

TOWN OF LABRADOR CITY

Façade Improvement Program



LABRADORCITY

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The Community Investment Fund, is a pilot project first implemented in 2017, that encourages commercial building owners to invest in façade renovations and storefront improvements for their building through grants to cover a portion of renovation costs. A grant can match up to 50% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$25,000 per building façade or storefront. The intent of the fund is to create a more interesting, appealing core commercial zone, reinvigorate community investment, and to support businesses owners in creating an environment that will attract people and new businesses to the area.

1.2 Program Goals

The Program works with other revitalization initiatives to:

- (1) promote the viability of our retail and commercial businesses;
- (2) help building owners to attract and retain tenants;
- (3) contribute to the quality of life of residents, workers and visitors to the city;
- (4) make the town's central shopping district more inviting and interesting places to work and conduct business; and,
- (5) build local community and civic pride among the business community and citizens of Labrador City.

1.3 Grant Allocation

Funding will be allocated on a case-by-case basis subject to the approval of the Council until the annual budget has been spent or the program year has ended. Submitting an application does not guarantee a grant or a specific grant amount.

All project proposals are subject to a comprehensive review of the building storefront and façade, must meet high quality standards, and must reflect the spirit and intent of the Program Design Guidelines. In the case of corner lots, both street-facing building facades may be eligible for consideration; the intent of the program is to allocate grant monies to facades with direct street frontage.

1.4 Permit Fees

In addition to grant monies, municipal permit fees for eligible projects will also be waived as a means of supporting community revitalization.

Projects that do not receive grant money due to fund limitations, but are still eligible under the terms of the program may also avail of waived permit fees.

2.0 Criteria

The following criteria are required in order to participate in the project.

1. These existing buildings are

(1) located within the Core Commercial Zone, (unless otherwise approved by the Council)

(2) are part of a pedestrian-oriented street/area, and

(3) are visible from the street or main thoroughfare



2. The applicant must be either the property owner or a designated person who has written authority from the owner to submit the application and/or to execute the project.

3. The buildings must be used primarily for retail and commercial purposes. The Committee has some discretion to include projects that are institutional or nonprofit or accommodate other non- commercial uses that contribute to the activity on the commercial main street.

4. The project must conform to the Program Design Guidelines.

5. There are no outstanding monies owed to the municipality or work orders in place. Applicants that are in arrears on taxes or who have active municipal enforcement work

orders in place for the building/business are not eligible to participate in the grant program.

3.0 Program Design Guidelines

3.1 Projects address winter conditions.

Labrador City is a winter city and we have the opportunity to utilize our streetscapes and building façades to enhance our enjoyment of the season.

This can be done with:

- awnings, balconies or building projections that provide shelter ;
- warm, bright colours that enliven the streetscape;
- hardy landscaping that provides colour and texture in winter months, and serves as a windbreak for pedestrians;
- interesting lighting to illuminate dark evenings; and,
- non-slippery materials for building entrances.



3.2 Renovations fit to a human scale.

Façade improvements should make the buildings friendly to pedestrians. The project emphasis will focus on the first two stories of the building. The front of the building will

be partitioned into sections that are more interesting to walk past than long stretches of homogenous walls. Design elements and materials such as signage should be scaled to pedestrian activity, rather than people driving past quickly in their cars.

3.3 Projects exemplify innovative, artistic design.

The improvements should make the building look inviting to shoppers, comfortable for pedestrians and interesting for the whole streetscape. Unique artistic elements can give a shopping area character and identity. Texture, pattern, colour and interesting shapes should be incorporated into the façade design in an innovative arrangement and through the use of a variety of materials.



3.4 Eligible Improvements

When you plan these improvements, please incorporate these elements in a complete design rather than checking off the elements on a list. The Program supports improvements to the first two stories of the building. The work must improve the building and street face by doing more than maintenance, but by creating a compelling and inviting environment for residents. Façade storefront features eligible to be restored, renovated or constructed with grant dollars include the following:

- Lighting
- Exterior walls
- Windows
- Doors
- Storefronts
- Entranceways/Accessibility Installations
- Awnings/Canopies
- Exterior architectural and/or artistic features



- Landscaping features
- Façade cleaning and painting
- Permanent Signage – only the permanent, installation components of the signage included and graphic elements are excluded
- Limited permanent interior improvements – the reconfiguration of the interior walls, display spaces and interior window finishes to enhance the function and displays of the storefronts



3.5 Ineligible Expenses

The following expenses fall outside the program:

- Contractor/construction & installation fees
- The purchase of tools & equipment
- Architectural/designer fees

4.0 Application Process

4.1 Design

What to Do

- ☐ Meet with the Director of Planning & Development onsite to verbally review project plans and determine project eligibility.
- ☐ Consider working with a designer, (though this is not necessary).
- ☐ Review the Criteria and Design Guidelines to make sure that the various design elements are considered in the project as a whole design.

What Happens

- ☐ Submit application to the Director of Planning & Development. Please refer to the Town's website for application deadlines.
- ☐ The project will be presented to the Planning & Development Committee who can decide one of the following: approval, approval with conditions or denial.

- ☐ Meet with the Director of Planning & Development & Committee Chair to address any of the questions or conditions that the Committee raised.
- ☐ Once the project design is approved, you can proceed with the Funding Phase.

What to Prepare

- ☐ **Application form** – Part A Design
- ☐ **Letter of Permission** – If the applicant is not the property owner, they will need to provide a letter from the Owner permitting the applicant to participate in the program.
- ☐ **Site Plan** denoting location of building in relation to neighbouring lots, sidewalks, roads, etc..
- ☐ **Before Photos** – This should show the whole facade, its context and details of any concepts.
- ☐ **Project Description** – This will outline what issues the design addresses and what the overall aim of the project is.
- ☐ **Project Drawings** with notations suitable for construction – Drawings required for development permits are generally acceptable. Please note as well colour, materials and lighting.



4.2 Funding

What to Prepare

- ☐ **Application Form.** Part B Funding

- ☐ **Budget.** Please use a **spreadsheet** to determine the requested grant amount.
- ☐ **Schedule.** Please provide a high level timeline for the construction process.

What Happens

- ☐ The Director of Planning & Development will review this information with the Council. Together they will determine the grant amount available for your project.
- ☐ The Director of Planning & Development will prepare the Reimbursement Agreement (contract) to be signed by you and the Town of Labrador City.
- ☐ The Project Manager will verify that no work has started on the project. Only the work done after the signed Agreement has been delivered to the applicant can qualify for reimbursement.



4.3 Construction

With your signed copy of the Reimbursement Agreement, you need to get all the permits necessary for your project.

☐ Building Permit

A **building permit** is required for all façade improvement projects including signage. All municipal permit fees will be waived for approved projects.

Please contact the **Town's Permit Clerk** at 709.944.4067 or permits@labradorcity.ca for more information.

☐ Government Services Approval

In the case of internal modification to the structure or significant changes to doorways, Service NL approval may be required. Our permits clerk will gladly help you navigate that process.

4.4 Reimbursement

What to do

- ☐ When construction is completed, contact the Director of Planning & Development to conduct a post-construction inspection.

What to Prepare

- ☐ The Director will prepare a sign-off letter, indicating that you believe the project is finished.
- ☐ Submit a summary and copies of all paid invoices.

What Happens

- ☐ The Program Manager will process this information and prepare a reimbursement cheque consistent with the terms of the agreement.

5.0 Contact Information

If you need more information or would like to discuss your project in detail, please contact:

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