

Downtown Revitalization Incentives Program

Presenter: Amanda Haitas, Senior Manager

Department: Planning and Development Department

Meeting Date: December 8, 2020



Presentation Purpose

1. Share Program update
2. Share Stakeholder Feedback
 - What is working?
 - What could be improved?
 - Ideas for new grant streams
3. Next steps & Recommendations

Council Motions June 23, 2020

- THAT the Downtown Revitalization Incentives Program Policy – FIN-320 be approved; and
- THAT \$5,000,000 be allocated from the Emerging Issues Reserve to fund the Downtown Revitalization Incentives Program Policy – FIN-320.

Program Objectives

1. To **retain existing businesses**, while helping **attract new** types of business that will increase pedestrian presence on the streets;
2. To introduce new features & amenities that create **interest and vibrancy**, helping transform the downtown into a place where people want to spend time; and
3. To enhance the **aesthetic qualities** within the downtown.



Grants

Grant	Maximum Grant Per Building (50/50 matching)
1. Façade Improvements Grant	\$100,000 (corner buildings) \$75,000 (mid-block buildings)
2. Interior Improvement Grant	\$50,000
3. Patio Grant	\$10,000
4. Beautification Projects & Murals Grant	\$5,000 (beautification) \$30,000 (murals)

All grants provided as a 50% matching reimbursement grant.

Program Promotion

- Social Media
- E-newsletters
- Webpage
- Posters
- Business Visits (over 150)
- Stakeholder Presentations
- Outreach (emails/calls to businesses)
- Front Counter discussions
- Stakeholder led conversations



Interest (June 29 to Mid Nov 2020)

Inquiries & Meetings

- Over **130 official inquiries** submitted and over 100 others
- Over **70 pre-application meetings**
- **Site visits** conducted as necessary
- Partnership with Community Futures (Loan Program)
- Collaboration with Arts Council of Wood Buffalo (murals)

Grants Approved

- **14 projects approved**
- **\$596,600 in grants (at least \$1.2 Million total investment)**



Interior projects (9)



Façade projects (4)



Patio projects (1)

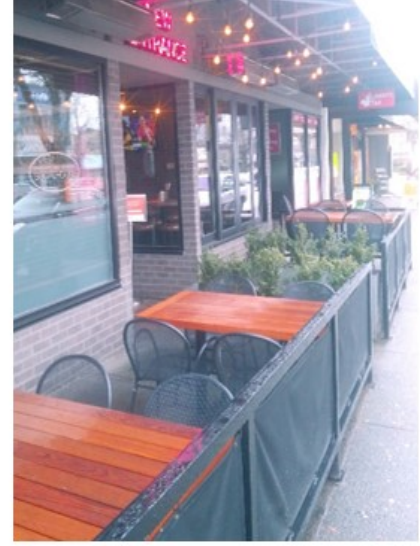
Stakeholder Feedback

Date	Description
July – Present	Meetings with prospective applicants
Oct. 21 – Nov. 10, 2020	Online survey
Oct. 21 – Nov. 10, 2020	One-to-one stakeholder meetings/ presentations (on request)
Nov. 5, 2020	Stakeholder discussion (virtual)

Stakeholder Feedback

What's Working

- Program communications
- Contacting staff with inquiries
- Pre-application meeting



Stakeholder Feedback

Areas for Improvement

- December 31, 2020 deadline too soon
- Construction start/finish deadlines
- Timing of reimbursement and retroactive funding
- Contractor estimates
- Façade Improvement Grant (number of design elements)
- Beautification Project & Murals Grant
(alignment with industry practices and timeframes for murals)
- Review Times

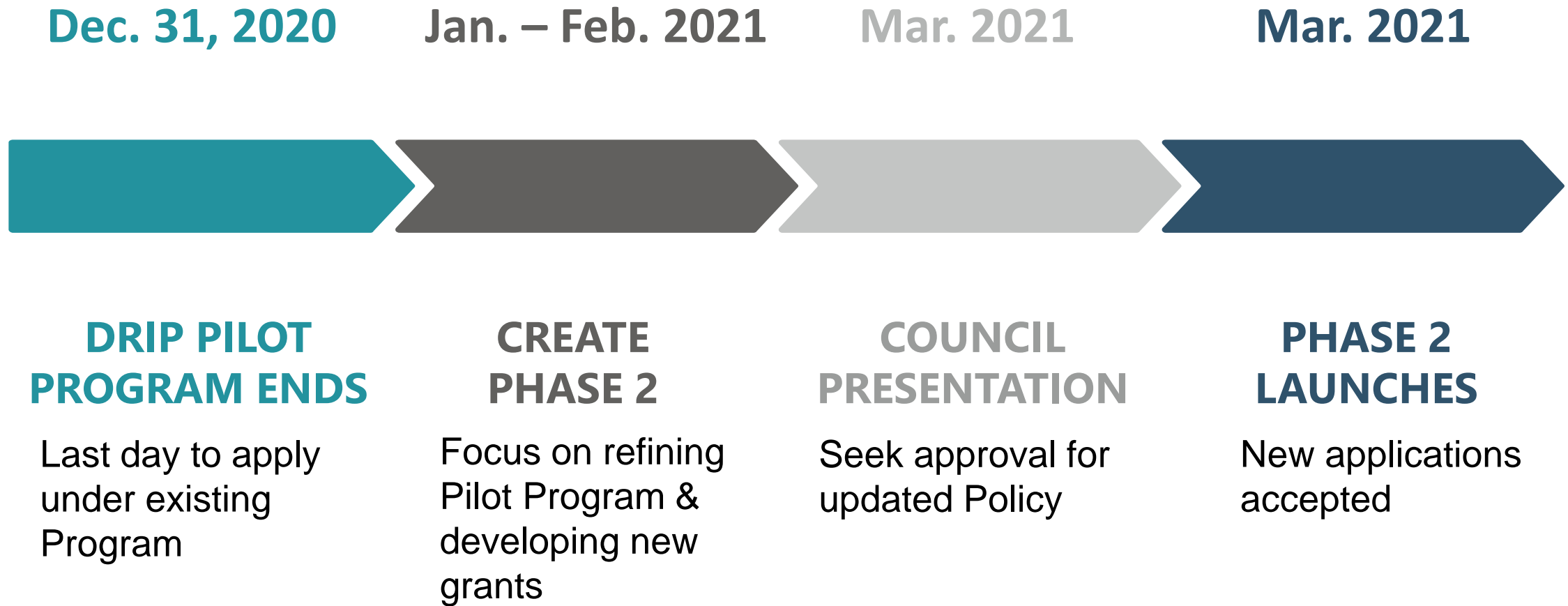
Stakeholder Feedback

Potential New Grant Ideas

- Façade improvements
 - less comprehensive options
 - multi-family developments
- Parking lot improvements
- Landscaping improvements



Proposed Next Steps



Recommended Motion

- THAT Administration be directed to bring forward an updated Downtown Revitalization Incentives Program (Policy FIN-320) for Council consideration by March 2021.

Thank you

