

Authority: Planning and Growth Management Committee Item PG31.6, adopted as amended, by City of Toronto Council on July 23, 24, 25, 26, 27 and 30, 2018

CITY OF TORONTO

BY-LAW 1153-2018

To adopt a Community Improvement Plan for all Business Improvement Areas within the City of Toronto relating to the Commercial/Industrial Façade and Property Improvement Program.

Whereas pursuant to subsection 28(2) of the Planning Act, the City of Toronto has been designated as a Community Improvement Project Area by By-law 516-2008; and

Whereas subsection 28(4) of the Planning Act provides for adoption of a community improvement plan respecting the areas designated as a Community Improvement Project Area; and

Whereas the City of Toronto Official Plan contains provisions relating to community improvement in the areas contemplated in this by-law; and

Whereas a public meeting has been held in accordance with the Planning Act;

The Council of the City of Toronto enacts:

- 1.** The community improvement plan attached to and forming part of this by-law as Schedule A is adopted as the Commercial/Industrial Façade and Property Improvement Program Community Improvement Plan.

Enacted and passed on July 27, 2018.

Glenn De Baeremaeker,
Deputy Speaker

Ulli S. Watkiss,
City Clerk

(Seal of the City)

SCHEDULE A

A Community Improvement Plan for the City of Toronto's Business Improvement Areas: The Commercial/Industrial Façade and Property Improvement Program

1. PROJECT AREA and SUMMARY

1.1 Project Area

This Community Improvement Plan (CIP) applies to the City of Toronto Community Improvement Area which comprises all of the City of Toronto.

1.2 Summary

This CIP enables the City to provide grants to commercial and industrial property owners, and business tenants of such properties, provided those properties are located within a Business Improvement Area, to improve and enhance building facades and properties. The grant program is referred to as The Commercial/Industrial Façade and Property Improvement Program, and for the purpose of this CIP, the "Program".

The Program is offered only within Business Improvement Areas and the provision of grants is contingent on applicants meeting the eligibility criteria set out below.

2. AUTHORITY

Section 28 of the *Planning Act* authorizes municipalities to designate a Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA) where there is an official plan in effect that contains provisions relating to community improvement in the municipality. The *Planning Act* further authorizes Council to prepare a plan suitable for adoption as a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) for the CIPA.

The City of Toronto Official Plan contains policies related to Community Improvement as required in order to designate and prepare plans for a Community Improvement Project Area ("CIPA") as envisioned in Section 28 of the *Planning Act*.

The *Planning Act* defines CIPA as "a municipality or an area within a municipality, the community improvement of which in the opinion of the council is desirable because of age, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement, unsuitability of buildings or for any other environmental, social or community economic development reason".

The City of Toronto has been designated as a CIPA.

The *Planning Act* authorizes municipalities to use a CIP to "make grants or loans to the registered owners, assessed owners, and tenants to pay for the whole or any part of the cost of rehabilitating such lands and buildings in conformity with the community improvement plan".

The City of Toronto Official Plan provides that CIPAs will be identified for areas exhibiting:

- physical decline in local building stock
- barriers to the improvement or redevelopment of vacant or underutilized land or buildings such as contaminated soil, fragmented ownership, or financial disincentive to private investment; or
- declining social, environmental and/or economic conditions.

Section 5.2.2 of the Official Plan states that "Community Improvement Plans will be prepared to promote the maintenance, rehabilitation, revitalization and/or conservation of selected lands, building and communities facing challenges of transition, deficiency or deterioration or for any other environmental, social or community economic development reason".

The Official Plan further provides that CIPs will be prepared to provide direction regarding the following:

- allocation of public funds, in the form of grants, loans or other finance instruments, for the physical rehabilitation or improvement of private land and/or buildings including rehabilitation of contaminated properties;
- other municipal actions, programs or investments for the purpose of stimulating production of affordable housing, strengthening neighbourhood stability, facilitating local physical or economic growth, improving social or environmental conditions, or promoting cultural development.

3. BASIS

The City has an economic and social interest in enhancing the vibrancy, attractiveness and economic viability of its commercial areas, which are centres of community, cultural and entrepreneurial activity. They provide employment opportunities for local residents, and are often one of the defining features, and sources of pride, for the City's long-established and emerging neighbourhoods.

Likewise, the City has an interest in supporting the economic viability, safety and attractiveness of its industrial buildings and areas, and their ability to generate economic activity and employment opportunities. The readiness of industrial buildings and properties to better accommodate existing, expanding and new businesses, and ability to compete regionally and internationally for such businesses, is of key importance to the City's economic well-being.

For almost fifty years, Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) have played a vital role in keeping the City's retail main streets and commercial areas attractive, safe and economically vibrant. More recently, BIAs have been created which include significant

industrial areas, and BIA programs have expanded to include initiatives to assist industrial businesses.

The tools provided for in this CIP will enable the City to complement the efforts of BIAs by providing financial assistance to property owners and business tenants to improve their commercial and industrial buildings and properties, and in doing so enhance their appearance, functionality, safety and competitiveness in a rapidly-changing economic environment.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE CIP

The primary objective of this CIP is to enhance the economic viability, vibrancy and competitiveness of the City's commercial and industrial areas by providing direct financial assistance to commercial and industrial property owners and tenants for a range of exterior building and property improvements.

5. COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL FAÇADE AND PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

This CIP enables the City to provide grants to commercial and industrial property owners and tenants for property improvements.

5.1 Program Details

5.1.1 Grant Amount

- Commercial and industrial property owners and business tenants within BIAs are eligible for grants covering a maximum of 50 percent of the eligible improvements to commercial and industrial buildings and properties.
- The grant awarded will be based upon the lowest contractor estimate submitted with the application.
- Applicants are eligible for a base grant of up to \$12,500 for eligible improvements, and up to an additional \$2,500 in grant funding towards the installation of exterior accessibility devices which meet *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* ("AODA") design standards.
- The minimum base grant amount is \$2,500.
- Multi-unit strip plazas under single ownership, or adjoining buildings on separate properties under one ownership, are eligible for additional grants of up to \$2,500 per unit or adjoining building for which improvements are proposed to a maximum grant of \$25,000, inclusive of the \$12,500 base grant.

5.1.2 Eligible Improvements

Eligible Improvements are:

- Brick cleaning and restoration treatments
- Re-pointing of brick masonry
- Exterior painting (not including painting of brick) as part of other façade improvements
- Replacement of doors or windows (on any level on the front facade of the building)
- Replacement or repair of cornice, parapets and other architectural features
- Installation or replacement of awnings or canopies
- Installation and improvement of wall-mounted signage
- Installation and improvement of ground-mounted signage
- Installation or upgrading of exterior decorative or security lighting
- Installation of lighting for on-site parking areas
- Installation of ramps, handrails and other exterior accessibility devices which meet AODA design standards
- Security fencing
- Installation of solar panels
- Permanent on-site boulevard landscaping features (excluding plant material) visible from a public street
- Other site and exterior building improvements as agreed to by the General Manager of Economic Development and Culture or their designate.
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5.2 Program Eligibility

The Commercial/Industrial Façade and Property Improvement Program is offered to commercial and industrial property owners, and business tenants of such properties, within BIAs which:

- a) have a BIA Board of Management approved by City Council;
- b) have operating budgets, adopted at a general meeting of the BIA and approved by City Council, for the year in which the grant is requested; and
- c) are in good standing with the respect to the provisions of all applicable legislation and the City's Municipal Code for BIAs.

5.3 Applicant Eligibility

Grant applicants must:

- a) be the owner or business tenant of a commercial or industrial property who has the written permission of the property owner; and
 - i. a commercial property must be used for commercial purposes at street level; and
 - ii. a tenant must have the written permission of the owner to make any improvements to the property and receive grants;
- b) have no outstanding taxes due to the City;
- c) apply and be granted approval for any grants prior to commencing the proposed improvements;
- d) propose through an application, a minimum of three (3) of the Eligible Improvements to each building or unit to which the application applies;
- e) have not have received a façade improvement grant for the property in the previous 10 years; and
- f) agree to the terms and conditions of the facade improvement program.

5.4 Program Administration and Implementation

The Economic Development and Culture Division will administer the Commercial/Industrial Façade and Property Improvement Program. It will work with applicants to help ensure that the Program objectives are achieved. Grants will be made available annually, subject to budget availability, and completed applications will be considered on a "first-come-first-served" basis in order of submission date until such time as the Council-approved Program funding is fully allocated.

Decisions regarding financial commitments to the Commercial/Industrial Façade and Property Improvement Program will be at the discretion of City Council in each budget year.

6. APPLICATION TO PREVIOUSLY ADOPTED COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLANS

This Community Improvement Plan replaces and supersedes façade improvement related policies in previously adopted Community Improvement Plans, as they may apply to BIAs within the City.