

British Columbia Air Access Program (BCAAP) Grants

Program Guidelines

2024/2025



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1.0 PROGRAM OVERVIEW

1.1 Background

Aviation is critical to the province's economy by supporting jobs and tourism, enabling investment and facilitating trade. British Columbia's aviation sector provides communities with travel opportunities; passenger, cargo, medevac and wildfire suppression services; and general aviation.

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the air sector in BC and around the world. In recognition of these pressures, a comprehensive program review was conducted in 2022 to help BCAAP remain responsive and relevant as recovery takes place for air facilities across the province. Program staff undertake annual continuous improvement to ensure BCAAP remains relevant and useful for the airport community.

Support to the aviation sector is critical in helping the BC Government address its responsibilities for:

- Emergency Response (Medevac, Search and Rescue, Flooding, etc.)
- Wildfire Suppression
- Access to Remote and Indigenous Communities
- Resource Exploration
- Tourism and Recreation
- Economic Development

1.2 Purpose of the BCAAP Program

The key priorities for BCAAP projects are helping to:

- Maintain safe and reliable facilities for aircraft, passengers and employees;
- Provide local, regional and provincial economic benefits;
- Ensure medevac and wildfire suppression services remain viable; and
- Improve the environmental performance and/or reduce the climate footprint of air facilities.

BCAAP is in place for all eligible public airports, heliports and water aerodromes in British Columbia.

Examples of eligible projects are in the table below and previously funded projects are in Appendix A.

Please reach out to BCAAP staff if you are unsure about the category to which your project belongs.

1.3 BCAAP Program Changes

The table below lays out all the key post-Covid program changes. Please reach out to BCAAP staff if you have any questions at BCAAP@gov.bc.ca or by phone at (778) 974-5468.

Key BCAAP Changes	Description
BCAAP funding of up to 90% of Total Project Costs	If the community, airport or project meets certain criteria, BCAAP will fund a higher percentage of eligible costs, resulting in a lower applicant contribution.
New configuration of application forms	Please note that there are four different application forms : 1. Major: projects with a projected cost of over \$100,000 2. Minor: projects with a projected cost of \$100,000 or less 3. Environmental Projects 4. Air Facility Master Plans
Air Facility Master Plans can now be funded	Applications to develop Air Facility Master Plans (100% funding up to \$35,000) will be considered from small communities (with a service area of 10,000 or fewer people).
Consistent annual intake in November of each year	This should allow projects to be approved in time to take advantage of the summer construction period.
New online application process	BCAAP will start accepting applications through an online process every November until near the end of December.
Limit of \$2M in BCAAP funding per facility per year	Multiple applications can be accepted from each facility, but there will be a cap on the BCAAP portion for any given facility in any given year of \$2M. This will allow more projects to be approved throughout the province. Applications can be accepted for phased projects, however approval of any one phase does not guarantee approval of subsequent phases.
Urgent applications will be accepted year-round	Limited funding for small, urgent projects will be considered at any time throughout the year.
(Formal application not required)	Contact at BCAAP@gov.bc.ca or (778) 974-5468.

1.4 BCAAP is a Cost-Share Program

BCAAP is a cost-share program administered by the BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (Ministry). The program encourages funding partnerships with local, regional and federal agencies and the private-sector. The actual BCAAP contribution for any project will be based upon total eligible costs, less any federal or other provincial funding.

- ➔ If a federal or another provincial agency is contributing to a project, that contribution will be deducted from the project's total eligible costs, with the BCAAP share calculated on the balance.
- ➔ Local trusts such as the Northern Development Initiative Trust are regarded as applicant funding, not provincial contributions and will be counted as part of the applicant's funding share.
- ➔ An airport eligible under the Federal Airport Capital Assistance Program (ACAP) must utilize ACAP funding first for any ACAP-eligible projects. Projects ineligible for ACAP, or that have been turned down by ACAP, are eligible for BCAAP. A BCAAP application must include appropriate supporting documentation related to ACAP eligibility and status of any ACAP applications.

Note that the applicant assumes responsibility for any increase in operating or maintenance costs resulting from the project and is also responsible for any cost overruns in excess of the approved project funds.

There is a requirement to provide Class B estimates, as defined by the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of BC (please see below).

NOTE: If you experience challenges in obtaining a Class B estimate, please reach out to BCAAP staff as there may be accommodations available.

Cost Estimate Classes	
Cost Estimate Class	Features & Uses
Class A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Detailed estimate based on final drawings and specifications - Used to evaluate tenders
Class B (Required)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prepared after completing site investigations and studies, and after defining major systems - Based on a project brief and preliminary design - Used for project approvals and budgetary control
Class C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prepared with limited site information and based on probable conditions - Captures major cost elements - Used to refine project definition and for preliminary approvals
Class D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preliminary estimate based on little or no site information - Represents the approximate magnitude of cost, based on broad requirements - Used for preliminary discussion and long-term capital planning

1.5 General Requirements

Please ensure that your application meets the following criteria:

- If eligible, federal ACAP funding must be applied for first;
- Submitted by an eligible applicant;
- For an eligible project;
- Complete and with supporting documentation appended;
- Certified/authorized by the appropriate officials within the organization; and
- Project is consistent with provincial, federal and municipal standards.

Please see Section 3 for more details.

1.6 Project Conditions

All successful applicants must:

- Enter into a Conditional Grant Agreement (CGA) with the Ministry;
- Carry out the project within the terms of the CGA;
- Submit quarterly progress reports;
- Provide a Summary of Expenditures along with supporting documentation for claims processing;
- Present a statement of all work completed and project expenditures;
- Communicate with BCAAP staff on milestones, public announcements and progress reporting.

2.0 BCAAP GRANT AMOUNTS

BCAAP infrastructure grants are limited to a maximum of \$2M for any given facility in any given year. Facilities can apply for multiple projects; however, BCAAP funding will not exceed this amount.

Funding for infrastructure projects includes base funding, additional funding (up to 95%) and 100% funding for Air Facility Master Plans up to \$35,000.

2.1 Base Funding

Base Funding	Type of Project	Description	Project Types
75%	Airside/Core Aviation	Aircraft operating areas and avionics equipment	Runway; taxiway; helipad; floatplane docks; airside lighting; fuel systems; GPS approach; hazard beacons
75%	Climate/Environmental	Anywhere at the airport that helps reduce GHG emissions or for climate mitigation	GHG baseline; electrification of baggage handling vehicles; LED lighting; solar beacons
60%	Transitional	Areas that separate airside and groundside	Terminal buildings; fencing; gates
50%	Groundside/Ancillary	Parts of airport where aircraft are not present	Parking lots; access roads
100% up to \$35,000	Airport Master Plans	Planning document (for airports with a service area of <10,000 people)	Airport Master Plan

2.2 Additional Funding

Applicants may qualify for **up to an additional 15% of BCAAP funding**, based on how the community, facility or project meets the following criteria, **subject to verification by BCAAP staff**:

- **The community served is Indigenous, isolated, rural or remote:** This category applies to Indigenous communities; communities that can only be reliably accessed by air; or communities more than three hours travel by road to the next nearest airport.
- **The facility has limited revenue streams available:** This applies to facilities that either lack scheduled air services and/or are not able to collect much revenue from other activities.
- **The facility has a greenhouse gas reduction plan and/or policies, procedures or infrastructure in place that supports active transportation:** This demonstrates a commitment to improving the facility's environmental performance.
- **The project is required for medevac operations:** The project is required to support air transport of individuals for medical assistance.
- **The project is required for wildfire suppression operations:** The project is necessary to enable firefighting related activities for wildfires.
- **The project is needed for emergency response/preparedness:** The project is necessary to enable the facility to respond to or prepare for unexpected events.
- **The project is required due to an extraordinary event:** The project is necessary to recover from an unexpected event, such as major flooding.
- **The project is required to correct a non-compliance with federal aviation regulations:** Transport Canada requires all airports to comply with federal aviation regulations.
- **The project is required for climate change mitigation/adaptation:** The project is necessary to support climate related initiatives.
- **The project is likely to result in significant economic impacts and/or generate revenue for the air facility.**

2.3 Additional Funding for Small Non-Profits

If a small facility is operated by a non-profit society that is reliant on some volunteer labour for the BCAAP project, the application may qualify for an additional **5% BCAAP funding (for up to a total of 95%)**.

A “small facility” is an airport, heliport or water aerodrome with a local service area of 10,000 or fewer people.

In-kind contributions may include volunteer hours and/or donated professional labour, services, space or materials, which are provided at no cost or below fair market value.

2.4 Air Facility Master Plan Funding

100% funding up to \$35,000 is available for the development of Air Facility Master Plans. This funding is limited to facilities with a service area of 10,000 or fewer people.

3.0 ELIGIBILITY

Applications will be considered from air facilities:

- Located in British Columbia;
- That are public airports, heliports or water aerodromes;
- Serve fewer than one (1) million scheduled passengers annually.

The operator of the air facility is responsible for submitting applications. This can include municipalities, regional districts, First Nation governments, non-profit societies and contracted managers. NOTE: Contracted Airport Managers are eligible to apply to BCAAP; however, if the application is successful, all funding will flow to the organization that owns the airport (e.g., municipality).

The project must be completed within one fiscal year.

3.1 Eligible Project Expenditures

Eligible costs include costs incurred within the period established in the Conditional Grant Agreement, including:

- Design or engineering costs during the execution of the project;
- Materials and labour;
- In-kind contributions;
- Equipment needed for completing the project;
- Directional, warning and project signage; and
- Applicable taxes.

3.2 Ineligible Project Expenditures

The following costs are deemed ineligible:

- Costs related to developing a BCAAP application and supporting documentation;
- Property acquisition;
- Studies, such as engineering reports or business cases;
- Applicant’s administration such as overhead, staff and supervision expenses/salaries;

- Project management costs in excess of 15% of the total grant value;
- Costs incurred prior to the project approval date, or incurred after project completion;
- Landscaping; and
- Costs associated with operations or maintenance.

3.3 Eligible Applicants

To be considered for funding, the application and supporting documents must show that the project:

- Falls within one of the project categories that BCAAP funds;
- Can be completed within one fiscal year;
- Has identified and secured all required funding (the percentage not funded by BCAAP);
- Meets the best available environmental practices, which includes identifying environmental risks, benefits and innovations; and
- Complies with applicable federal, provincial and/or local government standards.

Examples of previously approved projects are included in Appendix A.

3.4 Ineligible Applicants

Any of the following may deem an air facility ineligible:

- Facilities that serve more than one million passengers annually;
- Facilities with BCAAP projects from an earlier year that are not yet complete;
- Private aviation facilities; and
- Facilities owned and operated by the federal government.

4.0 APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Please submit your application(s) and supporting documentation via one of the four online application forms.

If you encounter any problems, please contact the BCAAP team at BCAAP@gov.bc.ca or by phone at 778-974-5468 for assistance.

There is no limit on the number of projects that a facility can apply for; however, there is a cap of \$2M in BCAAP funding for any one facility each year.

Applicants should be aware that information collected is subject to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. The information being collected will be used for reporting, tracking and evaluating purposes. Any questions about the collection, use or disclosure should be directed to the BCAAP administrative team via email at BCAAP@gov.bc.ca or by telephone at 778-974-5468.

5.0 APPLICATION DEADLINE

The 2024/25 BCAAP application intake starts on **November 1, 2023 and closes on December 22, 2023**. After this date, applications will no longer be accepted.

Applications are accepted from operators of public airport, heliport and floatplane facilities. This includes municipal and First Nation governments, regional districts, other operating authorities (e.g., non-profit societies) and contracted operators.

6.0 APPLICATION EVALUATION

All applications will go through an evaluation process led by BCAAP staff, with the assistance of other Ministry personnel and staff from other Ministries with specific knowledge of aviation requirements (e.g., medevac). Depending on the application, the review will prioritize projects based on the following: safety, medevac, wildfire suppression, environmental benefits and economic impacts. Applicants are asked to prioritize their projects if they are applying for more than one.

6.1 Evaluation Criteria

Applications are evaluated based on the type of project and the questions in each of the **four application forms**. The questions in each application form are slightly different, so please ensure you are using the correct form.

6.2 Evaluation Results

Applications are sorted from highest to lowest scores with a cumulative total linked to the available program budget. Funding will take into consideration the cap on BCAAP funding of \$2M per facility in any one year or for any one BCAAP project and other factors, such as geographic distribution and past BCAAP or other funding.

Unsuccessful applicants are invited to request detailed feedback at any time.

6.3 Evaluation Criteria Summary

NOTE: Please avoid “N/A” responses as evaluators can only mark what is included in an application, and are unable to make any assumptions based on pre-existing knowledge of the air facility or project. N/A responses will be given a mark of “zero” for that question.

<p>Initial Screening: The responses to these questions are used to determine whether the project moves on to the evaluation stage. Is the application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Complete? ○ From an eligible applicant? ○ For an eligible project type? ○ If applicable, has federal ACAP funding been applied for? 	
Question from Application	What evaluators are looking for
<p>Outline the benefits of the project from an environmental and/or climate perspective</p>	<p>If your project includes direct linkages to the environment/climate, place an emphasis in your response on how your project is focused on environment/climate considerations.</p> <p>If your project is focused on a different element, such as safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Acknowledge that your project focuses on something different. ● Demonstrate that you have considered environmental implications. <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If you are planning a lighting project, and will be using LED technology, you could include details such as energy savings. ● If you are planning to repave your runway, consider the use of recycled materials. Include information about the lower environmental impact.

<p>How are best practices from an environmental and/or climate perspective incorporated into the design and construction of this project?</p>	<p>If your project includes best practices related to the environment/climate, focus on the best practices that will be part of the project.</p> <p>If your project is focused on a different element, such as safety, acknowledge the focus of your project and demonstrate that your team has considered best practices (environmental/climate).</p>
<p>Have any specific environmentally-related risks been identified with this project and if yes, what is your plan to address these risks?</p>	<p>Evaluators are looking for an acknowledgement that there are (or are not) risks. Please indicate how you came to conclude that there are no risks. If there are risks, it is important to articulate a plan or action to mitigate the risks.</p>
<p>How will this project improve safety?</p>	<p>If your project is focused on safety, clearly state that the project is focused on safety, and explain how this will be accomplished.</p> <p>If your project is focused on a different element (e.g., environment), explain that safety has been considered.</p>
<p>How will the project benefit medevac and/or wildfire suppression?</p>	<p>If your project is focused on medevac and/or wildfire suppression, demonstrate the linkage between the project and those benefits.</p> <p>If your project is not focused on medevac and/or wildfire suppression, acknowledge that the project has a different focus but demonstrated that you've considered these other elements.</p>
<p>How will this project provide local, regional, and/or provincial benefits, including how this project may support your facility in recovery from the impacts of Covid-19?</p>	<p>BCAAP encourages you to document both the immediate and longer-term impacts of your project and to explain in detail.</p>
<p>How will the project advance the long-term goals and visions for the facility and community?</p>	<p>Demonstrate alignment with the community strategic plan (Official Community Plan) or the Airport Master Plan (where applicable).</p> <p>Explain how the project helps to work toward the goals of the plan.</p>
<p>Have any concerns or issues with respect to this project been raised by facility users or by members of the surrounding community? What are those concerns or issues? What plans, if any, do you have to address these concerns or issues?</p>	<p>If no concerns or issues have been raised, communicate how you know that there are no concerns, and that as a result, no plans are required.</p> <p>If concerns or issues have been raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe any identified concerns or issues, and • Lay out plans to mitigate these concerns or issues.

7.0 GRANT PROCEDURE

The BCAAP grant process is as follows:

- 1) Program online application intake opens on November 1, 2023.
- 2) Applications are accepted online until December 22, 2023.
- 3) Applications are reviewed and scored by a committee.
- 4) The Minister approves selected projects.
- 5) A Conditional Grant Agreement (CGA) is prepared by the Ministry and signed by both the recipient and Ministry.
- 6) Initial and subsequent payments are disbursed to the recipients in accordance with the CGA and the achievement of project milestones.
- 7) If a project requires an extension to the agreed upon completion date or amendment due to change in project scope, recipient must contact program staff at BCAAP@gov.bc.ca
- 8) CGA is closed upon final completion of project payments.

Appendix A – Sample of Past Completed Projects

The following sample projects have been selected based on:

- Geographic diversity
- Type of project (e.g., airside, transitional, groundside)
- Dollar value granted (BCAAP contribution)

Airside/Core Aviation Infrastructure Projects:

Main Terminal Helipad – Pitt Meadows Airport
Fuel System Reconfiguration – Anahim Lake Airport
Rehabilitation of Float Plane Dock – Kamloops Airport
Runway Lighting – Masset Airport
New Heliport – Sun Peaks Resort Municipality

Transitional Projects:

Terminal Building Expansion – Northwest Regional Airport (Terrace-Kitimat)
Terminal Building Construction – Trail Regional Airport
Runway Signage Replacement – Squamish Airport

Groundside/Ancillary Projects:

Terminal Façade and Groundside Rehabilitation Works – Dawson Creek Airport
Elevator (Barrier-Free Terminal Access) – Prince George Airport
Automatic Security Gates – Williams Lake Airport

Thank you for your interest in the BC Air Access Program.

For any assistance, please contact us at:

BCAAP@gov.bc.ca

(778) 974-5468