

## **Downtown Prince George 2020 Façade Improvement Grant Program Program Overview**

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## 1. Purpose of the Program

For a city's downtown one of the strongest determinants of **the character and quality** is its building frontages. A community that is more appealing to the eye gives its citizens a greater sense of place and welcomes visitors.

In partnership with the City of Prince George, the Prince George Downtown Business Improvement Association (Downtown Prince George) is pleased to provide this program to give **monetary assistance** as an incentive to owners of buildings and business tenants, to improve the character and physical appearance of their buildings and businesses.

## 2. Program Overview

If you are undertaking a façade improvement to your building or business frontage, Downtown Prince George will provide a **25%** reimbursement grant - up to a maximum of **\$5,000** - per building/project. The building must be located in the Downtown PG/ C1 Zone (Appendix I). Each building within the Downtown Prince George area is eligible for the one-time grant. Projects must include eligible components and cannot exceed \$200,000, in total.

### **NEW for 2020 – Heritage Buildings/Properties**

Owners and tenants of heritage buildings are eligible for a **50%** reimbursement grant up to a maximum of **\$10,000** – per building/project. The building must either be on the City of Prince George Heritage Registry or be eligible for inclusion on the heritage registry or have a letter from the City of Prince George Heritage Commission stating that the building has “significant heritage value”. The renovations/façade improvement project must enhance, restore or improve the heritage value of the building's facade.

Applications for 2020 projects will be accepted and awarded on a ‘first come, first serve’ basis. New projects must be completed no later than November 30, 2020. If for whatever reason, the project cannot be completed by November 30<sup>th</sup>, the applicant must notify Downtown Prince George and submit in writing, a request for a completion date extension. Approval is not guaranteed.

Please see Appendix II: Schedule of Eligible and Ineligible Expenses.

## 3. Project Review Process

Projects are reviewed by Downtown Prince George staff. The staff are responsible for reviewing all applications, to determine eligibility of projects. All projects will be reviewed to ensure alignment with the program guidelines. Staff will also be responsible for confirming verification of expenditures and that the project has been completed in accordance with the approved plans and program guidelines.

## 4. Program Guidelines

The program guidelines are intended to set a quality standard for the types of improvements, co-ordinate individual projects with surrounding buildings, and act as a guide to review applications by the Downtown Prince George staff.

The objective of this program is to make *significant* improvements to the appearance of our downtown streetscape. In order to receive consideration, applicants must be looking to do more than just simply repaint their business exterior. The project must be a “complete” project, in that the finished project should have no obvious “unfinished” aspects. Should the staff deem that the proposed project does not have a meaningful and positive impact to the streetscape the application may not be approved.

Buildings that have received the façade improvement grant shall not be eligible to receive a subsequent grant from Downtown Prince George for a period of 5 years after project completion. Tenants (e.g. shop owners) must receive written approval from Building Owners prior to moving forward with the façade improvements. A letter from the owner must accompany the application.

## Design Guidelines

In order to be eligible for this grant, the applicant must submit design information and costing (quotes) for the project. Designs need not to be done by a professional architect or designer, but it is strongly encouraged that the tenant/property owner seeks professional assistance, keeping in mind that that grants will be awarded based on merit of design and visual impact to the streetscape. Designs need to clearly outline the proposed improvements to allow the staff to evaluate the project. The staff must be able to confirm that the finished product looks like what was intended during the application process. The final grant approval will be considering the merit of the project design and impact on the streetscape.

## 5. Application Process

*Tenant/Business Owner or Building Owner referred to as the “applicant”.*

*Note: Submitting an application does not guarantee eligibility.*

1. Applicant submits application along with:
  - Photo of existing building facade.
  - Coloured building elevation of the proposed improvements including the identification of the exterior finishing materials.
  - All labour and materials quotations. (as supplied by contractors)
  - Approval letter from building owner. (as applicable)
  - City of Prince George confirmation for the requirement of a Development Permit and/or Building Permit
2. Downtown Prince George acknowledges receipt of application in writing or email.
3. Downtown Prince George staff receives and reviews application and proposed improvements to ensure they meet Downtown Prince George’s Facade Improvement Program Guidelines (contained herein).
4. Downtown Prince George staff will accept or reject the application.
5. Applicant is notified in writing of approval (Letter of Acknowledgement) or rejection of application.
  - For successful applications, a letter of acknowledgement is sent to the applicant, which must be signed by the Tenant/Owner and the Downtown Prince George representative.
6. Applicant completes renovations/improvements.
7. Upon completion, applicant provides verification of project completion and expenditures including:
  - Copy of all invoices.
  - Proof of payment (cleared cheque, receipt, bank statement or credit card statement)
  - Image of the building facade upon project completion.
  - Written testimonial with regards to the merits of the program.
8. Applicants may be required to provide a certificate of completion signed by the applicant and the general contractor or architect/designer.
9. Applicant provides proof that the improvements have passed final inspection (when required).
10. Downtown Prince George staff may require a meeting with the Applicant to verify and confirm that that the renovations are complete and that they reconcile to the original application and Letter of Acknowledgement.
11. Downtown Prince George staff approves monetary reimbursement to applicant.

12. Applicant is provided letter confirming acceptance of project completion and reimbursement cheque is issued.

*Additional Notes on Time Frame:*

- Applications must be submitted and approved by the Downtown Prince George staff prior to the onset of the façade improvement project in order to be eligible to receive funding.
- Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis as they are received and until the annual budget of the program has been allocated.
- Decisions will be made no later than one month after an application is received.
- Applicant acknowledges that project must be complete by November 30, 2020.
- If for whatever reason, the project cannot be completed by November 30<sup>th</sup>, the applicant must notify Downtown Prince George and apply for a completion date extension.

## 6. Awarding Process

The Downtown Prince George staff reviews all applications, verifies expenditures and confirms that projects have been completed in accordance with the approved plans.

In the event that there are more eligible applicants than funds available to award, the Downtown Prince George staff will prioritize projects based on the following ranked criteria:

1. Order in which applications are received
2. Use of a professional designer/architect
3. Age and condition of building
4. Impact on streetscape

Downtown Prince George may retain application information for reporting purposes including but not limited to: amounts applied for, approved, and disbursed, value of project, before and after photos, project descriptions, community impact reports and project owner testimonials.

## 7. Appeal Process

In the event that an application is declined, the project proponent may request a meeting with the Downtown Prince George Executive Director and one additional Downtown Prince George Board member to discuss the application with the purpose of:

- Seeking input on the proposal in order to modify the application and meet the program guidelines.
- Provide additional information to the committee in order to seek reversal of the decision

## 8. Additional information

***Permits:***

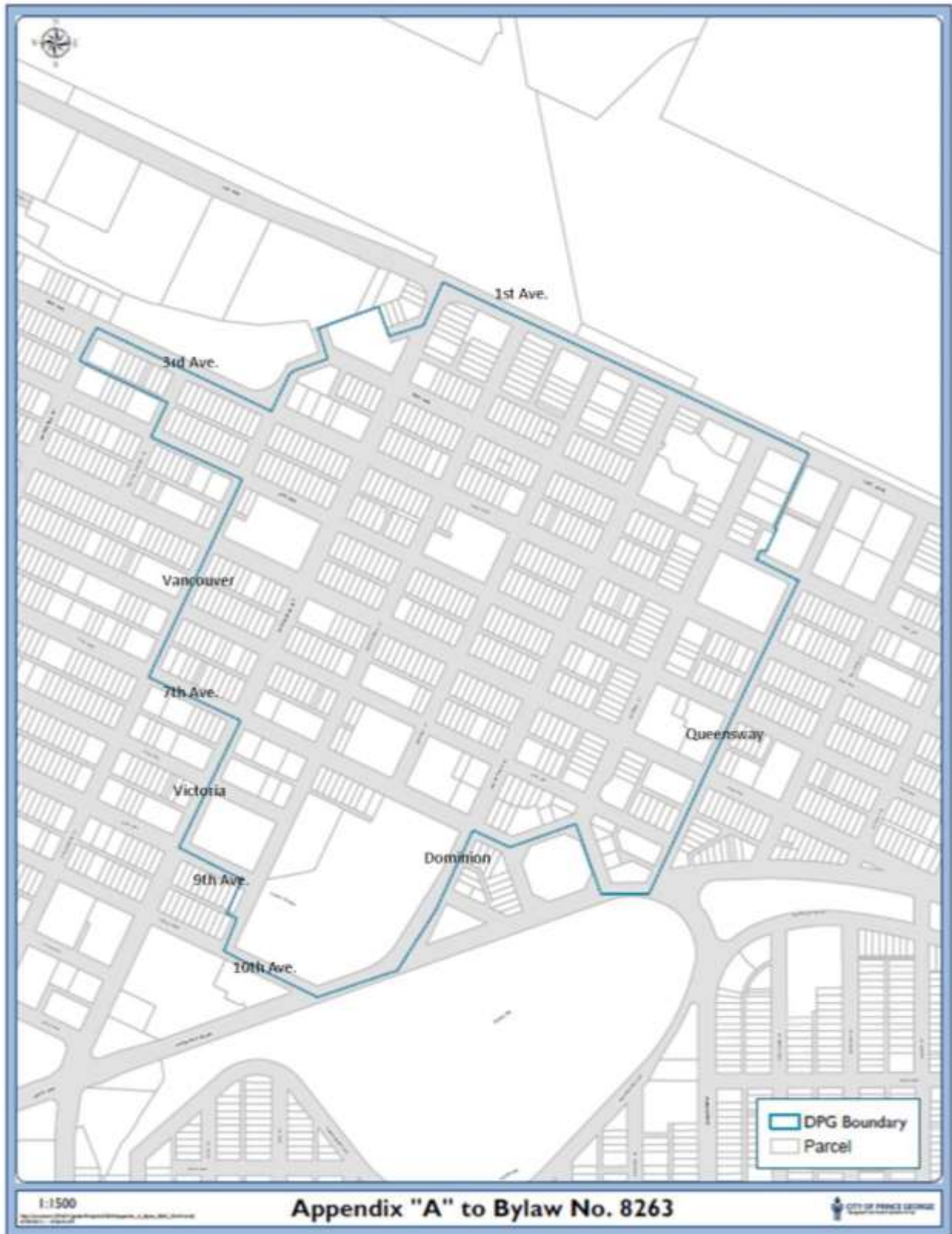
The City of Prince George may require development, building and or sign permits based on the extent of the improvements to be completed. The applicant is responsible for all permits. Downtown Prince George advises all applicants to contact the City of Prince George directly, to confirm and obtain all required approvals. Applicants should contact:

The Development Services Division  
City of Prince George  
1100 Patricia Boulevard – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor City Hall  
Phone: 250-561-7611  
Email: devserv@princegeorge.ca

***Other Funding:***

Applicants are encouraged to consider additional grants and other financial assistance to ensure the successful completion of your projects. Additional grant funding secured by an applicant will not disqualify an applicant for consideration of the Façade Improvement Grant Program.

**APPENDIX I:** Map of Downtown Prince George / C1 Zone Area Boundaries



## **APPENDIX II: Schedule of Eligible and Ineligible Expenses**

### ***Eligible Improvements may consist of but are not limited to:***

- Exterior lighting
- 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 (if part of larger enhancements)
- Permanent accessibility improvements (if part of larger enhancements)
- Awnings
- Signage (affixed to the building)

### ***Ineligible Improvements are:***

- Any improvements that have been started prior to application approval
- Routine maintenance
- Structural repairs
- Roofs
- Patios – non-permanent
- Non-permanent fixtures (benches, planters, patios, patio heaters etc.)
- Landscaping
- Paving
- Fencing
- Interior improvements
- Any improvements not visible from the public right of way
- Construction of additions, accessory buildings or new buildings
- Non-permanent wheelchair ramps

### ***Eligible Costs / Expenses:***

- Direct project labour costs
- Design, architectural or engineering fees (related to facade only)
- Contractor fees
- Permit fees (as required only for the Façade Improvement Project)
- Rental of tools and equipment
- Project related materials and supplies

### ***Ineligible Costs / Expenses:***

- Staff wages and/or benefits
- Expenses related to improvement to the building façade not visible from the public right of way
- Utilities (hydro, gas etc.)
- Equipment purchased
- GST/PST
- Duties
- Shipping costs
- Façade improvements expenses started prior to application approval