



Planning and Economic Development Department
Urban Renewal Section
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COMMERCIAL FACADE PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Commercial Façade Property Improvement Grant Program (the “Program”) is intended to provide financial assistance for commercial property owners / authorized tenants within Downtown Hamilton, Community Downtowns and the commercial corridors along Barton Street, east of the Barton Village BIA, and along Kenilworth Avenue North as identified in the Downtown and Community Renewal Community Improvement Project Area. The Program aims to improve upon the physical appearance of properties within the areas, achieve quality façade improvements and, encourage investment in the area. Spurring the preservation, revitalization and reinvestment of commercial properties within these areas will assist in creating a welcoming environment for people to live, work, play and learn.

Applications under the Program will be accepted to the end of December 2014 in Downtown Hamilton and April 1, 2016 in all other eligible areas (subject to the availability of funding). Improvements funded under the Program must be completed no later than August 1, 2016 in Downtown Hamilton and December 31, 2016 in all other eligible areas.

PROGRAM TERMS

1. Commercial property owners and tenants authorized in writing by the owner, are eligible to apply for a grant under the Program once each calendar year.
2. Commercial properties are to be identified by municipal address to identify multiple and separate commercial units with ground floor street frontages.
3. Commercial uses must be in conformity with: all policy documents of the City including but not limited to official plans; the provisions of the Zoning By-laws; and any other City by-laws.
4. Performance measures are to be applied to the payment of grants.
5. Eligibility requirements for the Program relating to the work to be funded will be specifically identified. Two separate cost estimates of the work are

- to be provided by a licensed contractor other than the owner. An owner may present an estimate but is required to have at least two prepared by contractors. The grant will be calculated based upon lowest cost estimate, and is not to address cost increases or over runs. In the case where the applicant is the owner of a contracting company and wishes to utilize the company to undertake the improvements, one cost estimate will be required. A Building Inspector will review all estimates provided for the purpose of ensuring competitiveness.
6. Maximum grant amount will be paid on a matching basis (50%-50%) to a maximum of \$10,000 per property for eligible work under the Program. As a further incentive for corner properties, the City will increase the maximum grant amount to \$12,500 on a similar matching basis for eligible work under the Program to recognize the importance of flankage facades.
 7. Restoration / conservation of heritage features on commercial properties designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act* are not eligible under this grant program; however, improvements other than those on heritage features are eligible subject to the approval of a City Heritage Permit. Urban Renewal staff will work closely with Community Planning and Design staff on all applications received that are designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.
 8. A building inspector will perform initial inspection relative to the façade which is intended to be improved, and subsequent final inspection to assure compliance with the Ontario Building Code.
 9. Approval of the grant is at the sole discretion of the General Manager of the Planning and Economic Development Department and subject to the availability of funds.
 10. Proposed improvements to be completed within one year to be eligible for payment. A one year extension can be authorized by the Manager of Urban Renewal.
 11. Work completed must be consistent with estimates, and work proposed and identified within the application unless previously discussed and approved by the Urban Renewal Section.
 12. The Applicant shall provide to the City's Urban Renewal Section copies of paid invoices for all work undertaken on the property for which the grant is applicable. This documentation is to be provided prior to the final inspection.
 13. A City Building Inspector's final inspection report confirming all works have been carried out satisfactorily will be provided prior to release of any grant monies.
 14. At the sole discretion of the Manager of Urban Renewal, partial payments for works completed can be processed consistent with the payment process described above.
 15. At the sole discretion of the Manager of Urban Renewal, the grant cheque can be made jointly payable to the applicant and the contractor if such a request has been received from the applicant.

16. An application fee of \$205 is payable upon submission of application. The fee will be authorized through a By-law passed by City Council. The rate of the fee may be changed from time to time as approved by City Council.
17. The grant may also be received by an owner, in conjunction with any other available City program, in support of the redevelopment / development of the property with the exception of the BIA Commercial Property Improvement Grant Program available within Business Improvement Areas.
18. Without limiting the discretion as set out in paragraph 9 herein, City Council, whether or not an Applicant satisfies the requirements of the Program, may reject any application received from an applicant where, in the opinion of Council, the commercial relationship between the City and the Applicant has been impaired by, but not limited to, the Applicant being involved in litigation with the City. Applicants are individuals; corporate entities and individuals behind the corporation (Officers / Directors/ Shareholders).
19. Without limiting the discretion as set out in paragraph 9 herein, City Council, whether or not an Applicant satisfies the requirements of the Program, may reject any application received from an applicant where there are property tax arrears owed on the subject property or on other properties owned by the Applicant within the City of Hamilton.
20. Improvements commenced prior to submitting an application are ineligible. Improvements commenced after submitting an application but prior to application approval do so at the Applicant's risk.
21. A successful applicant will enter into an agreement with the City containing the terms and conditions (but not limited to) set out in the program description.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- Property owners and authorized tenants are eligible
- Property taxes must be paid current
- The proposed to be pre-inspected by the City Building Inspector
- Commercial properties must be located within Downtown Hamilton, Community Downtowns or, the commercial corridors along Barton Street, east of the Barton Village BIA, and along Kenilworth Avenue North as identified in the Downtown and Community Renewal Community Improvement Project Area
- Existing use must be in conformity with: the City Zoning By-laws, other applicable planning controls; all City policies including but not limited to official plans; and all City by-laws.

ELIGIBLE IMPROVEMENTS

- Replacement or repairing of storefronts
- Improvements and / or upgrades to windows, doors, cornices and parapets

- Addition of new lighting and upgrading of existing fixtures, on exterior of the façade
- Awning replacements and / or additions
- Brick repairs and / or pointing
- Painting and façade treatments
- Installation or improvement of signage
- Paving of parking lots
- Outdoor furniture
- Permanent landscape features such as flagstone and natural stones / rocks, statuary, irrigation, containers
- Fencing
- Front-yard decks / patios or side-yard decks / patios that abut a street

Architectural, engineering or design fees may be eligible up to \$750 as part of the total grant awarded for completed construction

In-Eligible:

- Trees, shrubbery, perennials, annuals, soil, mulch, grass
 - Roofing (apart from mansard roofs above the eligible frontage)
 - Sandblasting
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