

Amendment No. 1

To The City Of Brantford

Downtown Community Improvement Plan

Part 1 – The Preamble To The Amendment

Part 1 constitutes an introduction to the Amendment found in Part 2 of Schedule "A" to By-law 206-2023. It describes in general terms the purpose of the Amendment, the location of the lands affected, and the basis upon which the Amendment is formulated.

Purpose Of The Amendment:

This Amendment adds the Downtown Façade & Safety Improvement Grant Program to the Downtown Community Improvement Plan.

Location:

This Amendment applies to eligible properties within the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA) established by By-law 145-2021. The Downtown CIPA aligns with the Downtown Urban Growth Centre identified in the City of Brantford Official Plan.

Basis Of The Amendment:

In February 2023, Council allocated funding for a future CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) program for the Downtown, supporting a priority identified in the April 2022 Brantford Downtown Priority Plan developed by the Mayor's Downtown Brantford Improvement Task Force: "Explore the feasibility of additional safety measures in the downtown (i.e. CCTV Cameras, Safe Walk, lighting improvements, CPTED improvement program)".

In September 2023, Staff presented a draft Downtown Façade & Safety Improvement Grant Program to Council and received direction to amend the Downtown Community Improvement Plan to establish the proposed program. Staff presented the proposed program to the Downtown Brantford Business Improvement Area, Brantford-Brant Chamber of Commerce Brantford-Brant, and at a Public Open House during November 2023, prior to the Statutory Public Meeting held on December 12, 2023.

Part 2 – The Amendment

All of this part of Schedule "A" entitled "Part 2 – The Amendment", consisting of the following text, constitutes Amendment No. 1 to the Downtown Community Improvement Plan.

Details Of The Amendment

1. The Downtown Community Improvement Plan is hereby amended by inserting the following text as Section B.4 and adjusting the Table of Contents accordingly:

"B.4 – Downtown Façade & Safety Improvement Grant

The following section describes the Downtown Façade & Safety Improvement Grant program offered through the Downtown Community Improvement Plan. This program, summarized in Table 3, supports the rehabilitation and improvement of existing commercial or mixed use properties within Downtown Brantford. This grant intends to support the ongoing use of properties within the Downtown Urban Growth Centre by improving their aesthetic appeal, site functionality and enhancing the sense of security. This program will be used as a tool to stimulate reinvestment in Brantford's Downtown and achieve the vision and goals described in Section B.2 of this CIP and in the City of Brantford Official Plan. More specifically, this program is intended to support the improvement of:

- Commercial façades that front upon a public right of way;
- Private properties' frontages along the public right-of-way including hard landscaping, such as permanent planters, and site amenities available for public or private use. These improvements will create a more attractive streetscape, improve pedestrian comfort, and provide new amenities to add vitality and interest, but will not extend into the municipal right-of-way; and
- Pedestrian connectivity into or through sites where the existing built form caters primarily to automobiles to enhance walkability and barrier-free access to, from, and between existing uses and destinations.

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Table 3 – Summary of Downtown Façade & Safety Improvement Grant Program

PROGRAM	PURPOSE	ELIGIBILITY	MAXIMUM GRANT
Downtown Façade & Safety Improvement Grant	To support the rehabilitation and enhancement of existing commercial and mixed-use properties and improve the aesthetics, appeal, functionality, and safety.	Properties must be located within the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area, and have existing commercial or mixed use buildings with commercial uses at grade.	The maximum grant is \$15,000 or 50% of the total eligible costs, whichever is less.

Program Purpose and Objective

The purpose of the Downtown Façade & Safety Improvement Grant is to encourage property owners to complete façade and safety improvements that will improve the aesthetics and appeal of Downtown properties and enhance the feeling of safety and security for residents and people working or visiting Downtown. This program intends to provide owners with grants to complete eligible projects.

The primary objective of the Downtown Façade & Safety Improvement Grant is to promote the revitalization of the downtown and to increase the safety of the area.

Downtown Façade & Safety Improvement Grant Eligibility Criteria

To be considered eligible for the Downtown Façade & Safety Improvement Grant, all proposed projects shall be in accordance with the following eligibility criteria:

1. Located in the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area

The subject property shall be located within the current Downtown Community Improvement Project Area, as confirmed by the City. For convenience purposes, the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area is attached to this Plan as **Appendix A**.

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2. Consistency with the Plan's intent

Proposed projects shall generally contribute to and be consistent with achieving the vision and goals of this Community Improvement Plan, as outlined in Section B.2, in the opinion of the City.

3. Eligible Costs

Costs that may be counted towards the calculation of a potential grant value include relevant costs related to permanent façade and safety improvements. Non-eligible costs would include the operation, general maintenance, and life cycle costs, non-permanent installations, construction costs, administration costs, and expenses that occurred before grant approval.

4. Total eligible costs less than \$5,000 will not be eligible

The City will not accept, process, or approve an application where the total eligible costs are less than \$5,000.

5. Maximum Grant

The maximum grant for the Downtown Façade & Safety Improvement Grant is \$15,000 or 50% of the total eligible costs, whichever is less. Only the portions of the façade and hard landscaping that is subject to the improvements and that faces a public right-of-way will be included in the calculation of maximum grant value. The breakdown of the grant elements will be at the discretion of the City based on project needs. An example of a maximum \$15,000 grant breakdown is \$7,500 for façade, \$5,000 for landscaping, and \$2,500 for connectivity improvement projects.

6. Grant Payment

The grant shall be paid as a one-time amount upon completion of construction, to the satisfaction of the City.

7. No Municipal arrears

The subject property shall not have any municipal fee, development charges, or property tax arrears at the time of application and throughout the duration of the grant commitment.

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8. Eligible types of applicants

Eligible applicants shall include owners and tenants. Where a tenant is an applicant, the owner shall provide written consent.

9. Non-transferrable

The related grant is non-transferable.

10. Project must represent an improvement

Proposed projects must represent an improvement over existing conditions, and not simply represent a typical lifecycle replacement of materials, paving, or structures. Maintenance-related works and repairs are not eligible. The works must represent a positive change over the existing conditions, subject to the sole discretion of the City. The Urban Design Manual and any other urban design guidelines that the City may develop or adopt will be used to inform the design and determination of whether the proposed project represents an improvement over the existing condition. Additionally, where an existing property is in a good state of repair, the City shall have the discretion to refuse an application that does not result in a significant enhancement to the property. Proposed projects shall be consistent with the Urban Design Manual and any other urban design guidelines that the City may develop or adopt.

11. Compliance with Official Plan, Zoning, etc.

Existing and proposed land uses, buildings and structures shall be in conformity with the Official Plan, Zoning By-law, and any other applicable municipal by-laws. Any proposed works shall also be subject to any required Building Permit, or other required permits or approvals from other approval authorities.

Notwithstanding this requirement, it is recognized that this Plan contemplates grants for projects that may require planning or building approvals, meaning that the proposed works may not fully comply with the current applicable requirements. In these cases, and at the City's sole discretion, the applicant shall be required to meet or formally pre-consult with the City in advance of submitting an application for a grant. The City may accept an application for incentives prior to the completion of any planning or building approvals. However, the City shall only approve an application for a financial incentive when any applicable planning approvals are finalized, inclusive of any applicable appeal period.

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12. Completed works to be consistent with the approved application

Where a project has been approved for grant funding, the completed works shall be consistent with the stated description and supporting materials as included in the grant application and as approved by the City. Supporting materials required by the City may include:

- drawings/elevations/plans/sketches/renderings of the planned improvements to compare against before and after photographs;
- multiple itemized quotes from contractors/suppliers to compare against the final invoice from the selected contractor/supplier;
- proof of payment of contractors/suppliers;
- occupancy permits; or
- any other information needed to confirm the completion of the project in accordance with the approved application.

The City will also undertake a site visit to confirm compliance with this requirement. Where the completed works are not consistent with the stated description, the applicant may be considered to have defaulted on the requirements of the agreement, and the City, at its sole discretion, may opt not to remit payment for the grant.

13. Eligibility where there is a history of CIP funding

A site that has previously received funding from the Brownfield Sites Community Improvement Plan or the former Downtown Community Improvement Plan may be eligible for funding under this CIP provided there is no duplication of eligible costs.

14. No duplication of eligible costs

In no case shall eligible costs be counted more than once in any application, including where the applicant has applied for multiple grant programs.

15. Disclosure of other potential funding sources

As part of completing an application form, the applicant shall disclose any other funding that may be received in relation to the project, whether or not the funding is part of the CIP. Where the project is subject to other funding sources, including funding from the Provincial or Federal governments, the City shall have sole discretion to reduce the value of the grant.

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16. Eligibility where improvement works have been initiated prior to approval

Improvement works should be initiated after approval of a grant application. However, at the City's sole discretion, improvement works that have been initiated prior to the approval of an application may be considered eligible and these expenses may be included in the calculation of the maximum grant. Projects completed prior to the approval of a grant application are not eligible for the grant program.

17. Grants subject to funding availability

Availability of grants is subject to funding availability. Applicants should confirm the current availability of funding with the City prior to making an application.

18. Government not eligible

No government or government agency shall be eligible to apply for any grant under this program. This program intends to provide incentives for private property owners."