

Town of Parry Sound – Façade Improvement Program Terms of Reference

Introduction

The Town of Parry Sound's vision is "to be the world-renowned jewel of the 30,000 Islands on Georgian Bay." One of Council's key 10-20 year Strategic Directions is that:

“Parry Sound will achieve a progressive and diverse economy, excelling in the role of being the economic hub of Georgian Bay. Economic development will flow from the creation and retention of forward-thinking, partnering businesses and business related agencies, charting sound development throughout the Town of Parry Sound while emphasizing diversity, identity, and opportunity.”

With this in mind, the Town of Parry Sound is pleased to present the Façade Improvement Program.

Background

In 1984, a community group was established with a mandate of identifying and examining issues that impact the Town's viability. Issues included:

- i. the Town as an area shopping centre central to Georgian Bay the terrain
- ii. the waterfront and waterfront development highway access
- iii. historic buildings

This exercise became known as the Parry Sound CAUSE Report. This report made recommendations related to the above issues. Many of the recommendations include reference to linkages from the commercial areas to the waterfront. In addition, reference is also made to the importance and the potential of the Seguin River and frontage along the river. The theme for the Façade Improvement Program is Marine Heritage.

The waterfront also had a significant role in the Town's heritage as identified in the CAUSE Report.

Although the CAUSE Report is not a Revitalization Plan, it does identify key fundamentals for area improvements.

Facade Improvement Program Purpose

To encourage business owners/tenants to improve their facades, including outdoor signage, outdoor lighting, landscaping and the installation of historic interpretive plaques on the front of their stores, where applicable. Buildings that combine residential and commercial use are not eligible unless located within the Downtown Business Association boundary.

Objectives:

The objectives of the Facade Improvement Program are as follows:

1. To create an attractive image of the Town that reflects the Great Lakes/Georgian Bay heritage theme and heritage character of the Town.
2. To encourage consistency in urban design and signage while recognizing the importance of creativity and diversity.
3. To reinforce the commercial core as the main service centre for the Town.
4. To create connections or linkages between the south end, downtown, waterfront and north end commercial areas.
5. To create attractive entrances to the commercial areas: north, south, William Street entrances and the waterfront access.

Great Lakes/Georgian Bay Heritage Theme

In keeping with the marine heritage theme, the color palette for the Facade Improvement Program will be from the Group of Seven Colour Collection, in appreciation of their works depicting the Georgian Bay landscape, linking the waterfront theme with the commercial areas. Facades, lamp hardware and signs must incorporate colors from this collection.

Historic Plaques on Buildings

In appreciation and recognition of the many historic buildings, the Facade Improvement Program also includes historic plaques which may be mounted on the storefronts. The Historic Plaque improvements are not limited to historically designated buildings only, rather, are available to any building with historic significance.

Application Process

During each year's budget process, Council will determine and approve the allocation of funds to the Facade Improvement Program.

The availability of grant money maybe limited to the total amount of funding that has been allocated to the Facade Improvement Program.

Council and the Application Review Committee reserve full right to either approve or reject any application.

1. Application for grants under the Facade Improvement Program shall be forwarded to the Application Review Committee c/o, the Manager of Building and Planning Services.
2. Where the applicant is not the building owner, the application must include approval from the building owner, authorizing the improvements.
3. Town staff will confirm that the subject property does not have tax arrears or outstanding orders against it.
4. The Application Review Committee may request a site visit to fully assess the application.
5. The Application Review Committee will review each application to confirm that the proposed work conforms with all Town By-laws.
6. The Application Review Committee shall forward a recommendation to Council, for their consideration. The applicant will be notified of the date when the recommendation will come forward to Council.
7. Upon approval, the Application Review Committee will mail the applicant (or the property owner if different than the applicant), the standard Letter of Agreement with an outline of the grant details. The Letter of Agreement is to be signed and returned to the Town of Parry Sound within 30 days.
8. Prior to commencing with any improvements, the applicant must obtain all necessary municipal permits. Building permit fees and other planning fees, if applicable, will be reimbursed once the work has been initiated.
9. All work completed by the applicant shall be in accordance with the Letter of Agreement and the requirements of the building permits and applications.
10. Upon completion of the project, the applicant shall submit copies of all invoices (stamped paid), and/or receipts pertaining to the approved improvements to the Manager of Building and Planning Services. The Chief

Building Official will inspect the completed work to ensure compliance with the commitment agreement. The Chief Building Official may obtain assistance from the Application Review Committee.

11. 50% of the grant will be paid to the applicant once the application has been approved and all necessary permits have been obtained. The balance of the grant will be paid within 30 days of receipt of the paid invoices, as indicated above.

Eligibility

Types of Facade Improvement Grants

Facade Improvement grants may be available for the following:

- i. Primary Building Facade Grants - where improvements are made to the front of the building, being the primary entrance.
- ii. Secondary Building Facade Grants - where a building has a side that faces a secondary street (likely an exterior side yard) and/or laneway, or is clearly visible from the street.
- iii. Outdoor Signage Improvement Grants - where improvements are made to exterior signage, including dark sky friendly lighting.
- iv. Landscape Improvement Grants - where improvements are made to the primary (front) of the building, or side of the building if that side fronts on a street and/or laneway.
- v. Heritage Signage Improvements - where improvements are made to the primary (front) of the building, or side of the building if that side fronts on a street and/or laneway, providing the building has historic significance (does not have to be registered as a Heritage Building).

Who is Eligible to Apply?

Commercial building owners and tenants of the buildings who operate a business in the Town of Parry Sound may apply for grants under the Facade Improvement Program. If the application is submitted by the tenant, the owner must give written authorization for the application to be considered. This applies for improvements to signage as well.

Buildings that combine residential and commercial use are not eligible unless located within the Downtown Business Association boundary.

Eligibility Criteria

1. Any work initiated prior to the review and approval of the Facade Improvement Program application is not eligible for funding.
2. Properties and buildings shall not have any tax arrears or outstanding work orders.
3. Facade Improvements are preferred for the entire building faces. However, partial improvements to a portion of a building face will be accepted if it results in a net improvement to entire facade. The overall goal is to create an

aesthetically pleasing façade as a whole. Improvements to signage and lighting may be made independent of improvements to the entire building faces.

4. A primary Building Facade Grant may be available for the building facade that forms the primary entrance to the building.
5. A secondary Building Facade Grant may be available for the side of the building, providing that side fronts on a street and/or laneway or is clearly visible from the street, and/or for improvements to the entire face of the secondary building facade.
6. Applicants may only apply for a maximum of \$25,000. in any one calendar year.
7. Improvements must be completed within 18 months from the date the application has been approved.
8. Improvements must be completed before another application is submitted.

Facade Improvement Program Grant Specifics

The following is what is eligible for the grant:

- i. Design Drawings, Artist's Rendering, Elevation Drawing or Architectural Plans
- ii. Site Plan Drawings
- iii. Facade Improvements on Primary Building Façade (front)
- iv. Facade Improvements on Secondary Building Façade (side)
- v. Sign Improvements
- vi. Heritage Sign Improvements
- vii. Exterior Lighting Improvements
- viii. Landscape Improvements
- ix. Building Permit Application Fees Grant

*Approval of applications is conditional on availability of funds.