

# ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE



REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY  
OF WOOD BUFFALO

Document Name: Downtown Revitalization Incentive Program Phase 2

Department Name: Planning and Development

Document Number: FIN-320-P01

Effective Date: April 1, 2021

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## **STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGE**

- Strategic Priority 2 – Downtown Revitalization
- Strategic Priority 3 – Regional Economic Development

## **PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE**

The purpose of this Administrative Procedure is to set out the eligibility criteria and process for assessing applications for the Downtown Revitalization Incentives Program Phase 2 (“the Program”). The Program offers eligible Applicants and buildings 50% matching reimbursement Grants for the purposes of encouraging:

- a. Façade Improvements;
- b. Interior Improvements;
- c. New or upgraded Patios;
- d. Beautification Projects and Murals; and
- e. Premises Improvements.

## **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

### **1. Definitions:**

All undefined capitalized terms in this Procedure are as defined in the Downtown Revitalization Incentives Program Policy FIN-320 Phase 2 (the “Policy”).

### **2. Responsibilities:**

#### **2.1. Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to:**

- 2.1.1. approve this Administrative Procedure and any future amendments; and
- 2.1.2. support the implementation of the Program.

#### **2.2. Senior Leadership Team to:**

- 2.2.1. recommend amendments to this Administrative Procedure; and
- 2.2.2. assign the necessary staff and resources to support the implementation of this Administrative Procedure.

**2.3. Manager of Planning and Development Department to:**

- 2.3.1. act as the approving authority for Applications to the Program; and
- 2.3.2. reassign approving authority in accordance with this Administrative Procedure.

**2.4. Planning and Development Department to:**

- 2.4.1. identify a Program Administrator(s) to administer the Program on behalf of the Planning and Development Department;
- 2.4.2. develop Program Guidelines and other supporting documentation;
- 2.4.3. provide information and direction for the Agreements, and work with Legal Services to draw up the Agreements, to be signed by the recipient;
- 2.4.4. coordinate pre-application meetings with prospective Applicants, where requested by the CPI Branch;
- 2.4.5. work with the CPI Branch to evaluate Applications;
- 2.4.6. oversee a detailed review of Applications, including obtaining advice from operating departments, and make a recommendation to the Manager of Planning and Development (or as assigned); and
- 2.4.7. monitor the effectiveness of the Program in achieving the objectives within the Downtown and report to Council upon the conclusion of the Program and as requested.

**2.5. Community and Protective Services Department, Community Partnerships and Initiatives Branch (CPI), Community Investment Program (CIP):**

- 2.5.1. identify a Program Administrator to administer the Program on behalf of the Community and Protective Services Department;
- 2.5.2. develop application forms and internal review forms, in collaboration with the Planning and Development Department;
- 2.5.3. prepare Agreements for Recipient signature;
- 2.5.4. accept applications and carry out a preliminary assessment for completeness;
- 2.5.5. assess completed projects to ensure Recipients fulfill the terms and conditions of Agreements;
- 2.5.6. ensure Recipients are accountable for their use of the Grant and meet the terms and conditions of any Agreements;
- 2.5.7. administer and manage the overall Program finances, including disbursing funds to Recipients;
- 2.5.8. monitor the uptake and amount of Grants requested by Applicants; and
- 2.5.9. maintain Program records.

**2.6. Legal Services to:**

- 2.6.1. support and work with Planning and Development Department to draw up Agreements, to be signed by the Recipient, which set out the terms and conditions for participation in the Program.

## **2.7. Operating Departments to:**

- 2.7.1. provide advice on Applications to confirm if they meet municipal requirements, when requested by CPI Branch or the Planning and Development Department.

## **3. General Procedures:**

### **3.1. Application Submission and Review Process:**

- 3.1.1. The CPI Branch will advise prospective Applicants on general eligibility for the Program.
- 3.1.2. The CPI Branch will refer prospective Applicants to the Planning and Development Department to discuss municipal permitting and other requirements prior to making an Application.
- 3.1.3. The Planning and Development Department will coordinate a pre-application meeting to confirm municipal permitting requirements and provide preliminary advice on proposals. The pre-application meeting may include participation from operating departments and their branches, including Engineering, Land Administration and Safety Codes Services.
- 3.1.4. The CPI Branch will accept and review Applications for general completeness and quality, in accordance with Program review forms. The CPI Branch will refer incomplete applications to Applicants for revisions.
- 3.1.5. The CPI Branch will refer complete Applications to the Planning and Development Department for detailed review.
- 3.1.6. The Planning and Development Department will undertake the following as part of the detailed review:
  - 3.1.6.1. confirm that the proposed use is permitted by the Land Use Bylaw;
  - 3.1.6.2. confirm that the Municipality is not in possession of securities associated with the proposed improvements;
  - 3.1.6.3. confirm that the project meets the intent of the Policy, Administrative Procedure and Program Guidelines, including design standards, where applicable;
  - 3.1.6.4. review the application documents for quality, accuracy and completeness;
  - 3.1.6.5. circulate proposals for Sidewalk Patios, On-Street Patios and other proposals, as needed, to operating departments for advice on municipal requirements, permit requirements, safety and other considerations;

- 3.1.6.6. review contractor estimates and determine the maximum Grant amount that Applicants will be eligible to receive; and
- 3.1.6.7. undertake a site visit to confirm if improvements are pre-existing, where necessary.
- 3.1.7. The Planning and Development Department will provide reviewer comments to Applicants and will receive revised plans and documentation for further review, if required.
- 3.1.8. The Planning and Development Department (minimum of two planners) will provide a recommendation to the Manager of the Planning and Development Department.
- 3.1.9. The Manager of the Planning and Development Department will be the final approval authority for all Applications but may reassign approval authority for Applications with a total project value of \$20,000 or less (Grant value of \$10,000 or less).
- 3.1.10. The Planning and Development Department will convey their decision to the CPI Branch and provide copies of the reviewed documentation.
- 3.1.11. The CPI Branch will notify the Applicant of the decision in writing.
- 3.1.12. The CPI Branch will provide successful Applicants (Recipients) with an Agreement detailing the terms and conditions of participation in the Program.
- 3.1.13. Recipients must return a signed copy of the Agreement to the CPI Branch within 20 business days of receiving notification of a successful application.

### **3.2. Reimbursement of Project Costs:**

- 3.2.1. Recipients must notify the CPI Branch of project completion.
- 3.2.2. Recipients with multiple approved Applications must submit separate requests for reimbursement.
- 3.2.3. Recipients must submit the following to the CPI Branch within three (3) months of the project being completed:
  - 3.2.3.1. Original invoices and receipts with detailed descriptions of the costs;
  - 3.2.3.2. Photographs that document the improvements; and
  - 3.2.3.3. Municipal permit numbers or proof that all necessary permissions, development, building and occupancy permits have been obtained.
- 3.2.4. At the time of reimbursement, Recipients must meet the following requirements:
  - 3.2.4.1. property taxes must be current and paid;
  - 3.2.4.2. utility bills must be current and paid;

- 3.2.4.3. properties must not have an unresolved order to comply with the Land Use Bylaw, Building Code, Fire Code, Nuisance Bylaw or other regulation;
  - 3.2.4.4. Applicant is not a party to a legal dispute with the Municipality;
  - 3.2.4.5. all necessary municipal permits and permissions have been received for the project and are closed and without deficiencies; and
  - 3.2.4.6. exceptions to section 3.2.4 will be at the discretion of the Municipality on a case-by-case basis.
- 3.2.5. The CPI Branch will make the final determination of Recipient qualification. The CPI Branch will undertake the following as part of the assessment:
- 3.2.5.1. Confirm that Recipients meet basic eligibility requirements outlined in the Council Policy and section 3.2.4
  - 3.2.5.2. Request the Planning and Development Department to undertake a site visit to confirm that the project matches the approved proposal. Alternatively, the CPI Branch may deem 'after' photos to be an adequate confirmation.
  - 3.2.5.3. Request the Planning and Development Department to confirm that all necessary municipal permits and permissions have been obtained and are closed and without deficiencies.
  - 3.2.5.4. Review the terms and conditions of all Agreements to ensure they have been satisfied.
- 3.2.6. Once the CPI Branch confirms that the required documentation has been submitted and is satisfactory, Recipients will receive funding in the form of a 50% matching reimbursement Grant.
- 3.2.6.1. The Municipality reserves the right to reimburse 50% or the balance of project costs, whichever is less, where Applicants have received insurance proceeds, provincial disaster recovery assistance or similar recovery funding for a portion of their improvement project(s).
- 3.2.7. Where contractor estimates are required, the lower of the estimates or final invoice will be reimbursed.
- 3.2.8. Grant funding will only be provided to Recipients for eligible costs as outlined in the Program Guidelines and this Administrative Procedure.
- 3.2.9. The Municipality will only provide Grant funding to Recipients for reasonable costs, in accordance with their proposed project budget.
- 3.2.10. Recipients are responsible for all payments to contractors and payment of all invoices.

### **3.3. Eligible and Ineligible Works – All Grants:**

- 3.3.1. The following project costs are eligible:
- 3.3.1.1. Project management, engineering, design, and other professional fees, including fees for professional drawings, to a maximum of 15% of eligible project costs before taxes.
  - 3.3.1.2. Professional fees paid before there is an executed Agreement are eligible if they are:
    - i. incurred after June 29, 2020; and
    - ii. necessary to obtain contractor estimates or permits and are directly related to the project being proposed in the Application.
  - 3.3.1.3. Direct project labour costs;
  - 3.3.1.4. Materials and supplies, including:
    - i. shipping and freight; and
    - ii. rental of tools and equipment;
  - 3.3.1.5. Municipal planning permit fees (development permits, building permits and trades permits);
  - 3.3.1.6. Goods and Service Tax (GST); and
  - 3.3.1.7. Specific expenses listed under the individual Grants described in this Administrative Procedure.
- 3.3.2. The following project costs are ineligible:
- 3.3.2.1. Costs associated with work completed before there is an executed Agreement, unless otherwise allowed in this Administrative Procedure or Policy;
  - 3.3.2.2. Costs associated with time or labour performed by the Recipient;
  - 3.3.2.3. Costs associated with losses or damages caused by the 2020 spring flood, including but not limited to, clean-up costs, demolition costs, landfill tipping fees and costs associated with returning buildings to pre-existing conditions;
  - 3.3.2.4. Costs associated with cost overruns or changes to the project scope that have not been pre-approved by the CPI Branch. The CPI Branch may require the Recipient to enter into an amended Agreement;
  - 3.3.2.5. Incidental costs, such as gas, tools (purchases) or other consumables;
  - 3.3.2.6. Insurance and warranties;
  - 3.3.2.7. Contingencies, profit and other non-specific costs;

- 3.3.2.8. Window treatments that obscure street-level windows, including tinted, frosted and mirrored windows. Exceptions may be made for Restricted Commercial uses and other uses, at the discretion of the Municipality;
  - 3.3.2.9. Vinyl wraps, security bars and rolling shutters; and
  - 3.3.2.10. Specific expenses listed under the individual Grants described in this Administrative Procedure.
- 3.3.3. Notwithstanding 3.3.1 and 3.3.2, costs that are not specifically mentioned may be considered at the sole discretion of the Manager of Planning and Development.

#### **3.4. Eligible and Ineligible Works – Façade Improvement Grant:**

- 3.4.1. The following costs are eligible:
- 3.4.1.1. Façade cleaning or power washing;
  - 3.4.1.2. Painting and new cladding;
  - 3.4.1.3. New or restored exterior architectural features;
  - 3.4.1.4. New or restored masonry and brickwork;
  - 3.4.1.5. New windows;
  - 3.4.1.6. New doors;
  - 3.4.1.7. Establishing new or reconfigured entrances or Storefronts (excluding additions);
  - 3.4.1.8. New or replacement awnings and canopies;
  - 3.4.1.9. New or replacement accessibility features, including ramps, handrails and automated doors;
  - 3.4.1.10. New or upgraded exterior lighting;
  - 3.4.1.11. New signage (located on facade and allowed by the Land Use Bylaw); and
  - 3.4.1.12. Flowerpots, window boxes, hanging baskets and similar items.
- 3.4.2. The following costs are ineligible:
- 3.4.2.1. Structural repairs;
  - 3.4.2.2. Roof repairs (excepting those that form part of a canopy, parapet, cornice or other feature that is part of the façade);
  - 3.4.2.3. Landscaping;
  - 3.4.2.4. Paving;
  - 3.4.2.5. Fencing;
  - 3.4.2.6. Interior improvements; and
  - 3.4.2.7. Facades on new buildings, additions and accessory buildings.

**3.5. Eligible and Ineligible Works – Interior Improvements Grant:**

- 3.5.1. The following improvement projects are eligible:
  - 3.5.1.1. Reconfiguring an existing unit (e.g., subdividing or combining units) to better meet the needs of future tenants;
  - 3.5.1.2. Accessibility upgrades (e.g., barrier free washrooms, handrails, ramps and lifts);
  - 3.5.1.3. Fire safety upgrades (e.g., sprinklers, fire separation between units);
  - 3.5.1.4. Electrical upgrades;
  - 3.5.1.5. Plumbing upgrades;
  - 3.5.1.6. HVAC / ventilation upgrades;
  - 3.5.1.7. Energy efficiency upgrades, including new doors and windows (if not applying under the Façade Improvement Grant); and
  - 3.5.1.8. Updates to the interior, including painting, drywall, flooring, ceilings, interior doors, finishes (trim, baseboards), millwork and fixed cabinetry and countertops.
- 3.5.2. The following costs are eligible if associated with the above improvements:
  - 3.5.2.1. Interior demolition; and
  - 3.5.2.2. Landfill tipping fees.
- 3.5.3. The following costs are ineligible:
  - 3.5.3.1. Costs associated with finishing the interior including removable objects and non-permanent fixtures, such as window coverings, furniture, appliances, light bulbs and displays.

**3.6. Eligible and Ineligible Works – Patio Grant:**

- 3.6.1. The following costs are eligible:
  - 3.6.1.1. Paving and decking;
  - 3.6.1.2. Patio partitions, fencing and screening;
  - 3.6.1.3. Weather protection, including awnings and canopies;
  - 3.6.1.4. Patio furniture, heaters and misting systems;
  - 3.6.1.5. Planters and containers, including corresponding landscaping;
  - 3.6.1.6. Exterior lighting, including string lighting or other lighting integral to the Patio;
  - 3.6.1.7. Patio signage, including A-Board signs;
  - 3.6.1.8. Temporary or modular structures for Patios;
  - 3.6.1.9. Temporary Boardwalks to divert pedestrian movement around



a Patio; and

3.6.1.10. Features that provide for barrier-free access.

3.6.2. The following costs are ineligible:

3.6.2.1. Electronics, including televisions and sound systems; and

3.6.2.2. Appliances, including barbeques.

3.6.3. To support Applicants with Patio projects for the 2021 season, Patio expenses (excluding labour) incurred no earlier than April 1, 2021 will be considered for reimbursement. Any expenses incurred prior to there being an executed Agreement is at the Applicant's risk.

### **3.7. Eligible and Ineligible Works – Beautification Projects and Murals Grant:**

3.7.1. For Beautification Projects, the following costs are eligible:

3.7.1.1. Storefront merchandise displays and platforms;

3.7.1.2. Storefront treatments to window glass, including window graphics;

3.7.1.3. Storefront lighting, including temporary seasonal lights and string lights;

3.7.1.4. Temporary artwork and installations in Storefronts;

3.7.1.5. Seasonal planters, hanging baskets and similar items; and

3.7.1.6. A-Board signs, including print and chalk boards;

3.7.2. For Mural projects, the following costs are eligible:

3.7.2.1. Murals;

3.7.2.2. Professional Artist fees, including design, labour, travel and accommodation fees for Professional Artists; and

3.7.2.3. Site preparation, including rubbish removal.

3.7.3. For Beautification and Mural projects, the following costs are ineligible:

3.7.3.1. Rubbish removal that is not part of a Beautification or Mural project.

### **3.8. Eligible and Ineligible Works – Premises Improvement Grant:**

3.8.1. The following costs are eligible:

3.8.1.1. New or replacement sidewalks, pathways or other hard surface improvements including accessibility upgrades and connections (e.g., curb ramps, tactile plates);

3.8.1.2. Parking lot resurfacing and associated line painting - provided improvement is made over the existing condition and not associated with a life-cycle replacement (e.g., upgrade in material to achieve increased durability, aesthetic, or

- sustainability);
- 3.8.1.3. Repair, replacement, or improvement to front, rear or side yard driveways - provided improvement is made over the existing condition and not associated with a life-cycle replacement (e.g., upgrade in material to achieve increased durability, aesthetic or sustainability);
- 3.8.1.4. Site grading and drainage improvements including swales, area drains and culverts;
- 3.8.1.5. Erosion control measures such as rip-rap and matting;
- 3.8.1.6. Free-standing walls and fencing used for property / spatial delineation, visual screening or noise buffering and associated gates;
- 3.8.1.7. Handrails or guardrails for accessibility;
- 3.8.1.8. Low-impact development or “green” infrastructure components including bio-retention facilities, rain gardens, permeable pavement and rainwater harvesting;
- 3.8.1.9. Sustainable transportation infrastructure including publicly accessibly electric vehicle charging stations;
- 3.8.1.10. Wayfinding and directional signs for the Property (i.e., non-advertising);
- 3.8.1.11. Soft landscaping, including sod, trees and shrubs that follows FireSmart guidelines;
- 3.8.1.12. Benches, bicycle racks and waste/recycling bins; and
- 3.8.1.13. Lighting, including lamp standards, in-ground lighting and bollards.
- 3.8.2. The following costs are ineligible:
  - 3.8.2.1. General site clean-up or trash removal;
  - 3.8.2.2. Improvements specific to Patios, Patio upgrades or Patio extensions;
  - 3.8.2.3. Utility upgrades;
  - 3.8.2.4. Artwork;
  - 3.8.2.5. Improvements associated with existing or new structures or buildings; and
  - 3.8.2.6. Improvements that are required as condition of a development permit, unless stated otherwise in this Administrative Procedure or Policy.

Appendix: Schedule A: Downtown Map

SUBJECT AREA MAP  
Downtown Revitalization Incentives Program – Downtown Area Schedule A



**APPROVAL**

This Administrative Procedure was approved by the Chief Administrative Officer. It will be reviewed not later than its next Revision Date to determine its effectiveness and appropriateness. It may be assessed before that time as necessary.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jamie Doyle, Chief Administrative Officer

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Brad McMurdo, Director Planning and Development

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**SUPPORTING REFERENCES AND POSITION RESPONSIBLE**

Legal References:

- Cross References:
- Community Investment Program Policy FIN-220
  - Downtown Revitalization Incentives Program Policy Phase 2 FIN-320

Position Responsible:     Director, Planning and Development  
                                   Director, Community and Protective Services

**ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE DETAILS AND REVISION HISTORY**

| <b>Date</b> | <b>Action</b>           | <b>Description</b>                                       |
|-------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| June, 2020  | Establishment           | Establishment of the Program                             |
| March, 2021 | Amendments to Procedure | Reflecting changes and updates to eligibility and Grants |