

Downtown Community Improvement Plan Guidelines

Program Overview

The vitality of a Downtown is often used as a means of evaluating the relative economic health of a community. It is therefore essential to maintain a strong Downtown in order to portray a positive picture of the community to residents and investors. As a result, the City of North Bay and the North Bay Downtown Improvement Area (DIA) have collaborated to implement a revitalization strategy.

The City and its partners recognize that the successful revitalization of the downtown requires significant private sector investment. To encourage and facilitate this type of investment, the City of North Bay established the Downtown Community Improvement Plan. This municipally funded grant and rebate program has provided a host of financial incentives to business and property owners in the downtown. The City has updated this Plan to allow it to continue to meet the needs of downtown business owners to support the redevelopment of the downtown.

Goals & Objectives

The primary objective of the Downtown Community Improvement Plan is to continue the revitalization of the Downtown core. In order to accomplish this, generally speaking, priority will be given to projects that will:

- Create new, permanent jobs or full-time equivalent positions in the Downtown;
- Create infill development;
- Improve the physical condition of buildings in the target area while providing for new usable space in the downtown area;
- Increase the amount of residential units in the Downtown;
- Increase the number of retailers on the ground floor;
- Increase the number of professional workers in the downtown;
- Support the development of the Downtown and Waterfront areas as a demand generator and tourism destination;
- Meet identified gaps in the Downtown's retail mix;
- Encourage development that complements the built form and commercial mix in the downtown, as outlined in the Official Plan; and
- Priority will be given to properties that have not previously benefitted from funding through the Downtown Community Improvement Plan.



Financial Incentive Programs

Professional Study Grant Program (PSG)

The PSG program can offer successful applicants located in the Downtown Target Area up to 75% funding to a maximum amount of \$3,750 to assist with professional fees required in the preparatory phases of a redevelopment project.

Eligible costs include fees incurred to engage a professional, third party consultant to prepare plans, drawings or analysis required for a renovation and/or development project.



Building Improvement Grant Program (BIG)

The BIG program can offer successful applicants located in the Downtown Target Area up to 50% funding to a maximum amount of \$30,000 to assist with the capital costs associated with building renovations. The intent of the program is to support capital projects that will create new usable space in the downtown to support the establishment of new businesses or significantly enhance existing businesses. The program also supports the upgrading of facades and the creation of new residential units.

Eligible costs include third-party contractor fees and construction materials.

Municipal Fee Rebate (MFR)

The MFR program can offer successful applicants located in the Downtown Target Area or the Rail Lands Target Area up to a 100% rebate of identified fees imposed by the municipality as part of a redevelopment project. Applicants are to pay the required fee(s) at the time they are requested. Approved applicants will receive a full reimbursement of the fee upon the successful completion of the redevelopment/renovation project.

The following municipally imposed fees are eligible for reimbursement under the MFR Program:

- Building Permit;
- Demolition Permit;
- All Planning Act applications (Minor Variances, Zoning By-law Amendments, etc.);
- Site Plan Control Agreement;
- Sign Permit; and
- Encroachment Agreement.

Tax Incentive Finance Program (TIF)

The TIF program can offer successful applicants a multi-year rebate of the incremental amount of property taxes incurred by a property owner based on the improvements and/or renovations carried out under the North Bay DCIP.

In the Downtown Target Area, the amount of the rebate is a 100% rebate of incremental property taxes in Years 1 to 5, 80% rebate in Year 6, 60% rebate in Year 7, 40% rebate in Year 8 and 20% rebate in Year 9. The applicant would be fully responsible for the incremental taxes beginning in Year 10 following the renovation project.

In the Rail Lands Target Area, the amount of the rebate is 50% rebate of incremental property taxes in Years 1 to 5, 40% rebate in Year 6, 30% rebate in Year 7, 20% rebate in Year 8 and 10% rebate in Year 9. The applicant would be fully responsible for the incremental taxes beginning Year 10 following the renovation project.

Exemption from Minimum Parking Requirements

Applicants within the Downtown Target Area are eligible to apply for an exemption from the minimum parking requirements of the Zoning By-law. This exemption allows development to occur and property owners to achieve a building permit without providing the minimum number of parking spaces required under the Zoning By-law.

Terms & Conditions

The City may accept multiple applications for the same property for all DCIP Programs except the Building Improvement Grant Program, where the project being undertaken is substantially different than previous approvals. In extraordinary circumstances, the City may wave this limitation.

All applicants must demonstrate that their property taxes are current at the time of application. Applicants must also attest that their property is in compliance with all municipal by-laws and is not subject to any work orders issued by the City's Building Department, Planning Department and/or Fire Department.

Other conditions include:

- i) All grants and rebates will be approved at the sole discretion of the City. All applications for assistance under this program will be considered subject to the availability of funding.
- ii) Costs incurred prior to the submission of a formal DCIP application to the City of North Bay will be deemed ineligible and will not be reimbursed.
- iii) The City is not responsible for any costs incurred by an applicant in relation to any of the programs, including without limitation, costs incurred in anticipation of a grant and/or tax assistance.
- iv) If the applicant is in default of any of the general or program specific requirements, or any other requirements of the City, the City may delay, reduce or cancel the approved grant and/or tax assistance.
- v) The City may discontinue any of the programs at any time. In this case, applicants who have been approved for grants and/or tax assistance will still receive said grant and/or tax assistance, subject to meeting the general and program specific requirements.
- vi) All proposed works approved under the incentive programs and associated improvements to buildings and/or land shall conform to all municipal by-laws, policies, procedures, standards and guidelines, including applicable Official Plan and zoning requirements and approvals.
- vii) The improvements made to buildings and/or land shall be made pursuant to a Building Permit, and/or other required permits, and constructed in accordance with the Ontario Building Code.
- viii) Outstanding work orders, and/or orders or requests to comply, and/or other charges from the City (including tax arrears) must be satisfactorily addressed prior to grant and/or tax assistance payment.
- ix) City staff, officials, and/or agents of the City may inspect any property that is the subject of an application for any of the financial incentive programs offered by this program.
- x) The applicant may only have one active application in process per property.
- xi) Any significant changes in design or scope of the project must be approved by the City.
- xii) The City will withhold 10% of its total contribution for a minimum of 45 days following the project's completion.
- xiii) The project must commence construction within one (1) year of formal notification of approval under the program. An extension to an approval will only be granted, where in the opinion of the City, there are reasonable unforeseen circumstances that have resulted in delays to the implementation of the project.

Contact Information

For additional information or to obtain an application form, please contact:

Adam Curran
Policy and Business Development Planner
Planning Services, 2nd Floor, City Hall
200 McIntyre Street East
North Bay, Ontario P1B 8H8
Phone: 705-474-0626 ext. 2402
Fax: 705-474-5928



Target Area Map

