet of taxi way centreline.
- Carlyle - \$15,423 - Deep crack asphalt and apron pavement repairs.
- Central Butte - \$1,625 - Radio control system.
- RM of Eldon No 471 - \$15,758 - Crack seal runway, taxiway, and apron. Repaint all lines.
- Estevan - \$13,369 - Rubberized crack sealing on all runways and replacing lighted runway signs.
- Humboldt - \$30,000 - Aerodrome feasibility and planning study.
- Kindersley - \$8,163 - Runway lighting upgrade, and crack sealing of runway.
- Kipling - \$10,281 - Expand taxiway and apron.
- La Ronge - \$60,000 - Upgrade/replace ATB security doors. Install four airside automatic doors, six groundside automatic doors and add keypad/card swipe security locks.
- Luseland - \$3,393 - Airport electrical upgrade.
- Maple Creek - \$23,523 - Rehabilitate a small section of the runway.
- Melfort - \$36,040 - Crack repairs on runway and taxiway.
- Moose Jaw - \$25,000 - Rubberized crack sealing on runway taxiway and apron.
- RM of Moosomin - \$222,263 - Completion of phase one - earthwork construction on runway, apron, and access road.
- North Battleford - \$75,000 - Installation of backup power generator at the runway light control building.
- Prince Albert - \$10,000 - Installation of automated sliding gate.
- Swift Current - \$35,000 - Rubberized crack sealing on main runway, new asphalt on apron and re-apply painted markings and upgrade airfield signage to LED backlit fixtures.
- Weyburn - \$88,600 - Mulch existing pavement at the entrance where STARS lands for patient transfers. Mulched asphalt reshaped and compacted as subbase for asphalt overlay.
- Wynyard - \$8,576 - Replace fencing and two gates to increase airport security.
- Yorkton - \$96,475 - CIFIB transmitter (ground station), repaint markings and numbers on runways, taxiways, and aprons and crack sealing on pavement, recreational taxiway improvements.

Sources from Government of Saskatchewan Press Releases

2021 - <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/news-and-media/2021/april/29/government-invests-15-million-in-community-airports-to-support-economic-recovery>

2022 - <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/news-and-media/2022/may/19/government-of->

saskatchewan-continues-to-invest-in-community-airports

2023 - <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/news-and-media/2023/june/13/community-airports-receive-another-lift>