ONTARIO ABORIGINAL
LANDS ASSOCIATION

Additions to Reserve (ATR) Pilot Project

Additions-to-Reserve (ATR) Pilot Project Overview

OALA, in partnership with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) and consulting firm Urban Systems (Urban) has begun the development of an *Additions-to-Reserve (ATR) Pilot Project*. This project involves developing a suite of technical guides, resources, and other materials to help OALA members in initiating and completing ATR. OALA begun this project this summer, and it is anticipated to be completed over two phases occurring from 2024-2025!

We understand the importance of helping our members navigate the complex and time-intensive ATR process. This topic has been voiced as a core area of interest by OALA members for several years and is growing in importance as land claims, economic development, and other initiatives involving OALA members are resulting in increasing acquisitions of land with the intention of converting them into reserve.

Phase 1 Overview – Developing ATR Resources (2024)

Phase 1 of the project involves the development of tools and resources for different ATR topic areas (see image right) to support and guide OALA members when undertaking ATR proposals and navigating the resulting ATR process requirements. These tools and resources will compliment NALMA's existing ATR Toolkit and ongoing training that OALA will offer in the future.

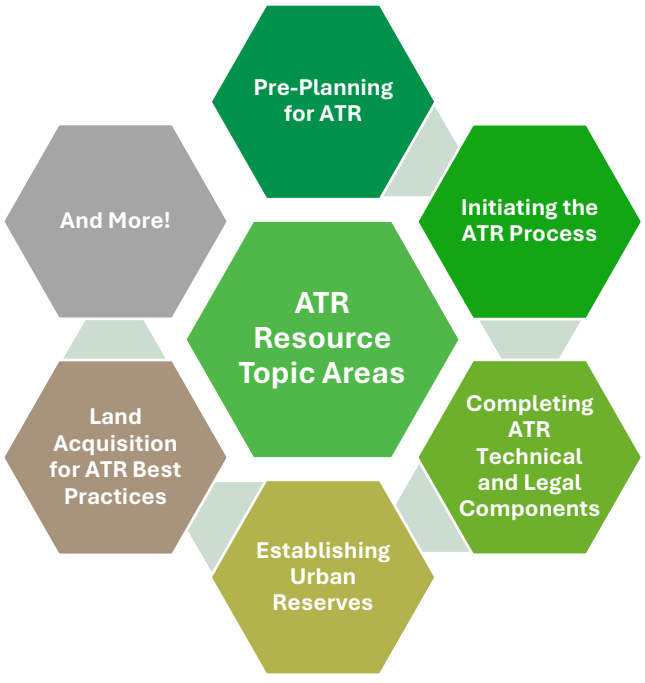


Figure 1 - ATR Topic Areas

Through this work, OALA intends to establish a formal ATR Unit within OALA. A job posting for an ATR Coordinator position has been launched with the objective of filling the position by August 2024. The coordinator position is intended to become an ongoing internal support and resource for OALA members with the intent that the position will remain in place after the completion of this project.

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Phase 2 Overview – ATR Pilot Project (2025)
Phase 2 of the project will involve a pilot program where a select group of OALA members, through an Expression of Interest call, may receive ongoing technical assistance and support in initiating and/or advancing an ATR application.

OALA will launch an Expression of Interest (EOI) in 2025 for First Nations, who are in the initial stages of an ATR process or planning to begin one. Those selected into the pilot program will receive technical support from Urban Systems and the ATR Coordinator that may include the following areas:

- Land selection, environmental reviews, planning and technical analysis of lands
- ATR application support and project management of ATR applications
- Technical support in completing ATR requirements (e.g. surveys, ESAs, third-party interests, etc.)
- Internal and external communications and consultation
- Urban reserves and municipal servicing agreements (if required)

How Can OALA Members Get Involved?
Over the next few months, OALA and the project team will be engaging OALA members to understand what your experiences, interests, needs, and priorities are with respect to ATR, including:

- Launching an ATR Survey (see survey announcement and link)
- Completing 1-on-1/small focus group interviews with interested OALA members (August 2024)
- Engagement and presentation at the OALA Annual General Meeting (September 16-18, 2024)

Your feedback is important for this project and will shape and inform the development of the various resources and materials developed. Following the completion of Phase 1 (Developing ATR Resources) of the project, we will be further engaging OALA members to participate in Phase 2 (Pilot Program) through an Expression of Interest call in 2025.

Technical Scope and Intent of the ATR Pilot Project

It is recognized that the current ATR process is challenging, time intensive, and costly, and there is a need to review and reform the process. There have been several efforts recently undertaken by different First Nations and First Nation organizations to identify ATR policy and process reforms.

OALA's focus with this project is to support its members in navigating and completing the various technical components included in the current ATR process as established through current Federal policy and legislation. This project is a technical exercise focused on improving ATR processes and timelines for First Nations undertaking ATR within the current policy and legislative framework.

Opportunities for OALA to support other organizations advocating for policy/legislative reform may emerge through this project in the future. OALA will also adjust tools and resources developed through this project in the future as required to align with any future policy and process changes enacted by the Canada and/or Ontario.

Contacts for Further Information

Please stay tuned to the OALA website and future newsletters/mailouts for more information on the ATR Pilot Project. If you want to learn more about the project or discuss it with project team members, please contact:

- Jess Pickett, OALA Executive Director – ed@oala-on.ca or 519-857-9228
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