



City of Quesnel

Business Façade Improvement Program

2024 Guidelines

Program Purpose and Goals

The program provides grants to property and business owners to renovate, restore, or redesign commercial building facades and storefronts in the City of Quesnel. The goal of this program is to make commercial areas more inviting and visually appealing to visitors and residents, increase property values, promote private sector investment, build civic pride, and to stimulate the local economy.

Funding for the Quesnel Business Façade Improvement program is provided by Northern Development Initiative Trust.

The Program

These program guidelines are intended to maximize the program benefit for improving aesthetics of commercial areas.

The City of Quesnel will provide a 50% reimbursement grant up to a maximum of \$5,000 per project to improve the facades of commercial buildings.

Each building is eligible for an annual grant, to a maximum of \$5,000. Each year a building may access the Business Façade Improvement program for new/incremental façade improvements.

Projects must have a minimum total cost of \$2000.

Application deadline is May 31, 2024, at 4:00 pm.

The Business Façade Improvement program is offered by the City of Quesnel with funding provided by Northern Development Initiative Trust.

Eligible Areas

The eligible properties are within City of Quesnel limits; map is attached to the application.

Eligible Applicants

- Applicant 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 (tenants)
- Home based businesses which are zoned commercial, have a storefront and are within the specified area
- Home based businesses without a commercial storefront (eligible for wayfinding signage only)

- Property taxes pertaining to the property are fully paid and current
- Current, valid business licenses for the property (unless otherwise exempt)
- No outstanding building permits, stop work orders, or development permit condition requirements outstanding
- Subject building has not received a previous grant under this program for the proposed improvements

Ineligible Applicants

- Residential homes located in the commercial area
- Apartment buildings
- Government owned buildings (municipal, provincial, or federal, even if they have business tenants)
- Properties outside the specified area (as defined in Eligible Areas)
- Empty buildings or businesses that are not operating (exception if the business is renovating or doing improvements to the building in anticipation of re-opening)

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 enhancements, no stand-alone window replacement)
- New siding
- Façade painting
- Entrances and doorways (only if part of larger enhancements, no stand-alone entrance/doorway replacement)
- Awnings
- Signage (permanent on applicant property)
- Wayfinding 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
- Patios (Please contact the planning department for illegibility requirements)

Ineligible Façade Improvements

The following improvements are ineligible:

- Routine maintenance
- Structural repairs
- Roofs

- Non-permanent fixtures (benches, planters, patio heaters etc.)
- Landscaping
- Paving
- Fencing
- Interior/internal improvements
- Improvements not visible from the public right of way
- Construction of additions, accessory buildings or new buildings
- Improvements that have been started prior to application approval
- 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
- Shipping and/or freight
- PST

Ineligible Costs/Expenses

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

Design Guidelines

To be eligible for this grant, the applicant must submit designs and costing for the project.

Grants will be awarded on a **first come, first-eligible basis**. Projects will be assessed based on their conformance (or the amount they bring the business into conformance) with the Official Community Plan guidelines for the applicable Development Permit Area. For example, properties in the Downtown Core should follow and be consistent with the Downtown Design Guidelines.

Designs need to clearly outline the proposed improvements to allow the review committee to accurately evaluate the project and clearly see that the finished product looks like what was intended during the application process.

Projects must be as consistent as possible with the general form and character of the design guidelines set out for the area. Façade Improvement Program 2024 Guidelines can be found at <https://www.quesnel.ca/business-services/incentives/city-incentives>

Building, sign and/or other permits may be required based on the extent of the improvements to be completed. These requirements are not waived by approval for the Business Façade Improvement Program and should be applied for prior to or concurrently with application for this program.

Business Application Process

Applications and other required documents should be submitted to:

The City of Quesnel
ATTN: Planning Department
410 Kinchant Street
Quesnel, BC, V2J 7J5

Submitting an application does not necessarily mean your 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 Business Façade Improvement Program Guidelines.

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 being considered complete.
3. Staff reviews the application and proposed façade improvements to ensure that improvements meet the applicable Design Guidelines and Business Façade Improvement Program 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.
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 and proof of payment (including invoices or other confirmations of payment) and submits their totals on the provided expense tracking sheet.
9. City staff will conduct a site visit to certify the completion of the work, as described in the application/approval. The Owner/Tenant will provide before and after photos, as well as a business testimonial to City staff during the site visit.
10. City staff confirms the completion of all required municipal permits.
11. Staff verifies that the renovations meet the Letter of Understanding requirements and approves reimbursement.
12. The applicant is issued a cheque.

Please note:

Approved projects must be completed by the Year End (December 31).

Evaluation/Selection Process

Applications will be evaluated by the Development Serviced Department, consisting of three staff members.

Evaluation of projects will be based on the following criteria:

- Does the project meet the policies and guidelines identified in the Official Community Plan No.1879?
- Does the project meet the regulations and requirements identified in the Zoning Bylaw No.1880?
- Will the project/renovation offer a noticeable improvement to the streetscape?

Additional Information

If all grant funds become allocated, individuals can still submit their applications in the event of funds becoming available.