

LUNDY'S LANE COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

COMMERCIAL FAÇADE, LANDSCAPING AND PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

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APPLICATION GUIDE





**LUNDY'S LANE COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN
APPLICATION PACKAGE**

**COMMERCIAL FAÇADE, LANDSCAPING AND
PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM**

- ❖ General Program Guide
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- ❖ Application Form

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This incentive program document is also on the City's Website at www.niagarafalls.ca under Community Improvement Plans.

General Program Guide

All of the financial incentive programs contained in the Lundy's Lane CIP are subject to the following general program requirements specified under each program. The general and program specific requirements contained in the Lundy's Lane CIP are not necessarily exhaustive and the City reserves the right to include other requirements and conditions as deemed necessary on a property specific basis:

- a) An application for any financial incentive program contained in the CIP must be submitted to the City prior to the commencement of any works to which the financial incentive program will apply and prior to application for building permit;
- b) If the applicant is not the owner of the property, the applicant must provide written consent from the owner of the property to make the application;
- c) An application for any financial incentive program contained in the CIP must include plans, estimates, contracts, reports and other details as required by the City to satisfy the City with respect to costs of the project and conformity of the project with the CIP;
- d) Review and evaluation of an application and supporting materials against program eligibility requirements will be done by City staff, who will then make a recommendation to City Council or Council's designate. The application is subject to approval by City Council or Council's designate. As a condition of application approval, the applicant must enter into an agreement with the City. This Agreement will specify the terms, duration and default provisions of the grant/loan. This Agreement is also subject to approval by City Council or Council's designate.
- e) Where other sources of government and/or non-profit organization funding (Federal, Provincial, Municipal, CMHC, Federation of Canadian Municipalities, etc...) that can be applied against the eligible costs are anticipated or have been secured, these must be declared as part of the Application. Accordingly, the grant may be reduced on a pro-rated basis;
- f) The City reserves the right to audit the cost of any and all works that have been approved under any of the financial incentive programs, at the expense of the applicant;
- g) The City is not responsible for any costs incurred by an applicant in relation to any of the programs, including without limitation, costs incurred in anticipation of a grant;
- h) If the applicant is in default of any of the general or program specific requirements, or any other requirements of the City, the City may delay, reduce or cancel the approved grant and/or loan, and require repayment of the approved grant. Grant money approved for a project shall not be held in a reserve stated beyond the defined dates of the agreement;
- i) The City may discontinue any of the programs at any time, but applicants with approved grants will still receive said grant, subject to meeting the general and program specific requirements;

- j) All proposed works approved under the financial incentive programs and associated improvements to buildings and/or land shall conform to all municipal by-laws, policies, procedures, standards and guidelines;
- k) All works completed must comply with the description of the works as provided in the application form and contained in the program agreement, with any amendments as approved by the City;
- l) Existing and proposed land uses must be in conformity with applicable Official Plan(s), Zoning By-law and other planning requirements and approvals at both the local and regional level;
- m) All improvements made to buildings and/or land shall be made pursuant to a Building Permit, and/or other required permits, and constructed in accordance with the Ontario Building Code and all applicable zoning requirements and planning approvals;
- n) The size and placement of existing signage, including rooftop signs and billboards, will be taken into consideration on a case-by-case basis by the City when determining eligibility to apply for and receive any of the financial incentive programs contained in the Plan. The City may require conformity to the Sign By-law and/or removal of existing signage as a condition of approval of any of the financial programs contained in the Plan;
- o) Approval of an application for any of the financial incentive programs contained in the Plan will be based on compatibility of the proposed use with the Lundy's Lane Urban Design Guidelines, and any other guidelines applicable to the Lundy's Lane Community Improvement Project Area;
- p) When required by the City, outstanding work orders, and/or orders or requests to comply, and/or other charges from the City must be satisfactorily addressed prior to grant approval/payment;
- q) Property taxes must be in good standing at the time of program application and throughout the entire length of the grant commitment;
- r) City staff, officials, and/or agents of the City may inspect any property that is the subject of an application for any of the financial incentive programs offered by the City; and
- s) The Commercial Façade, Landscaping and Property Improvement Grant Program may be combined with the Adaptive Reuse and Motel Revitalization Grant, but the total of all grants provided in respect of the particular lands and buildings of an applicant under the programs contained in the CIP and any other CIPs, shall not exceed the cost of rehabilitating said land and buildings. The Tax Increment-Based Grant is not intended to be combined with any other program.

Required Documents

REQUIRED DOCUMENT	TAX INCREMENT-BASED GRANT	COMMERCIAL FAÇADE, LANDSCAPING AND PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM	ADAPTIVE REUSE & MOTEL REVITALIZATION GRANT
Application applied for	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corporate - Incorporation documents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Financial - Current bank(s) and financial institutions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Details of primary construction lending	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Details of any secondary sources of government funding, e.g. federal, provincial, municipal, municipal heritage committee, CMHC, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Two detailed estimates of project construction costs prepared by bona fide contractors	<input type="checkbox"/> (only 1 required for this program)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project rental rates and/or sale prices per unit and per square feet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any leases currently in place	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Letter(s) of intent to Lease	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Projected expenses or actual if available	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Estimated assessed value upon completion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Property/Parcel - Proof of ownership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Site plan or survey	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Architectural drawings/design plans showing building, proposed building, façade and property improvements and/or interior layout drawings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Breakdown of other uses, e.g. commercial, institutional, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contracts in place	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Written authorization from property owner to apply for grant	<input type="checkbox"/> (only owners can apply for this program)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Picture of existing façade and areas of building (interior and exterior) to be restored/improved	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Grant Application Guide

1 Program Description

The intent of the Commercial Façade, Landscaping and Property Improvement Grant Program is to provide a financial incentive in the form of a grant to promote aesthetic improvements to those existing buildings and/or properties which are desirable to be maintained and improved over the long-term and which represent a positive contribution to the streetscape. The program applies to aesthetic improvements to the exterior façade of buildings, landscaping and related property improvements that improve pedestrian friendliness such as outdoor restaurant patios, walkway improvements and bicycle parking.

All alterations/improvements made to buildings and properties shall be made pursuant to a building permit, and constructed in accordance with the Ontario Building Code and all applicable zoning requirements and planning approvals.

2 Who can apply?

Owners of properties (and tenants with written authorization from owners) within the Lundy's Lane Community Improvement Project Area may apply. The City retains the right and absolute discretion to reject an application received from a person or corporation which, in the opinion of the City or its professional advisers, does not possess the experience, financial, technical, personnel or other resources that may be required to carry out the obligations that the applicant proposes to assume under the terms of its application and grant agreement.

3 How does the program work?

The program is structured as a matching grant program of up to 50% of the cost of certain types of façade improvement and building rehabilitation and improvement works, up to a maximum grant of \$40,000 per property. This program has two components:

a) Façade Component

A matching grant is available equivalent to 50% of the cost of eligible façade improvement/restoration works. The program is only available to an eligible building frontage, where "building frontage" means the width of the building that faces Lundy's Lane or another street. Rear façades and interior side yard façades are not eligible.

The maximum grant is calculated based on the length of an eligible façade. The maximum grant is calculated as \$5,000 plus the length of the façade (in meters) times \$500. For example, the maximum grant for a façade of a length of 20 metres would be \$15,000. In no case will the maximum available grant for eligible façade improvement works exceed \$20,000.

Furthermore, only those portions of the building that are located within 30.0 metres of the front lot line are eligible for these improvements. At the City's discretion, façades that are in a good state of repair may also not be eligible.

b) Landscaping and Property Improvements

A matching grant is available equivalent to 50% of the cost of eligible landscaping improvements, bicycle parking and outdoor patios. The maximum grant is calculated based on the length of the eligible property lines which are subject to the proposed improvements. The maximum grant is calculated as \$5,000 plus the length of the applicable property line (in meters) times \$250. For example, the maximum grant for an improvement associated with a front property line with a length of 20 metres would be \$5,000. In no case will the maximum available grant for these works exceed \$20,000.

Note: The maximum grant values are subject to availability and eligibility for matching Regional funding. Accordingly, the actual grant may be less.

4 What types of properties are eligible for funding?

Commercial and mixed use properties are eligible. Single detached dwellings or other ground-related residential uses are not eligible. This program is intended to be applicable to existing buildings and uses, and does not apply to redevelopment or infill development. Proposals for infill or redevelopment may alternatively be eligible for a tax increment equivalent grant.

5 What kinds of work are eligible for a grant?

a) Façade Component

The following types of façade restoration and improvement works on commercial and mixed use buildings are considered eligible for a matching grant under this program:

- i) Repair, replacement, restoration and / or enhancement of existing façade materials, such as masonry, brickwork, siding, stucco and plaster.
- ii) Improvements to architectural detailing, including cornices, sign boards, base boards, entryway articulation, exterior façade-facing lighting, and similar improvements that add to the architectural interest of the façade.
- iii) Installation of new awnings and canopies provided as part of the building frontage. The building frontage must face a public street to be eligible.

b) Landscaping and Property Improvement Component

The following types of landscaping and property improvement works are eligible for a matching grant under this program:

- i) **Landscaping and connectivity improvements** within the front yard or exterior side yard, or between a parking area and the public sidewalk, which in the City's sole opinion represents a significant positive aesthetic improvement for the site and the public realm, including:
 1. Works related to grading and site preparation to implement a professionally designed landscape treatment;
 2. Permanent elements and hardware associated with the landscape design, such as permanent planters and lighting;

3. The planting of trees and shrubs shall be eligible, however, flowers and other landscape features shall not be eligible;
 4. Walkways to better connect the sidewalk to the main building entrance;
 5. Publicly accessible seating areas;
 6. Lighting used to improve publicly accessible seating areas or walkways;
 7. Accessibility improvements such as installation or improvement of automatic doorways;
 8. Entryway leveling or widening to improve accessibility, where the existing building entrance is constrained and not level with the sidewalk; and
 9. Improved barrier-free connectivity between the sidewalk and the building entrance.
- ii) **The installation of new bicycle parking**, provided that:
1. The bicycle parking is publicly accessible by a walkway and the bicycle parking is located within the front yard or exterior side yard; and
 2. The eligible costs will only relate to permanent elements of the bicycle parking.
- iii) **The improvement or addition of an outdoor patio** (i.e., seating area) used in association with a restaurant, provided that:
1. The outdoor patio is located in the front yard or an exterior side yard; and
 2. The eligible costs will only relate to permanent elements of the outdoor patio, such as fencing, gateways, lighting, paving, landscaping elements and any seating elements that are permanently installed.

Eligible costs are considered to include those costs related to materials, labour, as well as fees related to professional services that are necessary for the applicant to prepare and submit a grant application (such as the services of an architect, engineer, or land use planner), Any costs associated with professional services will be considered up to a maximum of 15% of the eligible costs.

6 What are the maximum grant amounts?

The minimum investment in eligible works by the applicant for the Commercial Façade, Landscaping and Property Improvement Program shall be \$10,000 in accordance with the Plan.

The maximum total grant available is the lesser of \$40,000 or 50% of the eligible costs. This consists of up to \$20,000 available for façade improvements, and up to \$20,000 available for property and landscaping improvements. The calculation of the eligible grant is described in Section 3 above.

Grants are issued only upon completion of all approved works.

Note: The maximum grant of up to \$40,000 is subject to the availability and eligibility for matching Regional funding. Where Regional funding is discontinued or not available for this program, the maximum grant value may be less, at the City's discretion. The City does not intend to match the Region's portion of funding.

7 What conditions must be met to be eligible for a grant?

In addition to the General Program Requirements, the following program specific requirements must also be met:

- a) Applications must be made in writing (see attached for Application Form);
- b) The applicant will be required to submit at least two cost estimates from bona fide contractors not affiliated with the Owner/Applicant for the building and façade improvements to be completed;
- c) The applicant may be required to submit professional architectural/design drawings which shall be in conformity with any City issued urban design guidelines, heritage design guidelines, façade design guidelines and sign by-laws;
- d) The applicant may be required to submit other supporting documents as specified by the City (see attached list);
- e) Construction of all proposed improvements is to be completed within one (1) calendar year of the date of the approval of the grant. If the work is not completed within one (1) year, the grant will not be paid.

8 Is there a fee to apply?

No.

9 When will the grant funds be advanced?

The grant will be advanced in full when:

- a Grant agreement has been signed and executed (and registered where required by the City);
- construction is complete;
- the building has been inspected by municipal staff and has been deemed to be suitable for occupancy; and,
- the applicant provides proof that all contractors have been paid.

10 How do I apply for a grant?

1. Arrange a pre-application meeting with staff in order to determine program eligibility, proposed scope of work, project timing, etc...
2. If authorized to apply for a grant, complete an application form and ensure that your application includes all of the documents checked off in the required documents list.

11 What happens next?

- Applications and supporting documentation are reviewed by staff.
- Staff may request clarification or additional supporting documentation.
- Staff will perform an initial site visit(s) and inspection(s) of the property (if necessary).
- A recommendation on the grant application is made by staff and forwarded to City Council.
- If your application is approved, the Grant Agreement is then executed and a copy of the agreement(s) is returned to you. Construction of the approved works may now commence, subject to issuance of a building permit(s).
- Contact City staff toward work completion.
- Upon completion of the works, City staff will conduct a final site visit(s) and inspection(s) (as necessary) to ensure compliance with the Grant Agreement.
- Submit to the City, copies of paid invoices and "after" picture(s) of the completed works.
- Upon review and approval of all submitted documentation, the City will issue a grant cheque to the applicant for the full amount of the approved funding.

For further information on this program, please contact the Planning, Building and Development Services Department at (905) 356-7521 x4238.

Application Form

1 General Information and Instructions

1. Before filling out this application form, please read the attached Program Guide and arrange for a pre-application meeting with staff. The Program Guide describes the purpose, basic terms and conditions of the Commercial Façade, Landscaping and Property Improvement Grant Program.
2. If an agent is acting for the property owner, please ensure that the required authorization is completed and signed by the owner as provided in Section F below.
3. If you find insufficient space on this form to respond to questions, please provide additional information on a separate page and attach to your completed application form.
4. Please attach to the application the required supporting documents as indicated in the Required Documents list. An application will not be considered complete until all required documents have been submitted.
5. Please ensure that the application form is complete and that all required signatures have been supplied.
6. Please print (black or blue ink) or type the information requested on the application form.
7. You may deliver your application in person or send it by mail to:

City of Niagara Falls
Planning and Development Division
City of Niagara Falls
4310 Queen Street
P.O. Box 1023
Niagara Falls, ON L2E 6X5
8. For further information on this program, please contact the Planning, Building and Development Services Department at 905-356-7521, ext. 4238.

Commercial Façade, Landscaping and Property Improvement Program - Application

Application No. _____
(Office Use Only)

(Please Print)

2 Applicant Information

Name of Applicant _____

Mailing Address of Applicant _____

Telephone Number _____

Fax Number _____

E-mail _____

Registered Property Owner *(if the Applicant is not the property owner please fill in the following)*

Name of Registered Property Owner _____

Mailing Address of Property Owner _____

Telephone Number _____

Fax Number _____

E-mail _____

Agent Information *(if any)*

Name of Registered Agent _____

Mailing Address of Agent _____

Telephone Number _____

Fax Number _____

E-mail _____

Commercial Façade, Landscaping and Property Improvement Program - Application

Solicitor's Information *(if any)*

Name of Solicitor _____

Mailing Address of Solicitor _____

Telephone Number _____

Fax Number _____

E-mail _____

3 Property Information

Municipal address of property for which this application is being submitted

Assessment Roll Number(s) _____

Legal Description of Property (Lot and Plan Numbers)

Existing Property Use

Is property designated under the Ontario Heritage Act? Yes No

Are property taxes paid in full on this property? Yes No

Are there any outstanding work orders on this property? Yes No

Size of Property *(ha/acres)* _____

Commercial Façade, Landscaping and Property Improvement Program - Application

ii) Cost Summary – eligible façade and landscaping improvement works *(please attach 2 detailed costs estimates from bona fide contractors for work to be performed)*

Façade Component

Type of Improvement/Construction	Lowest Cost Estimate (\$)
a) Eligible façade restoration improvement works i) Base amount \$5,000 ii) _____ m building façade X \$500	Sum of i) and ii)
b) Other sources of government funding? <i>(includes Federal, Provincial, Municipal, Municipal Heritage Committee, CMHC...)</i>	
c) Total eligible costs: a) – b)	
d) Amount of grant applied for: <i>(0.5 x cost item c above) to a maximum of \$20,000 (as per the Program Guide)</i>	

Landscaping and Property Improvement Component

Type of Improvement/Construction	Lowest Cost Estimate (\$)
a) Eligible landscaping and property improvement works i) Base amount \$5,000 ii) _____ m of eligible property lines improved X \$250	Sum of i) and ii):
b) Other sources of government funding? <i>(includes Federal, Provincial, Municipal, Municipal Heritage Committee, CMHC...)</i>	
c) Total eligible costs: a) – b)	
d) Amount of grant applied for: <i>(0.5 x cost item c above) to a maximum of \$20,000 (as per the Program Guide)</i>	

Note: A minimum investment of \$10,000 in eligible costs is required for the project to be eligible.

iii) Construction Schedule
(Construction of all works must be completed within 1 year of grant advancement)

Approximate start date of construction) _____

Approximate end date of construction _____

5 Property Indebtedness

i) Property taxes and BIA Levies

Type	Annual amount levied	Amount in arrears
Property Taxes	\$ _____	\$ _____
BIA Levies	\$ _____	\$ _____

ii) Other encumbrances (e.g. liens, covenants, judgements)

Commercial Façade, Landscaping and Property Improvement Program - Application

iii) Credit check

The City of Niagara Falls reserves the right to conduct credit checks as it deems necessary. Please provide the following information:

Full name of Registered Property Owner _____

Current home address of Property Owner _____

6 Authorization

I, _____

am the owner of/applicant for the land that is subject of this application, and I hereby authorize my agent/solicitor _____

to make this application and to act on my behalf in regard to this application.

Dated at the *(City/Town of ...)* _____

this _____ *(day)* of _____ *(month)*, _____ *(year)*.

Name of Owner

Signature of Owner

If an agent is authorized in Section 6 above, all correspondence will be sent to the authorized agent. If no agent is authorized in Section 6 above, all correspondence will be sent to the Applicant

7 Sworn Declaration

I/WE HEREBY APPLY for a grant under this program.

I/WE HEREBY AGREE to abide by the terms and conditions of the grant program.

I/WE HEREBY CERTIFY to enter into a grant agreement with the City that specifies the terms and conditions of the grant.

I/WE HEREBY CERTIFY that the information contained in this application is true, correct and complete in every respect and may be verified by the City by such inquiry as it deems appropriate, including inspection of the property for which this application is being made.

I/WE HEREBY AGREE that if any statements or information in this application or submitted in support of this application are untrue, misleading or there is a material omission, the application may be rejected or not approved, or the grant may be delayed, reduced or cancelled.

I/WE HEREBY GRANT permission to the City, or its agents, to inspect my/our property that is subject of this application.

I/WE HEREBY AGREE that the grant may be delayed, reduced or cancelled if the work is not completed, not completed as approved, or if the contractors are not paid.

I/WE HEREBY AGREE the program for which application has been made herein is subject to cancellation and/or change at any time by the City in its sole discretion, subject to the terms and conditions specified in the Program. Participants in the program whose application has been approved and who have entered into a grant agreement with the City will continue to receive their grant, subject to their grant agreement.

I/WE HEREBY AGREE all grants will be calculated and awarded in the sole discretion of the City. Notwithstanding any representation by or on behalf of the City, or any statement contained in the program, no right to any grant arises until it has been duly authorized, subject to the applicant meeting the terms and conditions of the program and the grant agreement. The City is not responsible for any costs incurred by the Owner/Applicant in any way relating to the program, including, without limitation, costs incurred in anticipation of a grant.

Dated at the *(City/Town of ...)* _____

this _____ *(day)* of _____ *(month)*, _____ *(year)*.

Name of Owner or Authorized Agent *(please print)*

Signature of Owner