

1. Program Description

This program provides a financial incentive in the form of a grant to promote interior and exterior maintenance and improvement works to existing commercial, institutional and mixed use¹ buildings and properties.

2. Who can apply?

Only owners of properties (and tenants with written authorization from owners) within Improvement Project Areas that meet the program eligibility requirements may apply. If the applicant is not the owner of the property, the applicant must provide written consent from the owner of the property to make the application.

The Town retains the right and absolute discretion to reject an application received from a person or corporation which in the opinion of the Town or its professional advisers, does not possess the experience, financial, technical, personnel or other resources that may be required to carry out the obligations that the applicant proposes to assume under the terms of its application and grant agreement.

3. How does the program work?

The program is structured as a matching grant program where the Town will provide a grant equal to 50% of the cost of certain types of building maintenance and improvement works (excluding H.S.T.), up to a maximum grant of \$10,000 per property.

4. What types of work are eligible for a grant?

The following types of building maintenance and improvement works on commercial, institutional and mixed use¹ buildings are considered eligible for a grant under this program:

- (a) Entrance modifications to provide barrier-free accessibility;
- (b) Installation/upgrading of fire protection systems;
- (c) Repair/replacement of roof;
- (d) Structural repairs to walls, ceilings, floors and foundations;
- (e) Water/flood/weatherproofing;
- (f) Repair/replacement of windows and doors;
- (g) Extension/upgrading of plumbing and electrical services for the creation of retail, office or residential space;
- (h) Installation/alteration of required window openings to residential spaces;
- (i) Required improvements to heating and ventilation systems;
- (j) Other similar repairs/improvements related to health and safety issues, as may be approved; and
- (k) Individual servicing upgrades required as a result of a major servicing upgrade program e.g. upgrading of individual electrical services as a result of burying overhead utility wires (Note: This cost is only eligible for lands within the Vineland Central Business District Community Improvement Project Area).

5. What conditions must be met to be eligible for a grant?

In addition to the General Program Requirements, the following program specific requirements must also be met:

- (a) Professional design/ architectural drawing(s) and all eligible works must conform to the Town's Commercial Façade Design Guidelines, as amended from time to time, and appropriate reference material as determined by Town staff;
- (b) For buildings designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, the restoration and improvement works should be supported by documentation in the form of historic

¹ Mixed use includes commercial/residential, commercial/institutional and other mixed uses containing commercial use.

photographs or drawings clearly showing the feature(s) to be restored or reconstructed, and the Town will consult with the Heritage Committee (as required);

- (c) The applicant will be required to submit at least two cost estimates from bonafide licensed contractors, including a detailed breakdown of costs; and
- (d) Construction of all proposed improvements is to be completed within two years of the date of approval of the grant. If the work is not completed within two years, the grant approval will cease and the grant will not be paid.

6. Is there a fee to apply?

No.

7. When will the grant funds be advanced?

The grant will be advanced in full when:

- (a) A Grant agreement has been signed and executed;
- (b) Construction is complete;
- (c) The building has been inspected by municipal staff; and
- (d) The applicant provides proof that all contractors have been paid.

8. What are the default provisions?

The default provisions are contained in the Grant Agreement. Payment of the grant may be cancelled if:

- (a) Property taxes are more than three months in arrears;
- (b) The building is demolished or any of the heritage features are altered in any way that would compromise the reason for designation;
- (c) The applicant declares bankruptcy;
- (d) The applicant uses the grant for works that are not eligible for this program;
- (e) The applicant fails to maintain the improvements as required in the Grant Agreement; and
- (f) The applicant is in default of any of the provisions of the Grant Agreement.

9. How do I apply for a grant?

- (a) Arrange a pre-application meeting with staff in order to determine program eligibility, proposed scope of work, project timing, etc...; and
- (b) If authorized to apply for a grant, complete and submit an application form. Ensure that all required signatures have been provided and that the application is accompanied by all required documentation as shown in the required documents list.

10. What happens next?

- (a) Applications and supporting documentation are reviewed by staff to ensure that they meet all of the eligibility requirements. If your application does not meet the eligibility requirements, you will be notified of this in writing;
- (b) Staff may request clarification or additional supporting documentation;
- (c) Staff will perform an initial site visit(s) and inspection(s) of the property (if necessary).
- (d) A recommendation on the grant application is made by staff and forwarded to Council or Council's designate;
- (e) If your application is approved by Council or Council's designate, the Grant Agreement is then executed by the Town. A copy of the executed agreement(s) is then returned to you for your records;
- (f) Construction of the approved works may now commence, subject to the issuance of a building permit(s);
- (g) Contact Town staff toward work completion;
- (h) Upon completion of the works, staff will conduct a final site visit(s) and inspection(s) (as necessary) to ensure compliance with the Grant Agreement, Commercial Façade Design Guidelines and any permits pursuant to the *Ontario Heritage Act*;
- (i) Submit to the Town, copies of paid invoices and "after" digital picture(s) of the completed works;

- (j) Upon review and approval of all submitted documentation, the Town will issue a grant cheque to the applicant for the full amount of the approved funding;
- (k) The applicant will be asked to complete a grant receipt form and return this to the Town; and
- (l) The Town reserves the right to audit the cost of the works prior to advancing the grant payment.

For further information on this program, please contact Kathleen Dale M.C.I.P., R.P.P., Director of Planning and Development, at (905) 563-8205 Ext 242 or via e-mail at kdale@lincoln.ca

Building Improvement Grant/Loan Program Administration

