

Prince Rupert Façade Improvement Program



2019 Program Guidelines



The **“Prince Rupert Façade Improvement Program”** is administered by the City of Prince Rupert and the Economic Development Office to enhance Prince Rupert’s primary retail areas of Downtown and Cow Bay. Funding for the program is provided by Northern Development Initiative Trust.

The Program is managed and administered by the Prince Rupert Economic Development Office on behalf of the City of Prince Rupert. These Program Guidelines represent the intent of the City and Economic Development Office in implementing a commercial façade improvement grant program within the Downtown and Cow Bay Development Permit Areas of the City of Prince Rupert.

Purpose

The Program is designed to assist property and business owners with rehabilitating the commercial façades of their properties for the purpose of creating a positive visual impact, stimulating private investment, and complementing other community revitalization efforts. Participants are eligible to receive financial assistance in the form of a non- repayable grant, for eligible projects upon the completion of their respective Project.

The program provides grants to property and business owners to renovate restore or redesign retail and commercial building facades and storefronts located in either the Downtown or Cow Bay Development Permit Areas. The goal of the program is to encourage owners of buildings to invest in upgrades that create a more interesting and appealing environment – attracting customers, clients, visitors and businesses to the community.

The City hopes that this initiative will contribute to:

- Making Prince Rupert a more inviting and interesting place to eat, shop, walk and play.
- Promoting the marketability of retail and commercial businesses
- Helping building owners to attract and retain tenants
- Improving the quality of life residents, workers and visitors to Prince Rupert enjoy.
- Building civic pride among the business community and the citizens.

Program

The Façade Improvement Program will provide a 50% reimbursement grant up to a maximum of \$5,000 per building/project to improve the facades of existing buildings. The building must be located in the Downtown or Cow Bay Development Permit Areas (Appendix I). Each building within these areas is eligible for the one-time grant. Projects must have a minimum total cost of \$4,000 in order to qualify and a maximum of \$200,000.

Design Guidelines

In order to be eligible for this grant, the applicant must submit designs and costing for the project. Designs need not to be done by a professional architect or designer but it is strongly encouraged that the tenant/property owner seeks professional help, keeping in mind that that grants will be awarded based on merit of design and visual impact to the streetscape. Designs need to clearly outline the proposed improvements to accurately evaluate the project so that that the finished product looks like what was intended upon during the application process.

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 (tenants)
- 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);
- 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.
- Home based businesses without a commercial storefront (***eligible for wayfinding signage only****).

Ineligible Applicants

- Residential homes located in the commercial area are not eligible;
- Apartment buildings
- Government owned (municipal, provincial or federal) owned buildings (even if they have business tenants);
- Properties outside the specified area (as defined in the community's program guidelines);
- 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);
- Accessibility improvements (ramps, wider doors etc.) to the outside of the building only AND are part of a larger facade improvement project
- 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.

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
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- 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
- PST

Ineligible Costs/ Expenses

- Staff wages and/or benefits
- Purchase of construction tools or equipment;
- Utilities (hydro, gas etc.)
- Shipping costs
- GST
- 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

Note: Tenants must receive written approval from Owners prior to moving forward with the façade improvements. A letter from the owner must accompany the application.

The City of Prince Rupert may require development, building and or sign permits based on the extent of the improvements to be completed. Eligible projects will be taking place in either the Downtown or Cow Bay Development Permit areas, guidelines of which can be found on www.princerupert.ca. The Downtown and Cow Bay Development Permit Area Design Guidelines are a comprehensive guide to the City's vision of our future. In order to qualify for this program a project must be consistent to the areas design guidelines.

Application Process

Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis and are review on a first come first serve basis and until the annual budget of the program has been allocated. Submitting an application does not necessarily mean your project will be approved.

Applications must be submitted and approved prior to the onset of the façade improvement project in order to be eligible to receive funding

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 Façade Improvement Program Guidelines.

1. Owner/Tenant submits application with designs (and approval letter from owner if applicable). Once a completed application form is received, the applicant will receive an email confirming receipt
2. Committee reviews application and proposed façade improvements to ensure that improvements meet the City of Prince Rupert's applicable Development Permit Area Design Guidelines and the facade improvement program guidelines.
3. The Committee makes a decision to accept or reject the application
4. Approval or rejection of application is communicated to applicant by email and mailed letter
5. For successful applications, a letter of understanding is sent to the applicant, which must be signed by the Tenant/Owner and the Façade Improvement Committee Chair.
6. Tenant/Owner completes renovations.
7. Tenant/Owner provides verification of expenditures by providing
 - Copy of Invoice
 - Cleared Check/Bank Statement confirming payment or
 - Visa Statement confirming payment

8. Tenant/Owner provides a certificate of completion signed by the tenant/owner and the general contractor or architect/designer
9. Tenant/Owner provides proof that the improvements have passed final inspection (when required).
10. Committee meets to verify that that the renovations meet the Letter of Understanding requirements
11. Committee approves reimbursement
12. Letter confirming acceptance of project completion is prepared and cheque is issued to the project proponent

Approved projects have until December 31, 2019 to complete the project.

Project Review Committee/Selection Process

The PRC will consist of 3 to 5 members from the community and shall be chaired by the Prince Rupert Economic Development Officer. The committee's primary responsibility is to review all applications, determine eligibility of projects and decide which projects should be funded. The PRC will also be responsible for confirming verification of expenditures and that the project has been completed to according to the approved plans.

In the event that there are more eligible applicants than funds available to award, the PRC will prioritize projects based on the following ranked criteria:

1. Use of a professional designer/architect
2. Age and condition of building i.e. buildings in poor condition have greater likelihood of project approval
3. Impact on streetscape.

Additional Information

The City of Prince Rupert may require development, building and or sign permits based on the extent of the improvements to be completed.

Appendix 1

Map of Façade Improvement Program Boundaries

Please note:

Approved Projects should be completed by Year End.

