

Business Façade Improvement Frequently Asked Questions



Program Overview

The Business Façade Improvement program provides annual grant funding for local governments to enhance economic development by encouraging private sector investment in businesses façade improvements.

Program Frequently Asked Questions

When will we receive a funding decision?

Once a finalized application has been submitted to Northern Development, staff complete an application review and forward the application to the Regional Advisory Committees in January for a recommendation to support the application. If supported, final approval is delegated to the CEO and staff provide notice via email within ten business days of the respective Regional Advisory Committee date.

You can view the application process here: [Community Development Application Process](#)

You can view the Regional Advisory Committee meeting schedule here: [Important Dates](#)

When can we start promoting the Business Façade Improvement program in our community?

Once you have received notification of your funding approval you may begin promoting the program and application intake for funding.

If program funding is being carried forward for a second year, the program can be promoted as of January 1 with confirmation from Northern Development staff.

When will we receive our approved grant funding?

The grant is disbursed at project completion. Reporting for the Business Façade Improvement administration year is due by January 31 of the following year (for example the program administered in 2020 would be reported to Northern Development by January 31, 2021). Once reporting has been processed by Northern Development a cheque will be issued and mailed out.

What documents will we need to administer the program effectively?

To effectively and efficiently administer the Business Façade Improvement program the following materials are needed: Customized Program Guidelines (Northern Development template), BFI application form, BFI reporting form/checklist, and any other materials the local government needs to promote the program or communicate program expectations, funding terms, agreement between parties, etc.

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What flexibility do we have to customize program eligibility for our community?

The Program Guidelines template has sections highlighted in yellow for community customization. All eligibility criteria specific to costs and project types are fixed. A community may choose to remove eligible project types from the list based on unique need but may not add additional projects outside the scope of what is listed in the program guidelines.

If you have questions about eligibility or proposed work not addressed in the guidelines, please contact Northern Development staff for discussion.

If we receive a façade improvement application that may or may not be eligible, what should we do?

It happens. Project applications may come through that are not clearly eligible or ineligible. When that happens, you can give the staff at Northern Development a call to discuss the project.

If we do not allocate all the approved funding for the calendar year, what do we do?

If 50% or more of the annual grant is still unallocated the grant funding will be carried forward to the next calendar year for program administration. A new application will not be supported to top up the grant to a full \$20,000 maximum.

What is carry forward funding and how does it work?

Carry forward funding is completed when an approved community does not disburse 50% or more of the year's annual grant allocation. The community is given another calendar year to disburse the remaining funds. When carry forward funding is recommended a new application to the program is not required and program promotion can begin January 1 of the new calendar year with confirmation from Northern Development.

For example: in 2020 the community was approved for \$20,000 but only supported one project and disbursed \$5,000 at the end of the year. The remaining \$15,000 will carry forward to 2021 to administer the program. The community would then be able to support up to three projects at the maximum \$5,000 grant amount.

If we complete the program reporting before the end of the calendar year, can we submit reporting early?

You may submit reporting prior to the January 31 deadline; however, reporting claims may not be reviewed or processed until January.