



**DOWNTOWN  
MAPLE RIDGE**

Business Improvement Association

*Ours to Share!*

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# **FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM GUIDE**

**FOR BUILDING FAÇADES LOCATED WITHIN DOWNTOWN  
MAPLE RIDGE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION  
AREA IN MAPLE RIDGE, BRITISH COLUMBIA.**

## **FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM GUIDE**

### **HISTORY**

Initiated in 2008, this program is the result of a desire by the Downtown Maple Ridge Business Improvement Association (DMRBIA), the City of Maple Ridge (CMR), and the Downtown Maple Ridge business community to revitalize the downtown core of Maple Ridge.

### **PROGRAM PURPOSE AND GOAL**

This program provides grants to property and business owners to renovate, restore or redesign retail and commercial building façades and storefronts located in Downtown Maple Ridge. The goal of this program is to encourage owners of such buildings to invest in building upgrades that create a more interesting and appealing streetscape, attracting people and businesses to the area.

This initiative may contribute to:

- Making Downtown Maple Ridge a more inviting and interesting place to shop, walk, live, and play;
- Promoting the marketability of retail and commercial businesses;
- Helping building owners to attract and retain tenants;
- Contributing to the quality of life of residents, workers and visitors to Maple Ridge;
- Building civic pride among the business community and the citizens of Maple Ridge.

### **ELIGIBLE PROPERTIES**

Existing buildings located within the Downtown Maple Ridge Business Improvement Association (DMRBIA) Area in Maple Ridge.

### **ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS**

To be eligible to apply:

- You must be the property owner or the business owner. If the applicant is the business owner, the property owner must approve of the application in writing and confirm that all improvements are to be paid for by the applicant;
- All City of Maple Ridge (CMR) property taxes pertaining to the property are fully paid and current;
- You must start your improvement project **after the application is approved**; and
- You have not received a previous grant under this program for the subject property **in the prior 10 years**.
- Note: Both property owner and business owner are eligible to apply for a grant for the subject property once every 10 years as long as the improvements are paid for by the applicant.

## GRANT AMOUNTS

This program can provide grants of up to 50% of the cost of eligible improvements, up to a maximum of \$10,000 per building. Corner properties, facing 2 streets, could be eligible for \$20,000 maximum.

## ELIGIBLE FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS

Projects are required to reflect principles of good design. For this purpose, applicants should review and address the criteria outlined in this Program Guide (see 'General Guidelines' and 'Design Guidelines'). Building façade and storefront features eligible to be renovated, restored, or redesigned with grant dollars include:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Exterior Architectural Details                 | Exterior Surfaces                           |
| Exterior Decorative Details                    | Windows and Window Openings                 |
| Exterior Lighting of Building and/or Signs     | Doors and Doorway Openings                  |
| Façade Cleaning and Painting                   | Moldings/Trim/Cornices                      |
| Exterior signage* and exterior security lights | Entrance & Alleyways                        |
| Patio Areas (including sidewalk café/parklet)  | Awnings                                     |
| Design, Architectural, Engineering fees        | Landscaping Elements as part of improvement |
| *Vinyl "stick on" signage not included         |   |

## GRANT APPLICATION, APPROVAL, AND REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS

All project proposals are subject to a comprehensive review of façade and storefront, must meet high quality standards, and must reflect spirit and intent of the Façade Improvement Program Guidelines.

Generally, the application, approval, and reimbursement process is as follows:

- 1) Contact the DMRBIA to determine if your building is in the DMRBIA area and to obtain a Façade Improvement Program Guide and Application Form;
- 2) Contact the DMRBIA to discuss your proposed project;
- 3) Submit a completed Application to the DMRBIA before annual deadline, include "before" pictures;
- 4) Project Review Committee reviews the application. Part of the review process could include obtaining approval of the proposed project by the CMR;
- 5) Applicant will be advised in writing if the Application has been approved, refused or approved with conditions. All Applications will be reviewed on a timely basis;
- 6) If approved, a pre-construction site inspection is conducted by the Project Review Committee and "before" pictures will be taken, if not included with the application;
- 7) A Performance Agreement is entered into between the successful applicant and the DMRBIA, which will include a description of the project and work to be completed including all relevant attachments included with the Application (including drawings), total cost of the project, anticipated completion date of the project (completion must be **before** annual FIP deadline/ after Dec. 31 of application year, grant expires!), and any conditions;

- 8) Project construction begins;
  - 9) The applicant must provide the following to the DMRBIA for reimbursement:
    - a. A Certificate of Completion signed by the applicant and/or contractor or architect indicating that the work described within the Performance Agreement has been fully completed and paid in full + “after” pictures;
    - b) Copies of all bills pertaining to the project and proof of payment (copies of credit card receipts or cancelled cheques); and
    - c) Proof that the improvements have passed final inspection (where required) and meet all CMR requirements including zoning, building and safety codes (where required);
  - 10) Project is inspected by the Project Review Committee to ensure completion of the terms of the Performance Agreement;
  - 11) Applicant is issued a cheque according to the terms of the Performance Agreement, to the maximum of 50% of the actual improvement costs (**not including taxes**).
- \* Development, Building, and Sign Permits are required where applicable. If the proposed improvements significantly alter the external building appearance (i.e. changes to existing materials, form & character) and/or if the work value is greater than \$25,000 the applicant will be required to submit a Development Permit Application to the CMR and will have to refer to the Maple Ridge Town Centre Development Permit Area Guidelines.
- \* Submitting an Application does not guarantee a grant nor specific/requested grant amount.

## **GENERAL GUIDELINES**

### **Introduction**

The Façade Improvement Program is primarily concerned with the physical appearance of the buildings within the DMRBIA area and their relationship to the streetscape. Façades and storefronts of retail and commercial buildings need to be considered as part of an integrated streetscape. The character and design of the building along with the businesses contained within attract shoppers both for the goods and services they provide and for the experience of walking around an interesting and lively urban space.

Much can be achieved by thinking about what constitutes good building design when carrying out an exterior renovation project. A few general design principles pursued through this program include:

- Creating façades and storefronts that add interest, activity and comfort to the street environment; and
- Strengthening the architectural integrity and design unity of individual façades; and
- Emphasizing compatibility in design, materials and colours to make adjacent buildings read as a unit.

### **Purpose**

The Guidelines form the starting point of any application filed under this program.

The challenge under this program is to improve the character and physical appearance of buildings while allowing building owners and business owners to assert their identity and economic viability.

To this end the Guidelines are intended to:

- Set quality standards for the types of improvements that will improve the buildings;
- Coordinate individual projects with surrounding buildings and other projects to create a positive, welcoming image and a quality pedestrian environment;
- Serve as the basis for discussion with the DMRBIA in the development of the application; and
- Act as a guide to the review of the application by the Project Review Committee.

## DESIGN GUIDELINES

### 1) OVERALL BUILDING ARCHITECTURE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE STREET AND THE BUILDING

The starting point in creating a unified block face and in organizing the diversity of architectural styles and details on a given street and on a given building is an understanding of the building façade's design framework.

The framework is made up of two major elements - the street level storefront and the upper façade. The **Street Level Storefront** is defined by the upper façade's piers and the sign frieze or fascia that separates the storefront's display windows from the upper architecture. This lower portion of the façade provides visual and physical access to the business located within and is the area in which the individuality and identity of that business can best be expressed. The main purpose of the storefront is to display goods and to project the image of the business therein. Storefronts also permit window shopping and can contribute to the shopping experience on key street oriented retail streets. Collectively, storefronts combine to project the image of the street and, in the case of key streets, the downtown and region itself.

The **Upper Façade** is that part of the building extending to the roof line. The Upper Façade consists of the cornice and the fascia that cap the building front, the building's upper stories, the windows that give articulation and interest to the upper architecture, and the piers that extend to ground level and visually support the façade and frame the storefront.

Within this framework there are a range of architectural components such as:

Windows

Doorways

Signs & Awnings \*

Roofline/Upper Façade

Storefront architectural features like fascia, cornices and pilasters (or piers)

**\*Vinyl "stick on" signage, is not eligible**

The design of these various architectural components may be repeated or absent on surrounding buildings. Coordinating façade improvements with neighbouring structures helps to complement the design of the storefront, creating diversity and interest a street level and unity in building lines.

Design elements such as colour and texture may also be incorporated and can add interest, complexity and diversity to the building façade.

At a minimum, buildings require general cleaning, repairs and occasional improvements of the façade to enhance the positive design features.

## **2) INCORPORATION OF MAPLE RIDGE TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA GUIDELINES**

As far as possible, projects should take into consideration the building façade guidelines for awnings, signs, lighting, building materials, green building design, building colours and general form and character, as set out in the Maple Ridge Town Centre Development Permit Area Guidelines (a copy of which can be obtained from the CMR, Planning Department).

## **3) GROUND COVERING MATERIAL**

Minimum grade separation between the sidewalk and the built frontage should be provided. Any ground covering materials used in private forecourt space should be durable, non-slippery, and wheelchair, scooter and walker accessible. The finishes of the forecourt (private ground level entry area underfoot) can include creative materials, color, texture and overall design pattern that complement treatments to the public walk.

## **4) CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN**

The principles of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) should, where possible, be incorporated into the design/renovation of the buildings. *Free CPTED assessment of your property by Community Safety Officers (M.R Bylaw Dept) available on request.*

**If your Façade Improvement is more Safety & Security focused, PLEASE check out our LOCTED (Lock Out Crime Through Environmental Design) Grant Program.**

## **5) LIGHTING ON THE BUILDING**

The building entrances and façades should be lit to provide for pedestrian safety and security as well as to accentuate the building architectural features. Pedestrians scale lighting can also be incorporated into the building façade. Previously existing fixtures and electrical equipment should be removed. Exterior light fixtures to improve safety & security around the building are eligible.

## **6) SIGNAGE**

Ground floor business will have individual business identification signs. Signs should comply with City of MR bylaws.

## **7) QUALITY FINISHES INTEGRATED DESIGN & CORNER TREATMENT**

The renovated façade of the building should be well integrated, interesting, and architecturally in unison with the style for the whole building. The corners of the building facing two streets should address both streets and should be well detailed for any pedestrian activity. Important building corners should avoid placement of staircases or other non-active functions like storage, mechanical or electrical rooms as those make the corner a dead space.

## FAÇADE GRANT CRITERIA

- 1) Applicant must be a registered owner of a property within the DMRBIA Area or a business owner within the DMRBIA Area. If the applicant is a business owner, the property owner must approve of the application in writing and confirm that all improvements are to be paid for by the applicant. Grant reimbursement is made to the applicant.
- 2) All applicants must provide a recent copy of the title to the property (Property Tax document)
- 3) Where required, suitable drawings and building material specifications must accompany the application.
- 4) As far as possible, projects should take into consideration the façade guidelines as set out in the Maple Ridge Town Centre Development Permit Area Guidelines.
- 5) Exterior façade improvements/upgrades only.
- 6) Maximum amount of the grant to be 50% of approved project costs, to a grant maximum of \$10,000, no minimum – **excluding taxes**. Corner properties, facing 2 streets eligible for \$20,000.
- 7) The number of grant approvals and grant amounts will depend upon the number of applications received and approved.
- 8) Façade components include:
  - a) Doors and Doorways
  - b) Windows and Window Openings
  - c) Awnings
  - d) Signage\*
  - e) Sighting
  - f) Exterior Surfaces
  - g) Structural hanges
  - h) False Fronts
  - i) Moldings/Trim/Cornices
  - j) Architectural Details
  - k) Patio areas
  - l) Landscaping Elements
  - m) Paint
  - n) Decorative Details
  - o) Entranceways
  - p) Exterior security lighting

**\* Vinyl “stick on” signage is NOT eligible**

- 9) The completed project must match the approved project to ensure funding.
- 10) The grant is paid upon project completion, full payment and inspection of the project.
- 11) Grants are available to both the property owner and the business owner for each property once every 10 years.

For any additional information, please contact the DMRBIA office at 604-467-2420