

Community Improvement Plan Program

General Application Guidelines

February 2021



City of Owen Sound
Community Services Department
Planning & Heritage Division

Background

A Community Improvement Plan (CIP) is a tool that allows municipal planners and economic developers to work together to create policies and provide incentives targeting specific types of growth and investment.

A CIP, in a broad sense, encourages activities that contribute to the economic development, beautification, quality of life, aesthetic improvements, environmental sustainability, and the creation of a sense of place.

The City's CIP was adopted by City Council through By-law 2020-131 as a long-term strategy to revitalize the community, to improve the quality of life of residents, to enhance under-developed properties, and to support private investment in land and buildings.

The City's CIP (2020), has five (5) active financial incentive programs that provide capital grant funding to eligible property owners and authorized tenants of land and buildings each year. These include:

1. The Façade & Structural Improvement Grant Program
2. Accessibility Improvement Grant Program
3. Start-up Space Leasehold Improvement Grant Program
4. Property & Landscaping Improvement Grant Program
5. Vacant Building Expansion/Conversion Grant Program

The purpose of this guide is to outline the minimum eligibility and submission requirements and the application process that applies to all five (5) financial incentive programs noted above.

Reference should also be made to the City's Community Improvement Plan and program-specific guidelines within Appendix 'A' through 'E' of this document as applicable.

Who can apply?

Property owners and tenants authorized by the property owner of lands and buildings within the Community Improvement Project Area can apply.

The entirety of the City of Owen Sound is designated as the Community Improvement Project Area under the City's Community Improvement Plan, however, certain incentive programs, such as the Façade and Structural Improvement Grant Program, are only available within the Downtown and Harbour Area.

Applicants must satisfy all General Eligible Criteria provided in Section 6.3 of the City's Community Improvement Plan.

What do I need to submit an application?

The following materials are required, at a minimum, as part of a complete application to any of the financial incentive programs under the City's Community Improvement Plan:

1. A completed application form (see Appendix A).
2. Photographs of the existing building or property condition.
3. Itemized specification and detailed plans/drawings of the improvements to be undertaken.
4. At least two (2) cost estimates for eligible work provided by a qualified person (e.g., contractor, consultant, architect).

Additional submission materials may be requested by City Staff as part of a complete application, as appropriate, in the context of the financial incentive program. The requirement for additional submission materials will be identified at the **Pre-application Consultation** stage.

How do I apply?

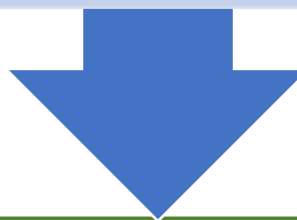
Step 1: Pre-application Consultation

Applicants are required to arrange and participate in a pre-application consultation meeting with City Staff in order to discuss matters such as: application requirements, program eligibility, project timing and scope of work. An initial site visit of the building/property will be performed by City Staff at this step.



Step 2: Submit Application

Following Pre-application Consultation, an applicant may submit their formal program application with the required supporting materials. Note that certain programs have application intake deadlines. Refer to program specific guidelines for more information.



Step 3: Application Review & Evaluation

City Staff will undertake a review of the application for completeness requirements. If the application clearly does not meet the program requirements (e.g., owner is in tax arrears), it will not be accepted.

Step 4: Application Approval

If an application is accepted, it will be processed by City Staff and considered by City Council (or its delegate) for approval. If approved, an applicant must enter into a Financial Incentive Program Agreement with the City.



Step 5: Project Work Begins

Once an application has been approved, an agreement signed, and the required permits are in place, the applicant may commence the improvement works.



Step 6: Final Inspection

Once the project work is complete, the applicant must submit photos, invoices and proof of payment for all eligible work completed. City Staff will perform a final site visit at this stage.



Step 7: Payment of Funds

Following a satisfactory final site inspection and provided all program requirements continue to be met, City Staff will issue payment of the approved grant.

Is there a fee to apply?

No, there is no fee to apply. Costs incurred by the applicant during the application process, such as costs associated with preparing materials for a complete application, are the sole responsibility of the applicant unless otherwise specified within program specific guidelines.

What else do I need to know?

- Applications must be approved by City Council, or its delegated approval authority, prior to beginning any work or improvements in order to be considered eligible.
- Be sure to review the applicable program specific guidelines for the financial incentive program you wish to apply for. The City, as its sole discretion, will select eligible projects based on the criteria provided in the City's Community Improvement Plan and program specific guidelines (see Appendix B to F).
- The City is not obligated to fund any project. Precedent will not influence the City's decision making.

Appendices

Appendix A – Application Form

Appendix B – Façade & Structural Improvement Program Guidelines

Appendix C – Accessibility Improvement Program Guidelines

Appendix D – Start-up Space Leasehold Improvement Program Guidelines

Appendix E – Property & Landscaping Improvement Program Guidelines

Appendix F – Vacant Building Expansion/Conversion Program Guidelines

Community Improvement Plan

Grant Program Application



1. Applicant Information

Name: _____ Relationship to property: _____
Address: _____
Email: _____ Phone: _____

2. Owner Information (if different from applicant)

Name: _____
Address: _____
Email: _____ Phone: _____

3. Primary Contact

Please pick one as the primary contact for this application:

Applicant Owner

4. Subject Property Information

Address: _____
Assessment Roll Number: 4259-

5. Application Type

Please identify what program grant(s) are being applied for in this application:

Façade & Structural Improvement Accessibility Improvement
 Start-up Space Leasehold Improvement

6. Description of Project Work (please use other pages if needed)

7. Disclosure

I am the owner of this property and I confirm, to the best of my knowledge, and agree that:

- The property taxes for the subject property are up to date.
- I have read the program guidelines and my project meets the minimum requirements for program eligibility.
- I authorize City Staff to enter upon the subject property and take photos of the project area for the sole purpose of this application.
- I may be required to enter into an agreement with the City, which may be registered on title of the subject property, to obtain grant payment.
- I have no objection to this application being considered by the City's staff delegate for approval.
- I understand that I must not start any project work until I have received written notification from the City about the decision regarding my application and any applicable agreement.

Community Improvement Plan

Grant Program Application



8. Authorization

I am the owner(s) of the lands subject to this application. I have given consent to the above-mentioned applicant (if any) to complete this application process on my behalf and/or as an authorized tenant of the building.

I certify that the personal information and documents submitted, or to be submitted, in this application, are true, complete and correct, including all supplementary details about my project. I certify that all information requested in this application has been disclosed.

I understand that personal information is collected under the authority of the *Planning Act* and the *Municipal Act, 2001*, S.O. 2001, c. 25, as amended. The information collected will be used to complete the subject Community Improvement Plan Grant Program application, and will form part of the public record. Questions about this collection should be addressed to the City Clerk.

Owner Name	Owner Signature
Applicant Name	Applicant Signature

9. Contact Us:

City Clerk

bbloomfield@owensound.ca

Planning & Heritage Division

planning@owensound.ca

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