

District of Tumbler Ridge

Business Façade Improvement Program

2024 Guidelines



Program Purpose and Goals

The physical environment in which we live and work greatly affects us. A community that is more appealing to the eye gives its citizens a greater sense of place and pride while also providing a positive image to visitors. The District of Tumbler Ridge is partnering with the Tumbler Ridge Chamber of Commerce to provide this program as an incentive to building/business owners to improve the character and physical appearance of their buildings. The Business Façade Improvement Program will focus on the physical appearance of the buildings in highly visible areas. Facades and storefronts of the retail and commercial buildings will be considered.

Funding for the Tumbler Ridge Business Façade Improvement program is provided by Northern Development Initiative Trust.

The Program

These program guidelines are intended to maximize the program benefit for improving aesthetics of commercial areas.

The District of Tumbler Ridge will provide a 50% reimbursement grant up to a maximum of \$5000 per project to improve the facades of commercial buildings.

Each building is eligible for an annual grant to a maximum of \$5,000. Each year a building may access the Business Façade Improvement program for new/incremental façade improvements.

Projects must have a minimum total cost of \$2500.

Application deadline is August 31, 2024.

The Business Façade Improvement program is offered by the District of Tumbler Ridge with funding provided by Northern Development Initiative Trust.

Eligible Areas

All eligible applicant businesses must be located within the municipal boundaries of Tumbler Ridge.

Eligible Applicants

- Applicant must be either the property owner or business owner (if the applicant is the business owner, the property owner must approve the application in writing and confirm that all improvements are to be paid for by the applicant)
- Non-profit and enterprising non-profit organizations (tenants)
- Home based businesses which are zoned commercial, have a storefront and are within the specified area
- Home based businesses without a commercial storefront (eligible for wayfinding signage only)
- Property taxes pertaining to the property are fully paid and current
- Current, valid business licenses for the property (unless otherwise exempt)

- No outstanding building permits, stop work orders, or development permit condition requirements outstanding
- Subject building has not received a previous grant under this program for the proposed improvements

Ineligible Applicants

- Residential homes located in the 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 Eligible Areas)
- Empty buildings or businesses that are not operating (exception if the business is renovating or doing improvements to the building in anticipation of re-opening)

Eligible Façade Improvements

Eligible improvements may consist of but are not limited to:

- Exterior lighting (new but not replacement)
- 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 (only if part of larger enhancements, no stand-alone entrance/doorway replacement)
- Awnings
- Signage (permanent on applicant property)
- Wayfinding signage (sign located on the business property i.e. at the bottom of a driveway).
 - Signs are eligible for 50% to a maximum of \$500 and must adhere to any signage bylaws and regulations
- Accessibility improvements (ramps, wider doors etc.) to the outside of the building only
- Patios [as regulated by District zoning and bylaws]

Ineligible Façade Improvements

The following improvements are ineligible:

- Routine maintenance
- Structural repairs
- Roofs
- Non-permanent fixtures (benches, planters, patio heaters etc.)
- Landscaping

- Paving
- Fencing
- Interior/internal improvements
- Improvements not visible from the public right of way
- Construction of additions, accessory buildings or new buildings
- Improvements that have been started prior to application approval
- Improvements deemed inconsistent with redevelopment purposes and design guidelines

Eligible Costs/Expenses

- Direct project labour costs
- Design, architectural or engineering fees (related to facade only)
- Contractor fees
- Rental of tools and equipment
- Project related materials and supplies
- Shipping and/or freight
- PST

Ineligible Costs/Expenses

- Staff wages and/or benefits
- Purchase of construction tools or equipment
- Operational costs including utilities (hydro, gas etc.)
- Duties
- Permit fees
- Expenses related to improvement to the building façade not visible from the public right of way
- Façade improvement expenses started prior to application approval
- GST

Design Guidelines

To be eligible for this grant, the applicant must submit designs and costing for the project.

Grants will be awarded first come first served based on the merit of design, visual impact to the streetscape, and how well the project fits the program criteria. Designs need to clearly outline the proposed improvements to allow the review committee to accurately evaluate the project and clearly see that the finished product looks like what was intended during the application process.

Projects must be as consistent as possible with the general form and character of the design guidelines set out for the area.

Please refer the [Tumbler Ridge Design Guidelines](#).

Building, sign and/or other permits may be required based on the extent of the improvements to be completed. These requirements are not waived by approval for the Business Façade Improvement Program and should be applied for prior to or concurrently with application for this program.

Business Application Process

Funding will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis until August 31, 2024, or until all funds have been subscribed. Submitting an application does not necessarily mean your project or a specific grant amount will be approved. All project proposals are subject to a comprehensive review, must meet high quality standards, and must reflect the spirit and intent of the Business Façade Improvement Program Guidelines.

Step-by-Step Process:

1. Owner/Tenant contacts the Chamber of Commerce to determine if the building qualifies for the Façade Improvement Program, discuss your project, and obtain the Program Guide and Application.
2. Owner/Tenant submits a complete application with designs. All required supporting materials and documents (including owner authorization) must be received prior to be considered complete.
3. Staff reviews the application and proposed façade improvements to ensure that improvements meet the applicable Design Guidelines and Business Façade Improvement Program Guidelines.
4. Applications are reviewed and a decision to accept or reject the application is made.
5. Applicant is advised of the decision by email.
6. For successful applications, a Letter of Understanding is sent to the applicant which must be signed by the owner/tenant and a representative of the Municipality.
7. Owner/Tenant acquires any required permits and completes the renovations.
8. Owner/Tenant provides verification of expenses and proof of payment (including invoices or other confirmations of payment) and submits their totals on the provided expense tracking sheet.
9. Owner/Tenant provides a Certification of Completion signed by the applicant or contractor, indicating that all work described in the application/approval and has been paid in full, as well as before and after photos (matching) and any other supporting documentation.
 - a. Owner/Tenant acknowledges they may be contacted by the Municipality or Northern Development to supply a testimonial about the value of the supported façade improvement to the business.
10. Owner/Tenant provides proof that the improvements have passed final inspection for municipal permits (where required) and meet all building standards and codes (where required).
11. Staff verifies that the renovations meet the Letter of Understanding requirements and approves reimbursement.
12. Applicant is issued a cheque.

Please note:

Approved projects must be completed by Year End (December 31).

Evaluation/Selection Process

The Business Façade Improvement Program is a joint venture offered by the District of Tumbler Ridge, facilitated by Tumbler Ridge Chamber of Commerce and sponsored by Northern Development Initiative Trust. The Chamber of Commerce and District staff will review all applications and determine eligibility regarding the projects that should receive funding.

Evaluation of projects will be based on the following criteria:

- Does the project for which the funds are being sought meet the applicable Design Guidelines?
- Will the project once complete have a noticeable impact on the streetscape?
- Was a professional designer or architect used?
- Will the project be completed by the end of December?

In the event that there are more eligible applicants than funds available to award, the Project Coordinator will prioritize applications based on the following criteria:

- Location with preference in areas outlined in these guidelines (high-visibility locations);
- Age and condition of building;
- Use of local contractors and services.

Additional Information

Submit an application to:

Jerrilyn Kirk

Tumbler Ridge Chamber of Commerce

Box 1821, Tumbler Ridge BC VOC 2W0

Phone: (250) 242-8047

Email: tumblerchamber@gmail.com

District of Tumbler Ridge Staff Representative:

Jessie Olsen – Director of Economic & Community Development

Town Hall – 305 Iles Way

Box 100, Tumbler Ridge BC VOC 2W0

Phone: (250) 242-4242

Email: jolsen@dtr.ca