



CENTRAL COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT

Business Façade Improvement Program

2024-2025 Guidelines

Program Purpose and Goals

The purpose of the program is to help business owners renovate, restore, repair or redo retail or commercial building facades. The goal of the program is to encourage building and business owners to invest in upgrades that create a more appealing streetscape and an environment that attracts new visitors and businesses and renews interest of residents and returning visitors.

The goals of this program are to:

- Make the business areas of the Central Coast Regional District a more inviting and interesting place to eat, shop, walk and stay,
- Improve the marketability of retail and commercial businesses,
- Build civic pride among the business community and the citizens.

The Program

These program guidelines are intended to maximize the program benefit for improving aesthetics of commercial areas.

The Central Coast Regional District will provide up to a maximum of 50% reimbursement grant up to a maximum of up to \$5,000 per project to improve the facades of commercial buildings.

Each building is eligible for an annual grant to a maximum of \$5,000. Each year a building may access the Business Façade Improvement program for new/incremental façade improvements. Projects are reviewed on a first-come first-served basis.

Projects must have a minimum total cost of \$1,000.

Application deadline is April 30, 2025.

The Business Façade Improvement program is offered by the Central Coast Regional District with funding provided by Northern Development Initiative Trust.

Eligible Areas

Grants are available within business districts of the Central Coast Regional District.

Eligible Applicants

- ✓ Applicant 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)
- ✓ 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)
- ✓ Property taxes pertaining to the property are fully paid and current
- ✓ Current, valid business licenses for the property (unless otherwise exempt)

- ✓ No outstanding building permits, stop work orders, or development permit condition requirements outstanding
- ✓ Subject building has not received a previous grant under this program for the proposed improvements

Ineligible Applicants

- x Residential homes located in the commercial area
- x Apartment buildings
- x Government owned buildings (municipal, provincial or federal, even if they have business tenants)
- x Properties outside the specified area (as defined in Eligible Areas)
- x 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)
- ✓ Awnings
- ✓ Signage (permanent on applicant property)
- ✓ Wayfinding signage (*sign located on the business property i.e. at the bottom of a driveway*).
 - o Signs are eligible for 50% to a maximum of \$500 and must adhere to any signage bylaws and regulations
- ✓ Accessibility improvements (ramps, wider doors etc.) to the outside of the building only
- ✓ Patios

Ineligible Façade Improvements

The following improvements are ineligible:

- x Routine maintenance
- x Structural repairs
- x Roofs
- x Non-permanent fixtures (benches, planters, patio heaters etc.)
- x Landscaping
- x Paving

- x Fencing
- x Interior/internal improvements
- x Improvements not visible from the public right of way
- x Construction of additions, accessory buildings or new buildings
- x Improvements that have been started prior to application approval
- x 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
- ✓ Shipping and/or freight
- ✓ PST

Ineligible Costs/Expenses

- x Staff wages and/or benefits
- x Purchase of construction tools or equipment
- x Operational costs including utilities (hydro, gas etc.)
- x Duties
- x Permit fees
- x Expenses related to improvement to the building façade not visible from the public right of way
- x Façade improvement expenses started prior to application approval
- x GST

Design Guidelines

To be eligible for this grant, the applicant must submit a complete application that includes clear explanations, designs and costing for the project.

Designs need to clearly outline the proposed improvements to all District staff to accurately evaluate the project, and clearly see that the finish product looks how it was intended during the application process. Grants will be reviewed and awarded on a first come, first serve basis.

As far as possible, projects must be consistent with the general form and character of the design guidelines set out for the area (if any).

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Building, sign and/or other permits may be required based on the extent of the improvements to be completed. These requirements are not waived by approval for the Business Façade Improvement Program and should be applied for prior to or concurrently with application for this program.

Business Application Process

Applications can be submitted via email or dropped off at the Central Coast Regional District office in Bella Coola, BC.

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 Business Façade Improvement Program Guidelines.

Generally, the application, approval and reimbursement process are as follows:

1. Owner/Tenant contacts the Municipality to determine if the building qualifies for the Façade Improvement Program, discuss your project, and obtain the Program Guide and Application.
2. Owner/Tenant submit a complete application with designs. All required supporting materials and documents (including owner authorization) must be received prior to be considered complete.
3. Staff reviews the application and proposed façade improvements to ensure that improvements meet the applicable Design Guidelines and Business Façade Improvement Program Guidelines.
4. Applications are reviewed and a decision to accept or reject the application is made.
5. Applicant is advised of the decision by email and mailed letter.
6. For successful applications, a Letter of Understanding is sent to the applicant which must be signed by the owner/tenant and a representative of the Municipality.
7. Owner/Tenant acquires any required permits and completes the renovations.
8. Owner/Tenant provides verification of expenses and proof of payment (including invoices or other confirmations of payment) and submits their totals on the provided expense tracking sheet.
9. Owner/Tenant provides a Certification of Completion signed by the applicant or contractor, indicating that all work described in the application/approval and has been paid in full, as well as before and after photos (matching) and any other supporting documentation.
 - a. Owner/Tenant acknowledges they may be contacted by the Municipality or Northern Development to supply a testimonial about the value of the supported façade improvement to the business.
10. Owner/Tenant provides proof that the improvements have passed final inspection for municipal permits (where required) and meet all building standards and codes (where required).
11. Staff verifies that the renovations meet the Letter of Understanding requirements and approves reimbursement.
12. Applicant is issued a cheque.

Please note:

Approved projects must be completed by October 30, 2025.

Evaluation Process

The Project Review Committee will consist of 3 members, which could include both staff members and council members or others as appointed. All Eligible Projects will be evaluated using the following ranked criteria:

- Does the project for which the funds are being sought meet the applicable guidelines?
- Will the project once complete have a noticeable impact on the streetscape?
- Will the renovation offer a noticeable improvement on the streetscape?
- Was a professional designer or architect used?

Applications for the 2025 year will be accepted from the start of the program announcement until all funds have been allocated.

Project applications must be submitted no later than April 30, 2025 to be eligible. Any applications received after that date will be considered AFTER on-time applicants and ONLY IF funds are available. All complete applications submitted will be scored and ranked based on the evaluation process listed below.

Selection Process

Evaluation of projects will be based on the following criteria:

Each application will be judged by the following criteria. Each criterion is weighted by the points listed for a total score out of 50.

1. Fit of improvements with the local business character (10)
2. Need for the façade to be improved (20)
3. Effectiveness of the proposed façade improvements to address the need (10)
4. Visibility of the façade to neighbours and tourists (10)

Any debris resulting from the project must be removed before submitting the final report and request for payment to the Central Coast Regional District.