

DISTRICT OF KITIMAT

Business Façade Improvement Program

2025 Guidelines and Application



KITIMAT
A Marvel of Nature and Industry

Program Purpose and Goals

The District of Kitimat and Kitimat Chamber of Commerce aims to enhance economic development by encouraging private sector investment in façade improvements for existing businesses.

The availability of façade improvement grants comes at a time in which the community is experiencing a period of renewal as a result of industrial development.

Funding for the District of Kitimat 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 Kitimat will provide a 50% reimbursement grant up to a maximum of \$5,000 per project to improve the façade of commercial buildings.

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

Projects must have a minimum total cost of \$1,000.

Application deadline is November 1, 2025. Work must take place in the 2025 calendar year, and approved projects must provide required reporting materials to the District of Kitimat by the first Friday of January, 2026 in order to receive grant funding.

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

Eligible Properties

Businesses may be eligible to receive a façade improvement grant if they meet the following criteria:

- Located in a commercial zone, Service Centre (M2, M2-A, M2-B zones) or Institutional zone
 - See map of areas on Appendix A

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)
- 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 Properties)
- 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 (affixed to the building)
- 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
- Permanent patios

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

In order to be eligible for this grant, the applicant must submit designs and costing for the project. Projects will be approved for this program on a first-come-first-serve basis until funding fully committed, as determined by District of Kitimat and Kitimat Chamber of Commerce staff.

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.

As much as possible, projects must be consistent with the general form and character of the design guidelines set out for the area.

For businesses located within the Downtown Revitalization Area, the improvements should align with Kitimat's Downtown Design Guidelines. A PDF version of the guidelines is available on the municipal website at: <https://www.kitimat.ca/en/business-and-development/downtown-design-guidelines.aspx>

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

Applications will be accepted by the District of Kitimat Economic Development Department by mail, in person or electronically.

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.

1. Owner/Tenant contacts the Municipality 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 completed application with designs. All required supporting materials and documents (including owner authorization) must be received prior to being 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 outlines the requirements to receive reimbursements.
7. Owner/Tenant acquires any required permits and completes the renovations.
8. Owner/Tenant provides verification of expenses (including receipts or other confirmations of payment) and submits totals on the provided Expense Reporting Form.
9. Owner/Tenant provides 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). Funding cannot carry over from one calendar year to the next. Supporting documents for the above steps 7 to 10 must be provided no later than the first Friday of January 2026.

Evaluation/Selection Process

A three (3) member Project Review Committee comprised of District of Kitimat (Economic Development, and Planning) and Kitimat Chamber of Commerce staff will review applications and determine which projects qualify for funding.

Projects determined to be eligible for the program will be approved on a first-come-first-serve basis.

Contact

Applicants or prospective applicants may contact the District of Kitimat Economic Development Department by:

e-mail: edo@kitimat.ca

In person or by mail:

270 City Centre,
Kitimat, BC

(Third floor of City Centre Mall)

Telephone: 250-632-8900

Business Façade Improvement Program
Grant Application
DISTRICT OF KITIMAT

Applicant Information

Applicant Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Building Address: _____

If you are applying as the tenant of a building, please provide the following information and attach a letter of consent from the owner(s) stating that you are permitted to make these changes and that the improvements will be at your expense.

Owner Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Applicant Signature: _____

Submitting an application for this project means you accept the Terms and Conditions as set out on page 9 of this document.

OFFICE USE

Application
Received by:

Date:

Project Description

Describe the proposed project; please attach any extra sheets, photos, designs, samples, etc. Describe the work to be done and materials to be used and, if this project is in the Downtown Revitalization Area, note how the improvements meet the Downtown Design Guidelines.

Planned Start Date: _____

Planned Completion Date: _____

Total Project Cost (estimated): _____

Funding Amount Requested: _____

Date Application Received: _____

Applicant Checklist		Attach to Application	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Property taxes paid	<input type="checkbox"/>	Photos of existing conditions (before)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Utility account paid	<input type="checkbox"/>	Detailed specifications
<input type="checkbox"/>	License fees paid	<input type="checkbox"/>	Contractor's cost estimates/quotes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Required permit applications approved by the District of Kitimat	<input type="checkbox"/>	Drawings/designs
<input type="checkbox"/>	Building owner authorization if applicant is not the building owner (complete Building Owner Authorization form)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Material and colour samples
Note: Incomplete applications will not be assessed. Please ensure all relevant documents are attached.		<input type="checkbox"/>	Signed Terms and Conditions

Business Façade Improvement Program

Terms and Conditions

I have read the complete application and concur with and give my consent to the work proposed in the application.

I assume all responsibility for obtaining appropriate architectural drawings, building permits and inspections, and hiring of contractors as necessary.

I will allow the District of Kitimat to use before and after pictures of the project and testimonials for the purpose of promoting this program in the future.

I agree not to involve the District of Kitimat or the Façade Improvement Program in any legal action between myself and any contractors, estimators, employees, workers or agents arising from or out of the Façade Improvement Project.

I give my consent to the District of Kitimat to make all inspections necessary to confirm that the approved plans are implemented in accordance with the expected standards.

Payment of approved grants will be made upon the applicant providing, by the First Friday of January 2026, the municipality proof of final completion of proposed improvements along with verification of expenditures and proof of final inspection (when required).

Business Façade Improvement Program
Expense Reporting Form

Applicant Name	
Business Name	

Item	Description	Cost (excluding PST/GST)	Invoice/ Receipt Attached?
TOTAL COST			
TOTAL ELIGIBLE GRANT			

Building Owner Authorization Form

LETTER OF AUTHORIZATION FOR:

Civic address: _____

This letter is to advise that I/we: _____ am/are the

registered owner(s) of the above referenced property and hereby authorize

_____ to submit an application to the Façade Improvement

program and perform any and all improvements that are outlined in this application.

Signature of registered owner(s) : _____

Date: _____

Appendix A

