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CITY OF
Lethbridge

URBAN CORE PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM POLICY

PURPOSE

The Council of the City of Lethbridge has a broad mandate to provide good government, develop and maintain a safe and viable community, and to supply desirable and/or necessary services to the community.

The purpose of the program is to financially support property owners and business owners with improvements that spur the preservation, revitalization and reinvestment of properties within the urban core of Lethbridge; including quality façade improvements, permanent interior and exterior space improvements, rehabilitation of key aspects that support the functionality and re-use of buildings, and barrier-free/accessibility improvements.

PERSONS AFFECTED

City Council / City Manager or Delegate

POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the City of Lethbridge to financially assist qualified property owners and business owners to spur preservation, revitalization, and reinvestment of properties within the urban core of Lethbridge.

APPLICATION INFORMATION

- a. Applicants must ensure that the application form is complete including required supporting documents. Additional requirements and/or supporting documents may be required on a case by case basis at the discretion of the City Manager or delegate based on the nature of the work proposed. Incomplete applications will be returned to applicant.
- b. Once an application is deemed complete by the City Manager or delegate, the application will be time stamped and applicable funding will be held for the project. Should there be inadequate funding to meet demand, applications will be held in a queue and processed in chronological order as funding becomes available.

ELIGIBILITY

- a. Projects shall consist of one or more of the following aspects: quality façade improvements, rehabilitation of key aspects that support the functionality and re-use of buildings, permanent interior and exterior space improvements and barrier-free and accessibility improvements. Spurring the preservation, revitalization and reinvestment of properties within the urban core.
- b. Projects shall be located within Lethbridge’s urban core districts including Downtown, Warehouse District, or 13 Street North as defined.
- c. Properties must not be in arrears in municipal taxes, municipal utilities or any other municipal charge.
- d. Eligible expenses and maximum funding per expense area include:

TABLE 1: ELIGIBLE EXPENSES AND MAXIMUM FUNDING PER EXPENSE AREA		
	URBAN CORE DISTRICT WITH AREA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN	URBAN CORE DISTRICT WITHOUT AREA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN
i. Structural matters	\$100,000	\$100,000
ii. Mold & Asbestos	\$100,000	\$100,000
iii. Accessibility/barrier free	\$100,000	\$100,000
iv. Historic Preservation	\$100,000	\$100,000
v. Other costs deemed by grant administrator to be critical in addressing a historically significant, deteriorating, functionally compromised or obsolete aspect of the building	\$100,000	\$100,000
vi. Professional fees and technical studies including architectural, engineering, environmental & geotechnical, traffic impact, etc.	\$10,000	\$10,000

vii. Façade & permanent exterior improvements	\$15,000 PER 25' STREET FRONTAGE	n/a
viii. Permanent interior improvements	\$30,000	n/a
ix. CPTED	\$5,000	\$5,000
x. Signage	\$2,000	n/a
xi. Non-permanent business improvements	\$5,000	n/a

e. Ineligible expenses in all areas include those related to:

- Ongoing operation or general maintenance & life cycle costs;
- Non-permanent finishes and equipment (i.e. lighting, cameras, security systems, furniture, etc.)
- Tenant improvements except those that address eligible issues;
- Construction equipment and related hardware, tools, machinery;
- Construction insurance and permits;
- Insulation;
- Administration, financial reporting, fundraising, preparing the application, and similar activities.
- Expenses incurred prior to date of grant application approval.

f. Projects that qualify under this program are eligible for other City of Lethbridge incentives.

FUNDING

- a. Project funding is limited to a maximum of 50% of eligible project costs that must be matched by the property and/or business owner in alignment with Table 1.
- b. Multiple applications may be accepted, however any given property or business is limited to \$100,000 for expense areas i -vii and \$75,000 for expense areas viii - xi for a combined total of \$175,000. These maximum limits are bound by a ten (10) year time period. Exceptions may be made at the sole discretion of the City if the property has been damaged due to fire, vandalism, or natural disasters.

- c. Approved projects that do not start construction with reasonable progress, as determined by the City Manager or delegate, within 1 year of the approval will have application approval cancelled and funding will be reallocated to projects in the queue.
- d. Retroactive funding shall not be permitted; eligible projects shall have commenced following an approved application by the City Manager or delegate.
- e. Project must receive all necessary approvals including but not limited to: Development Permit, building permits, and historic approvals (if applicable). If any approvals or permits lapse, project eligibility for funding will cease, application will be cancelled, and a new application will be required to be submitted.
- f. Funding will be issued following necessary inspections by the City Manager or delegate to confirm completion and submission of receipts and reporting requirements in alignment with the application form.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

City Council to:

- a. Approve the Urban Core Property Improvement Program Policy
- b. Approve the appropriate budget for the incentive program
- c. Review and evaluate the program outcomes

City Manager or delegate to:

- a. Provide administration of the grant program including individual application approvals.
- b. Consult with the necessary expertise required to make informed decisions on the program including but not limited to other city departments, committees (e.g. Historic Places Advisory Committee and Heart of Our City Committee), and external resources (e.g. Province of Alberta).
- c. Report program outcomes and disposition of the funding annually to City Council

Applicant to:

- a. Meet all requirements and conditions of the program.

DEFINITIONS

- a. 13 Street North - means the area of the City of Lethbridge that includes all properties that front on 13 Street North between 1 Ave North and 9 Ave North.
- b. Downtown - means the area of the City of Lethbridge bounded by the following: Stafford Drive on the east, 6 Avenue South to the south, the Crowsnest Trail to the north, and the Oldman River Valley top-of-bank setback line to the west.
- c. Preservation - means the action or process of protecting, maintaining, and/or stabilizing the existing materials, form, and integrity of a building.
- d. Rehabilitation - means the action or process of making possible a continuing or compatible contemporary use of a building.

- e. Restoration - means the action or process of accurately revealing, recovering or representing the states of a building, or of an individual component, as it appeared at a particular period in its history.
- f. Warehouse District - means the area of the City of Lethbridge bounded by the following: Stafford Drive to the west; 3 Avenue to the south (including all properties fronting on 3 Avenue); Mayor Magrath Drive to the east; and Crowsnest Trail to the north.

REFERENCES

- Heart of Our City Master Plan
- Integrated Community Sustainability Plan/ Municipal Development Plan
- Heritage Management Plan

REVISION HISTORY

- August 6, 2019: New Document (Adaptive Reuse Incentive Program Policy)
- October 19, 2020: Program extended to both property and business owner; maximum grant raised from \$100,000 to \$175,000; Urban Core definition expanded beyond Downtown, Warehouse District, and 13 Street North