



Business Façade Improvement Program

2025 Guidelines



Program Purpose and Goal

The Business Façade Improvement Program provides reimbursement funding to business and property owners to improve retail and commercial building frontages. Eligible businesses can receive a **50% reimbursement to a maximum of \$5,000 for completion of exterior improvements** such as building façades, signage, murals, architectural features, siding, lighting and awnings. The goal of the program is to provide business owners with an incentive to improve the look and feel of their business frontages. Vibrant businesses have the potential to attract new customers, clients, visitors and potential investors. The **Cariboo Regional District (CRD)** is pleased to deliver this program with funding provided by the **Northern Development Initiative Trust (NDIT)**.

- Each building is eligible for a grant of a **maximum of \$5,000 annually**. Approved projects must be new & incremental (*i.e.. repainting the façade every two years is not eligible but painting one year and adding an awning the next is eligible*)
- Projects must have a minimum total cost of \$1000
- Funding will be committed on a first-come, first-serve basis

Eligible Properties

- Commercial properties located within the Cariboo Regional District, with an operating business on their property (excluding those located within municipal boundaries)
- Home-based businesses zoned commercial, have a storefront, and are within the specific area.

Eligible Applicants

- Property owners or business owners (*if applicant is the business owner, property owner must approve the application in writing, confirming that improvements will be paid for by the applicant*)
- Non-profit societies occupying commercial locations (tenants)
- Home-based businesses with customer traffic eligible for signage only - maximum \$500 reimbursement

Ineligible Applicants

- Residential homes located in commercial area
- Apartment buildings
- Government owned buildings (municipal, provincial, or federal) even if they have business tenants
- Properties outside the specified area as defined in Program Guidelines
- Empty buildings/businesses that are not operating (except if the business is renovating or making improvements in anticipation of re-opening)

Eligibility Requirements

- All property taxes pertaining to the property must be fully paid and current
- There are no building permits, stop work orders, or development permit condition requirements outstanding

Eligible Façade Improvements: May consist of but not limited to:

- New exterior lighting (not replacement lighting)
- Exterior architectural features
- Exterior surfaces and details (decorative details, moldings, trims)
- Windows (if part of larger enhancements, no stand-alone window replacement)
- New siding
- Façade painting
- Entrances and doorways (if part of larger enhancements, no stand-alone entrance/doorway replacement)
- Awnings
- Signage (**must be affixed to building**)
- Way finding signage - *sign located on the business property (i.e. at the bottom of driveway)*
 - Signs are eligible for **50% to a maximum of \$500** and must adhere to any signage by laws and regulations
- Accessibility improvements (ramps, wider doors) to building exterior only

Ineligible Façade Improvements

- Routine maintenance
- Structural repairs
- Roofs
- Non-permanent fixtures (removable patios, benches, planters, patio heaters etc.)
- Landscaping
- Paving
- Fencing
- Interior improvements
- Improvements not visible from the public right of way
- Construction of additions, accessory buildings, or new buildings
- Façade improvements started prior to application approval

Eligible Costs / Expenses

- PST
- Direct third-party project labour costs
- Contractor fees
- Rental of tools and equipment for construction work

- Project related materials and supplies
- Design, architectural, or engineering fees (related to façade only)
- Shipping and/or freight

Ineligible Costs / Expenses

- GST
- Staff wages and/or benefits
- Purchase of construction tools or equipment
- Operational costs including utilities (hydro, gas)
- Permit fees
- Duties
- Improvements not visible from public right of way
- Façade improvements started prior to application approval

Business Application & Project Evaluation Process

- 1) Applications can be completed online at <https://www.cariboord.ca/en/business-and-development/business-facade-improvement-program.aspx>, or submitted by e-mail to grantwriter@cariboord.ca
- 2) CRD staff will review and evaluate applications to ensure the project meets program eligibility criteria. CRD staff may contact the applicant to discuss the application, if required.
- 3) All eligible projects will be evaluated using the following ranked criteria:
 - Does the project and the applicant meet all eligibility criteria?
 - Will the project have a noticeable impact on the community?
- 4) Funding allocated based on project eligibility and availability of program funds. Businesses who have not received prior funding will be a priority. Funding committed on first-come, first-serve basis.
- 5) All applicants will be advised in writing as to whether their application has been approved, denied, or approved with conditions.
- 6) Owner/Tenant acquires any required permits and completes the project.
- 7) For successful applications, a **Letter of Understanding** will be sent to the applicant, which must be signed by the owner/tenant and a representative of the CRD.

Project Reporting & Business Reimbursement Process

- 1) Owner/Tenant provides verification of expenses including invoices or other confirmations of

payment and submits their totals on the **Expense Tracking Sheet**.

- 2) Owner/Tenant provides in writing that all work described in the application/approval has been completed and paid in full, with **before and after photos**, a **business testimonial(s)** and any other supporting documentation.
- 3) Owner/Tenant provides proof that the improvements have passed final permit inspections where required and meets all building standards and codes where required.
- 4) CRD staff verify that the renovations meet the Letter of Understanding requirements and approve reimbursement.
- 5) **Applicant receives a payment for up to 50% of the approved façade project, to a maximum of \$5,000.**
 - Projects/funding cannot carry over from one calendar year to the next.
 - Approved projects must be completed by **July 31, 2025**.

For questions related to the Business Façade Improvement Program, or to discuss a project, contact Kathie Vilkas, CRD Regional Economic & Community Development Officer, either by phone 250-392-3351 or by email at grantwriter@cariboord.ca