

Business Façade Improvement 2024 Program Application Guide



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.

Funding Terms

- Up to \$20,000 in grant funding (50% to a maximum of \$5,000 per façade improvement project) each calendar year
- Applicants that have not committed more than 50% of approved funding within the last two years may apply for up to \$10,000 in grant funding (50% to a maximum of \$5,000 per façade improvement project) or submit supporting evidence of full program subscription to apply for the maximum \$20,000

Application Intake Deadlines

Northern Development approves Business Façade Improvement applications on an annual basis. The 2024 application intake will be opened by invitation on October 1. Invitations are extended in each region once a program funding envelope has been approved. The 2024 intake will close on November 15.

Applications will be assessed and funding decisions made by December 31.

Eligibility

Eligible Applicants

*All applicants must be located within [Northern Development's service region](#).

- Local governments
 - Program administration can be managed by the local government administration or delegated to the Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Business Association, Tourism Association or Economic Development Association

Eligible Projects

- Facades, siding, murals
- Signage
- Architectural features
- Lighting
- Awnings
- Patios

Refer to the [Guidelines Template](#) for more details.

Eligible Costs

- Direct third-party project labour costs
- Contractor fees
- Rental of construction tools and equipment
- Project related materials and supplies
- Shipping and/or freight
- Design, architectural, or engineering fees
- PST

Refer to the [Guidelines Template](#) for more details.

Ineligibility

Ineligible Projects

- Roofs
- Non-permanent fixtures (benches, planters, patio heaters etc.)
- Landscaping
- Interior/internal improvements

Refer to the [Guidelines Template](#) for more details.

Ineligible Costs

- GST
- Purchases of construction equipment or tools
- Operational costs (including utilities)
- Staff wages
- Permit fees
- Duties

Refer to the [Guidelines Template](#) for more details.

Application and Program Requirements

Application Requirements

All applicants are required to submit the following documents. Only applications that meet these requirements will be processed and assessed.

- Complete [Application Form](#)
- Business Façade Improvement Program Guidelines using the [Guidelines Template](#)
- Local government resolution
- Copies of marketing materials used to advertise the program (if applicable)

Application Assessment

Northern Development staff undertake comprehensive due diligence of each funding application received. All projects are assessed on the strength of the application and strategic factors identified in the funding application.

Strategic factors:

- Is this the first time the applicant has accessed funding through the Business Façade Improvement program?
- Has the applicant completed reporting from the previous year's project, if applicable? If project reporting is not complete, has the applicant provided an update on the previous year's grant commitment?
- Has the applicant successfully disbursed 50% or more of approved grant dollars last year, if applicable?
- Has the applicant decommitted more than 50% of approved funding in the last five years?
- Is the program being offered within a defined commercial zone or downtown area?
- Will the project take place in an unincorporated community or municipality with a population less than 5,000?
- Has the applicant provided marketing materials that support program promotion?
- Has the applicant provided evidence of program interest or pending projects/applications that would move forward if the program were to be administered?

Program Administration Requirements

All applicants approved for funding administer the Business Façade Improvement program within their municipality or regional district. Using the program guidelines template and associated materials created by the applicant for successful program administration, eligible businesses inquire and apply directly to the local government for Business Façade Improvement grant funding.

Business applications to the program are assessed, approved and reimbursed upon completion by the administrator (local government). Businesses report back to the administrator with the following requirements for assessment and to unlock the grant as a rebate:

- Copies of invoices and associated proofs of payment
- Before and after photos (matching) of the façade improvement
- Other documents as requested by the administrator (if applicable)

Administrators may contact Northern Development staff for assistance as required.

Reporting

The local government must submit a final report to Northern Development **by January 31** of the following year in order to receive reimbursement for the approved calendar year. Applicants are required to submit the following documents:

- Complete [Reporting Form](#)
- Complete [Reporting Attachment](#)

- Internal proof of payment to each participating business
- Before and after photos of each business façade improvement project completed

To Apply

Please review all program documents in detail as incomplete applications will not be reviewed.

Completed application forms with all supplementary materials are to be provided electronically through the [Online Application System](#).

Resources

- [Important Dates](#)
Intake deadlines, Regional Advisory Committee Meeting and Board Meeting schedules
- [Funding Program Matrix](#)
Available funding programs and eligibility criteria
- [Application Process](#)
Details on the process of applying and getting approved for Northern Development funding
- [Post-Approval Process](#)
Process and responsibilities for successful funding applicants

Questions?

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