



SQUAMISH-LILLOOET REGIONAL DISTRICT
ELECTORAL AREAS A and B

Business Façade Improvement Program

2025 Guidelines

Program Purpose and Goals

The Business Façade Improvement Program provides grant funding to property and business owners located in Electoral Areas A and B of the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) to renovate, restore, or redesign commercial building facades and storefronts. The goal of the program is to assist communities within SLRD Areas A and B in creating diversified, resilient, and sustainable local economies.

The program is intended to:

1. Boost the economic viability and vibrancy of the many small communities within SLRD Areas A and B by supporting visual improvements such as facades, signage, murals, architectural features, siding, lighting, and awnings;
2. Stimulate private sector investment in local business improvement;
3. Enhance the quality of life for residents, workers, and visitors to the communities within the SLRD Electoral Areas A and B;
4. Increase the attractiveness of the communities to enhance community pride and visitor experience; and
5. Improve community appearance to support recruitment of new businesses and/or residents.

Funding for the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Electoral Areas A and B Business Façade Improvement program is provided by Northern Development Initiative Trust.

The Business Façade Improvement Program is aligned with the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District's Regional Growth Strategy Goal #4: Achieve a Sustainable Economy, and also fits with cultural heritage and economic development objectives noted in the Area A and Area B Official Community Plans.

SLRD Regional Growth Strategy Goal #4: Achieve a Sustainable Economy

- Sustainable economic development will contribute to the livability of the region, helping to sustain the quality of life we all desire and will help reverse the economic decline in the northern part of the region.

Electoral Area A (Upper Bridge River Valley) Official Community Plan (OCP) – related objectives:

- To encourage and facilitate the identification, protection, and conservation of heritage resources, including historical buildings, archaeological sites, and historic trails.
- To foster a diversified economy that meets local and visitor needs.

Electoral Area B Official Community Plan (OCP) – related objectives:

- To support the identification, protection, and conservation of heritage resources, including historical buildings, pre-contact archaeological sites, and historic trails.
- To foster a diversified economy that meets local and visitor needs, that contributes to the rural character of the area, and stimulates healthy ecological and social conditions.

The Program

These program guidelines are intended to maximize the program benefit for improving aesthetics of commercial areas in SLRD Electoral Areas A and B. The Squamish-Lillooet Regional District will provide a 50% reimbursement grant up to a maximum of \$5,000 per building/project to improve the façades of commercial buildings. Each building is eligible for an annual grant to a maximum of \$5,000. A business may submit one application per year, for new/incremental façade improvements. Projects must have a minimum total cost of \$1,000.

Application deadline is March 31, 2025. After the application deadline, should any funding remain, applications will be accepted and reviewed on a “first come, first served” basis until the annual budget of the program has been allocated.

The Business Façade Improvement program is offered by the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Electoral Areas A and B with funding provided by Northern Development Initiative Trust.

Eligible Properties

Existing buildings with a commercial storefront located within SLRD Electoral Areas A and B are eligible for the program.

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)
- Non-profit and 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
- The subject property 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 (permanent; 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
- Patios (fixed or semi-permanent structures) located on the commercial property

Ineligible Façade Improvements

The following improvements are ineligible:

- Routine maintenance
- Structural repairs
- Roofs
- Non-permanent fixtures (benches, planters, patios, patio heaters etc.)
- Landscaping
- Paving
- Fencing
- Interior/internal improvements
- Any improvements not visible from the public right of way
- Construction of additions, accessory buildings, or new buildings
- Any improvements that have been started prior to application approval
- Any improvements deemed inconsistent with redevelopment purposes and design guidelines

Eligible Costs/Expenses

- Direct project labour costs
- Design, architectural or engineering fees (related to façade 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

To be eligible for this grant, the applicant must submit designs and costing for the project. Applications will not be reviewed until designs and costing have been received. Designs need not be done by a professional architect or designer, but they must be to scale. It is strongly encouraged that the applicant seeks professional help, keeping in mind that the grants will be awarded based on merit of design and visual impact to the streetscape.

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 should be consistent with the general form and character of the design guidelines set out for the area.

Design guidelines should follow the recommendations outlined in the relevant Official Community Plan (OCP), including relevant Development Permit Area requirements and/or sub-area plans, depending on where the building is located.

Copies of the Electoral Area A and Electoral Area B Official Community Plans and related maps can be found on the SLRD website: www.slrd.bc.ca/inside-slrd/bylaws (Choose “Official Community Plans” as the Bylaw type).

Applicants wishing to apply to renovate, restore, or redesign building façades in Electoral Area B, in the vicinity of the District of Lillooet are also encouraged to review design guidelines in the District of Lillooet OCP, a copy of which can be found on the District of Lillooet website: www.lillooet.ca (Search for OCP Bylaw 2020-040 Lillooet 2040; specific guidelines can be found in section 5.3 of the OCP).

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

Prospective applicants can download the SLRD Business Façade Improvement Program Guidelines and Application Form from the SLRD website: www.slrd.bc.ca/BusinessFacadeImprovementProgram.

The application deadline is March 31, 2025. After the application deadline, should any funding remain, applications will be accepted and reviewed on a “first come, first served” basis until the annual budget of the program has been allocated.

Applications, including building owner authorization (if applicable), photos of existing conditions (before improvements), detailed specifications, contractor’s cost estimates, project drawings/ designs, material/ colour samples, and proof of up-to-date property taxes can be submitted by email, mail, or in person and should be directed as follows:

Squamish-Lillooet Regional District
Business Façade Improvement Program
ATTN: Jeannette Nadon, Indigenous Relations Advisor
By Email: jnadon@slrd.bc.ca

By Mail: PO Box 219, Pemberton, BC V0N 2L0
In Person: 1350 Aster Street, Pemberton, BC

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 SLRD to determine if the building qualifies for the Façade Improvement Program, discuss your proposed project, and obtain the Program Guide and Application.
2. Owner/Tenant submits a complete application with designs prior to the application deadline. All required supporting materials and documents (including owner authorization) must be received prior to the application deadline to be considered complete.
3. SLRD 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 meeting the eligibility requirements and applicable Design Guidelines and Façade Improvement Guideline are forwarded to the SLRD Selection Committee for its review, and a decision to accept or reject the application is made.
5. Applicant is advised of the decision by email and mailed letter.
6. For successful applications, a Letter of Understanding / Partnering Agreement is sent to the applicant which must be signed by the owner/tenant and a representative of the SLRD.
7. Owner/Tenant acquires any required permits and completes the renovations. **Note: All related permit fees are the responsibility of the owner/tenant (i.e. not eligible for reimbursement).**

8. Owner/Tenant provides verification of expenses and proof of payment (including invoices or other confirmation of payment) and submits their totals on the provided expense tracking sheet.
9. Owner/Tenant provides a Certification of Completion signed by the applicant or the contractor, indicating that all work described in the application/approval and has been paid in full, as well as “before and after” photos (matching) and any other supporting documentation.
 - a. Owner/Tenant acknowledges they may be contacted by the SLRD or Northern Development to supply a testimonial about the value of the supported façade improvements to the business.
10. Owner/Tenant provides proof that the improvements have passed final inspection for SLRD permits (where required) and meet all building standards and codes (where required).
11. SLRD 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 December 31, 2025. No exceptions.
- Funding cannot carry over from one calendar year to the next.

Evaluation/Selection Process

Following the application deadline, all applications meeting the eligibility requirements and applicable Design Guidelines and Façade Improvement Guidelines will be forwarded to the SLRD Project Review Committee for review. The Project Review Committee will consist of three members, including: the SLRD Area A Director, the SLRD Area B Director, and the SLRD Chief Administrative Officer or designate.

If there are more eligible applicants than funds available to award, all Eligible Projects will be evaluated based on the following ranked criteria:

- Quality of design
- Age and condition of building
- Impact on streetscape
- Overall impact to community

Program Marketing Plan

The following communication channels will be used to promote the Business Façade Improvement Program in SLRD Electoral Areas A and B:

- News release, in cooperation with Northern Development Initiative Trust (issued to Bridge River Lillooet News, the Mountain Telegraph and shared on www.slrd.bc.ca)
- Program page on SLRD website:
www.slrd.bc.ca/BusinessFacadeImprovementProgram
- Shared on social media (SLRD Facebook and X)
- Shared with the Bridge River Valley Community Association, Seton Portage – Shalalth & District Chamber of Commerce, Lillooet & District Chamber of Commerce, District of Lillooet
- Word of mouth

Additional Information

As a cooperative venture between businesses, property owners, and the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District, the Business Façade Improvement Program is an excellent resource to support beautifying the streetscape for the benefit of local citizens and visitors to the rural communities in SLRD Electoral Areas A and B.