



DISTRICT OF STEWART

Business Façade Improvement Program 2018



Program Purpose and Goals

Through a grant program offered by the Northern Development Initiative Trust, the District of Stewart is implementing a business façade grant program to financially support business improvements in the downtown area to enhance the aesthetics and visual appeal of Stewart. This grant is offered to enhance economic viability and vibrancy of the community, Stewart plans to support and encourage businesses in the downtown core to invest in visual enhancements to the built environment. The benefits of the program for local businesses include increased values and tax base as a result of improved properties, attractiveness of front street to enhance community pride and tourism experience, and support recruitment of new businesses and/or residents.

The Program

Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis and are reviewed on a first come, first serve basis until the annual budget of the program has been allocated.

The District of Stewart will provide a 50% reimbursement grant up to a maximum of up to \$5,000 per building/project to improve the façades of commercial buildings.

Each building/business is eligible for a one-time grant only.

Eligible Properties

All businesses who are *not* in tax arrears qualify for this grant if they are located in the Downtown Commercial Development Permit Area as outlined in the Official Community Plan. These properties are illustrated in the map below and include properties:

- Fronting to 5th Avenue between Railway and Vancouver Street;
- Fronting on 4th Avenue on the North side of the road only between Railway and Vancouver Street;
- Within the block between Columbia Street and 3rd Avenue; and
- Fronting onto 6th Avenue between Railway and Conway Street.

Eligible Applicants

- You must be either the property owner or business owner (if the applicant is the business owner, the property owner must approve the application in writing and confirm that all improvements are to be paid for by the applicant);
- Non-profit and enterprising non-profit organizations occupying commercial storefronts (tenants)
- Home based businesses without a commercial storefront (***eligible for wayfinding signage only****).
- All property taxes pertaining to the property are fully paid and current;
- There must be a current, valid business licenses for the property (unless otherwise exempt);

Business Façade Improvement Guidelines

- There must be no outstanding building permits, stop work orders, or development permit condition requirements outstanding; and
- You have not received a previous grant under this program for the subject property.
- Home based businesses which are zoned commercial, have a storefront and are within the specified area.

Ineligible Applicants

- Residential homes located in the designated commercial area are not eligible; exception if the home is commercially zoned and has a storefront;
- Municipally owned buildings (even if they have business tenants);
- Properties outside the specified area (as defined in the community's program guidelines);
- Non-operating business (the business must be in operation); and

Eligible Façade Improvements

Eligible improvements may consist of but are not limited to:

- Exterior lighting (new but not replacement);
- Exterior architectural features;
- Exterior surfaces and details (decorative details, moldings, trims etc.);
- Windows (only if part of larger improvements, no stand-alone window replacement);
- New siding;
- Façade Painting;
- Entrances and doorways (only if part of larger improvements, no stand-alone entrance/doorway replacement); and
- Awnings.
- Signage (affixed to the building);
- *Way finding signage (*sign located on the business property i.e. at the bottom of a driveway*). Signs are eligible for 50% to a maximum of \$500 and must adhere to any signage bylaws and regulations.
- Accessibility improvements (ramps, wider doors etc.) to the outside of the building only AND are part of a larger facade improvement project.

Ineligible Façade Improvements

The following improvements are ineligible:

- Routine maintenance;
- Structural repairs;
- Roofs,
- Non-permanent fixtures (benches, planters, patios, patio heaters etc.)
- Landscaping
- Paving
- Fencing

Business Façade Improvement Guidelines

- Interior / internal improvements;
- Any improvements not visible from the public right of way;
- Construction of additions, accessory buildings or new buildings;
- Any improvements that have been started prior to application approval.
- Any improvements deemed inconsistent with redevelopment purposes and design guidelines

Eligible Costs/ Expenses

- Direct project labour costs
- Design, architectural or engineering fees (related to facade only);
- Contractor fees
- Rental of tools and equipment
- Project related materials and supplies

Ineligible Costs/ Expenses

- Staff wages and/or benefits
- Purchase of construction tools or equipment;
- Utilities (hydro, gas etc.)
- Shipping cost
- GST/PST
- Duties
- Permit fees
- Expenses related to improvement to the building façade not visible from the public right of way
- Façade improvements expenses started prior to application approval.

Design Guidelines

As outlined in the Development Permit Guidelines for the Downtown Commercial area, the building façade improvement designs should include one or more of the following:

- Bright colours;
- The use of wood and other natural materials on the exterior of the building;
- Building design should incorporate Stewart's rich history;
- Characteristics that minimize domination of the streetscape and give the appearance of smaller blocks;
- Provide a visually interesting viewscape for pedestrians; and/or
- Exterior signs should avoid neon and backlit signs.

Application Deadline

Applications will be accepted on a first come first serve basis from February 15th to May 31st or until funds are committed.

Business Application Process

Businesses interested in receiving the grant should fill out an application form and submit it to the District office. Applicants may be contacted to discuss further details of their project and submission.

District staff will evaluate proposals based on their alignment with Development Permit Area #3 design guidelines and eligibility requirements of the grant program.

Submitting an application does not necessarily mean a project or a specific grant amount will be approved. All project proposals are subject to a comprehensive review, must meet high quality standards, and must reflect the spirit and intent of the Façade Improvement Program Guidelines. Generally, the application, approval and reimbursement process is as follows:

- 1- Owner/ Tenant contacts the Municipality to determine if the building qualifies for the Façade Improvement Program, discuss your project, and obtain the Program Guide and Application.
- 2- Owner/ Tenant submit a complete application with designs. All required supporting materials and documents (including owner authorization) must be received prior to be considered complete.
- 3- Staff reviews the application and proposed façade improvements to ensure that improvements meet the applicable Design Guidelines and Façade Improvement Guidelines.
- 4- Applications are reviewed and a decision to accept or reject the application is made.
- 5- Applicant is advised of the decision by email and mailed letter.
- 6- For successful applications, a Letter of Understanding is sent to the applicant which must be signed by the owner/tenant and a representative of the Municipality.
- 7- Owner/Tenant acquires any required permits and completes the renovations.
- 8- Owner/Tenant provides verification of expenses (including invoices or other conformations of payment) and submits their totals on the provided expense tracking sheet.
- 9- Owner/Tenant provides a Certification of Completion signed by the applicant or contractor, indicating that all work described in the application/approval and has been paid in full, as well as before and after photos, a business testimonial, and any other supporting documentation.
- 10- Owner/Tenant provides proof that the improvements have passes final inspection for municipal permits (where required) and meet all building standards and codes (where required).
- 11- Staff verifies that the renovations meet the Letter of Understanding requirements and approves reimbursement.
- 12- Applicant is issued a cheque.

Please note:

Approved Projects must be completed by Year End.

Funding cannot carry over from one calendar year to the next.

Evaluation / Selection Process

District staff will evaluate proposals based on their alignment with Development Permit Area #3 design guidelines and eligibility requirements of the grant program.

Reporting and Reimbursement

Following notification of a successful application, businesses can proceed with their project. After the project is completed, a basic project report will need to be submitted to the District including all eligible receipts. The project completion report will need to include a testimonial from the business describing the façade improvements that were completed and the impact they will have or have had on the community. Several before and after photos must also be included. A letter format is acceptable for the project completion report.

Following the receipt of a satisfactory project completion report, the District will issue the business owner a cheque for 50% of the cost of the project for up to \$5,000.

Program Marketing Plan

Stewart is a small community (under 500 people) and word travels fast. We already have a number of local businesses that are anxiously awaiting the opportunity to take advantage of this program.

In terms of a marketing plan, an overview of the program will be included in the next community newsletter which is actively read by the large majority of residents and a poster will be posted at the municipal hall and post office downtown. The opportunity will also be discussed during council meetings which are attended by a large number of community members.

Business Façade Improvement Program

Grant Application

DISTRICT OF STEWART

Applicant Information

Applicant Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Building Address: _____

If you are applying as the tenant of a building, please provide the following information and attach a letter of consent from the owners stating that you are permitted to make these changes.

Owner Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Project Description

Describe the proposed project – Please attach any extra sheets, photos, designs, samples, etc. Describe the work to be done and materials to be used and note how this related to the Design Guidelines.

Business Façade Improvement Guidelines

Planned Start Date: _____

Planned Completion Date: _____

Total Project Coast (estimated): _____

Funding Amount Requested: _____

Applicant Checklist

Attach to Application

_____ Property taxes paid

_____ Utility account paid

_____ License fees paid

_____ Required permit applications complete

_____ Building owner authorization

_____ Photos of existing conditions (before)

_____ Detailed specifications

_____ Contractor's cost estimates

_____ Drawings/designs

_____ Material and colour samples

_____ Signed Terms and Conditions

Application Received:	
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Business Façade Improvement Program

Terms and Conditions

I, _____ of _____ have
(Applicant) (Business / Building)

Read the complete application and concur with and give my consent to the work proposed in the application.

I assume all responsibility for obtaining appropriate architectural drawings, building permits and inspections, and hiring of contractors as necessary.

I will allow the District of Stewart to use before and after pictures of the project and testimonials for the purpose of promoting this program in the future.

I agree not to involve the District of Stewart or the Façade Improvement Program in any legal action between myself and any contractors, estimators, employees, workers or agents arising from or out of the Façade Improvement Project.

I give my consent to the District of Stewart to make all inspections necessary to confirm that the approved plans are implemented in accordance with the expected standards

I give the District of Stewart my consent to use before and after photos in any future program promotion.

Payment of approved grants will be made upon the applicant providing the municipality proof of final completion of proposed improvements along with verification of expenditures and proof of final inspection (when required).

Signature _____ Date _____

OFFICE
USE

Application
Received by:

Date:

