



Downtown Perth Community Improvement Plan Façade Improvement Program Program Guide

The intent of the Downtown Perth Community Improvement Plan (CIP) – Façade Improvement Program is to provide a financial incentive in the form of a grant to promote building rehabilitation and façade improvements of commercial and mixed-use (commercial/residential) buildings located within the Community Improvement Plan area. The program applies to the exterior façade of the building only. *(Note a key objective of the CIP to promote improvement of building signage and facades while respecting, rehabilitating, restoring or re-establishing the character, design and authenticity of the building elements of heritage buildings)*

Who can apply?

Owners (or tenants with the written authorization) of commercial and/or mixed use properties located within the designated Community Improvement Area may apply. (see map)

In the event that the applicant is a multiple property owner project funding will be limited to two (2) projects annually*.

Façade is defined by this program as the front of a building, especially an imposing or decorative one or any side of a building facing a public way or space and finished accordingly.

** Should there be unallocated funds after September 30th those individuals who own multiple properties will be considered on a first come, first-served basis until such time that all funds have been allocated.*

How does the program work?

The program is structured as a matching grant program where the Town will provide a grant to the applicant for 33% of the projects eligible costs to a minimum/maximum of \$500 / \$5000 per building.

What kind of work is ineligible?

Proposed façade improvements to front, rear or side walls must maintain any existing heritage or architecturally significant characteristics by retaining, restoring or matching: glass, wood, stone or brick elements; i.e., materials used shall be consistent in type and form with existing materials, and the use of synthetic components, except where they are already in use will generally not qualify for assistance. Without limiting the preceding statement, the following type of work will not be eligible for this program:

- painting or stuccoing or placement of covering or siding materials over original brick or stone features;
- replacement or covering of original or authentic wooden architectural components with other materials;
- backlit or neon signs;
- alterations to, and or removal of existing or designated heritage features or architecturally significant characteristics or building elements;
- the use of synthetic components and materials, except where they are already in use

All alterations/improvements made to buildings shall be pursuant to all applicable permits and constructed in accordance to the Ontario Building Code, *Ontario Heritage Act* and all applicable zoning requirements and planning approvals.

All signage alterations or replacements shall comply with the Town's Sign By-law.

What kind of work is eligible for a grant?

Except where rendered ineligible (as per the notes below) the following works will be supported under this program:

- repair or replacement of storefront, including replacement of storefront doors and windows which may enhance energy efficiency of the building or unit;
- repair or replacement of façade masonry or brickwork;
- repair or replacement of cornices, parapets eaves and other architectural details;
- repair, replacement or installation of new awnings or canopies;
- façade painting and cleaning treatments including murals;
- addition of new lighting/upgrading of existing features on exterior façade and entrance and storefront display areas;
- addition of new sidewalk cafes (in accordance with applicable by-laws);

- installation and improvement of signage (contact staff for additional details and applicable by-laws);
- physical improvements to improve accessibility;
- landscaping improvements including;
 - a. replacement of sod with new sod or alternative ground cover treatments such as water efficient, native plant species
 - b. planting of trees, shrubs, plants or beds;
 - c. improvement to parking areas, such as landscaping improvement, sidewalk repairs or replacement, pavement repair or replacement, or demarcation/improvement of pedestrian walkways;
 - d. repair or construction of fencing or retaining walls;
 - e. implementation of fixed benches and planters;
 - f. repair construction of driveways, walkways or rockwork;
 - g. and water efficiency improvements to irrigation systems.
- architectural/design fees required by a licensed Architect for eligible works (to a maximum of 15% of the approved grant amount); and
- other similar repairs/improvements may be approved.

What conditions must be met to be eligible for a grant?

- Projects must be within the dedicated Downtown Perth Community Improvement Area (see attached map);
- Applications must be submitted on the official application form;
- The property shall be improved in such a manner that the improvement does not compromise the reasons for heritage designations or pre-existing heritage features and comply with the Town's Heritage Conservation District;
- The applicant will be required to submit three cost estimates from a bona fide contractor for the façade improvements to be completed;
- The applicant may be required to submit professional architectural/design drawings which shall be in conformity to the issued urban design guidelines, heritage design guidelines, and sign by-laws where applicable;
- The applicant may be required to submit other supporting documents as specified;
- Construction must be completed within one (1) calendar year of the date of the approval of the grant. If the work is not completed within one (1) calendar year the grant may not be paid.

When will the grant funds be advanced?

The grant will be advanced in full when:

- A grant agreement has been signed and executed;
- Construction is complete;
- The building has been inspected to the satisfaction of municipal staff; and
- Applicant provides proof that all contractors have been paid.

How do I apply for a grant?

- Arrange a pre-application meeting with staff in order to determine program eligibility, proposed scope of work and, project timing etc.;
- If authorized to apply for a grant, complete an application form and ensure that the application includes all of the required documentation.

What happens next?

- Applications and supporting documentations are reviewed by staff and the CIP Implementation Advisory Panel;
- Staff or the Panel may request clarification or additional supporting documentation
- Staff will conduct an initial site visit(s) and inspect the property if necessary;
- The CIP Implementation Advisory Panel will review, process, and approve/reject, under delegated authority, all applications equal to or less than \$5,000 for Financial Incentive Programs in accordance with the eligibility requirements of the CIP and the terms and conditions of the Façade Improvement Program;
- If the application is approved by the Implementation Advisory Panel a Grant Agreement is then executed and a copy of the agreement is returned to the applicant;
- Construction of the approved works may now commence, subject to the issuance of all applicable permits.
- Contact the Economic Development Coordinator toward work completion.
- Upon completion of works, Town staff will conduct a final site visit and inspection (as necessary) to ensure compliance with the Grant Agreement and any permits pursuant to the *Ontario Heritage Act*.
- Submit to the Town, copies of paid invoices and “after” pictures of the completed works.
- Upon review and approval of all the submitted documentation, the Town will issue a cheque to the applicant for the full amount of the approved funding.

For further information on this program, please contact:

Economic Development Coordinator – Town of Perth
613-267-3311 ext. 2240
ecdev@perth.ca

