

City of Toronto Commercial Façade Improvement Program for BIA Members

Frequently Asked Questions

Below are some commonly asked questions. Many of these and other questions are answered in the [application package available from the City of Toronto](#). Please contact the [program administrator – Michael Saunders](#) for more specific & detailed answers to these questions.

Q: Does the grant apply to facade renovations that have already been completed?

A: *No, facade renovations must be completed following the application's approval by The City of Toronto Economic Development & Culture*

Q: Why are brick painting and stucco work not considered for funding as part of the Façade Improvement Program?

A: *Painting and stuccoing brick is considered to be damaging to the underlying material, and is therefore not an improvement of the commercial property.*

Q: I am having trouble finding a contractor to provide a quote for this work.

A: *The Riverside BIA maintains a list of contractors that have been used by other local businesses for the Façade Improvement Program. Please email office@riverside-to.com to obtain this list. We cannot speak to these contractors qualifications, professionally or quality of workmanship, so we recommend that you request references from each contractor prior to hiring them.*

Q: How often can I apply?

A: *Both property owner and business owner are eligible to apply separately for a grant for the subject property once every 5 years, provided that the improvements are paid for by each applicant separately. However, consecutive grant applications will be considered for projects that build upon the successes of previous façade improvements.*

Q: Can I apply for the grant if I have already started construction?

A: *No, for an improvement project to be eligible to receive a grant the project may only start after the application is approved.*

Q: How long do I have to complete the work once the application is approved?

A: *Typically you have until about the end of October to complete the facade improvement work (see agreement for details). In some cases, the deadline can be extended slightly on a per-request basis.*

Q: Do I have to get permits to do the work once the grant is approved?

A: *Yes, the necessary permits are still required for all construction once the facade grant has been approved.*

Q: Do I need to submit professional drawings in the application forms?

A: *The drawings in the application do not have to be produced by a professional, but they must be clear and legible in order to adequately show what facade work will be completed through the program.*

Q: How long do I have to complete the work once the application is approved?

A: Typically you have until about the end of October to complete the facade improvement work (see agreement for details). In some cases, the deadline can be extended slightly on a per-request basis.

Q: When is the deadline?

A: The deadline is by end of May of each year; however, the funding is given out on a first-come-first-serve basis, so funding is often gone prior to the deadline. We recommend that you apply well in advance in order to ensure that you will receive funding from this program.

Q: Is this program intended for commercial landlords or tenants?

A: This program is intended for both commercial landlords and tenants. The best facade renovations tend to happen when the landlord and tenant work together to improve the condition of the building, making it both more visually attractive and functional.

Q: I own multiple commercial properties, can I apply for the Facade Improvement Program for both?

A: You may make multiple applications for multiple commercial properties that you own, provided that those properties are not located directly beside each other. In the case that the commercial properties are located directly beside each other, they are considered a single property under provincial law and would only qualify for a single application, unless the properties have been severed by obtaining a part lot control exemption.

Q: Who provides this program?

A: This program is offered to small businesses located within established Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) by The City of Toronto.