

**PROGRAM GUIDE FOR CITY OF PORT COLBORNE
EAST WATERFRONT COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN RESIDENTIAL
INTENSIFICATION AND REHABILITATION GRANT**

This guide is to be used by persons wishing to apply for Community Improvement Plan funding for the incentive programs offered under the East Waterfront Community Improvement Plan by the City of Port Colborne.

Further Information:

For more information regarding the Residential Grant Program please contact:

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Program Description

The purpose of the Residential Grant Program is to provide a financial incentive in the form of a grant to promote the renovation of existing residential units and construction of new residential units through:

- i) Renovations to existing residential units in mixed use buildings (which include commercial/residential, commercial/institutional and other mixed uses containing a commercial use);
- ii) Conversion of excess commercial and vacant space on upper stories of commercial and mixed use buildings to residential units;
- iii) Residential intensification; and
- iv) Infilling of vacant lots with new residential units.

Further, this program is in place to promote the rehabilitation (maintenance and improvement) of existing single detached and multi-unit residential properties. This program is not intended for the conversion of ground floor commercial space to residential use.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. *Who can apply?*

Only owners of properties within the Port Colborne East Waterfront Community Improvement Plan Project Area that meet the program eligibility requirements may apply.

The City retains the right and absolute discretion to reject an application received from a person or corporation which in the opinion of the City or its professional advisers, does not possess the experience, financial, technical, personnel or other resources that may be required to carry out the obligations that the applicant proposes to assume under the terms of its application and grant agreement.

2. *How does the program work?*

Residential Intensification Component

The City will provide a grant equal to 50% of the cost of rehabilitating existing residential units and/or constructing new residential units on the basis of \$10 per square foot of habitable floor space rehabilitated/constructed, to a maximum grant of \$10,000 per unit, and a maximum of 4 units per property/project. The total maximum grant for any property/project will be \$40,000.

The grant can be used for rental or ownership units. If used for ownership units, the grant may apply to buildings that fall under the *Condominium Act*. The grant will be paid once all construction is complete and the City has conducted all final inspections.

Residential Rehabilitation Component

The City will provide a grant equal to 50% of the cost of eligible exterior building maintenance and property improvement works to single and multi-unit residential properties. The minimum grant per property will be \$1,000 or greater value as determined by the City, with a maximum of two (2) applications per property, and a maximum total grant per property of \$12,500.

3. *What types of projects are eligible for funding?*

The following types of projects are eligible:

- i) Renovations to existing residential units in a mixed use building to bring these units into compliance with the Building Code, Fire Code and Property Standards By-law;
- ii) Conversion of excess commercial space or vacant space in an existing commercial or mixed use building that creates two or more residential units;
- iii) Construction of at least two net residential units on vacant property (i.e. vacant lots and parking lots).

4. *What conditions must be met to be eligible for a grant?*

In addition to the General Program Requirements, the following specific requirements must also be met:

Residential Intensification Component

- i) The applicant will be required to submit at least two (2) cost estimates from bona fide licensed contractors, including a breakdown of costs;
- ii) Eligible works must conform to the Region of Niagara's Urban Design Guidelines, as amended from time to time, and appropriate reference material as determined by City Staff;
- iii) The following types of projects are considered eligible for a grant under the Residential Intensification component of this program:
 - a) Renovations to existing residential units in a mixed use building to bring these units into compliance with the Building code, Property Standards By-law and the Fire Code;
 - b) Existing commercial or mixed use building where two or more net residential units are created; and/or
 - c) Vacant lot (including parking lots) converting to mixed use or residential use where two or more net residential units will be created.

Residential Rehabilitation Component

- i) The following types of exterior building maintenance and property improvement works are considered eligible for a matching grant under this program:
 - a) Cleaning, painting, repair or replacement of exterior façade materials;
 - b) Repair/replacement of front doors, windows and porches;
 - c) Repair/replacement of cornices, parapets, eaves and other architectural details;
 - d) Landscaping, including walkways and permanent plant materials (to a maximum 15% of the grant amount); and
 - e) Other similar repairs/improvements as may be approved by Staff.
- ii) ALL eligible works must be visible from the road right-of-way and must be acceptable to and approved by the City.

5. *Is there a fee to apply?*

No.

6. *When will the grant funds be advanced?*

The grant will be advanced in full only when:

- i) A Grant Agreement has been signed and executed;
- ii) Construction is complete;
- iii) The building has been inspected by Staff; and
- iv) The applicant provides proof that all contractors have been paid.

7. *What are the default provisions?*

The default provisions are contained in the Grant Agreement. Payment of the grant may be cancelled if:

- i) Property taxes are more than three (3) months in arrears;
- ii) The building is demolished or any of the heritage features are altered in any way that would compromise the "Reason for Designation";
- iii) The applicant declares bankruptcy;
- iv) The applicant uses the grant for works that are not eligible for this program;

- v) The applicant fails to maintain the improvements as required in the Grant Agreement; and
- vi) The applicant is in default of any of the provisions of the Grant Agreement.

8. *How do I apply for a grant?*

In order to apply for a grant, an applicant must arrange for a pre-application meeting with staff in order to determine program eligibility, proposed scope or work, project timing etc.

Once authorized to apply for a grant, the applicant must complete and submit an application form, ensuring that all required signatures have been provided and that the application is accompanied by all required documentation as shown on the required documents list.

9. *What happens next?*

The following is a basic outline of what occurs, once the application is submitted:

- i) An application and supporting documentation are reviewed by staff to ensure that they meet all of the eligibility requirements. If your application does not meet the eligibility requirements, you will be notified of this in writing.

*Staff may request clarification or additional supporting documentation.
- ii) Staff will perform an initial site visit(s) and inspection(s) of the property (as required).
- iii) A recommendation on the grant application is made by Staff and forwarded to the appropriate approval authority.
- iv) If your application is approved, the Grant Agreement is then executed by the City. A copy of the executed agreement(s) is then returned to you for your records.
- v) Construction of the approved works may now commence, subject to the issuance of any building permits (as required).
- vi) Upon completion of the works Staff will conduct a final site visit(s) and inspection(s), as required to ensure compliance with the Grant Agreement and any permits pursuant to the *Ontario Heritage Act*.
- vii) Submit to the City, copies of paid invoices and “after” pictures of the completed works.
- viii) Upon review and approval of all submitted documentation, the City will issue a grant cheque to the applicant for the full amount of the approved funding.

**For further information on this program please visit our website at
http://www.portcolborne.ca/page/waterfront_cip**

**Or contact Amy Dayboll at 905-835-2901 x 204 or via email at
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