



Municipality of Central Huron Policy

**Policy Title:** Central Huron Municipal Façade Grant Program Policy

**Policy Number:** GE 108

**Effective Date:** January 1, 2025

**By-Law or Resolution Number:** 345-2024

**Last Revision:** 2021

**Responsibility:** Clerk's Department

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## **Description and Policy Statement**

The Central Huron Municipal Façade Grant Program assists commercial property owners of the Municipality of Central Huron by providing grants to improve the façades of buildings. The purpose of the Program is to enhance the appearance of commercial businesses and maintain a sense of pride within the community. Central Huron Council is committed to treating all requests within the Program in a consistent, fair, and equitable manner subject to Council's priorities and approved budget. As such, the Municipality will annually commit funds to the Program within the approved annual budget.

This policy establishes the following:

- Eligibility Requirements
- General Provisions
- Administration
  - Application and Program Process
  - Approval Process and Consideration
  - Notification Process
  - Applicant Reporting

## **Eligibility Requirements**

All properties assessed for Commercial use, in whole or in part, at the time of application within the Municipality will be considered eligible for the Program. Any property owner seeking consideration for a grant under this Program must submit a completed application by the deadline. To qualify for the program, applicants must satisfy the following conditions:

- Ensure their application meets the eligible improvements under the General Provisions of the Program and not for general maintenance;

- Fully satisfy any outstanding work orders on the property from the municipal Fire Department or Building Department by the Program deadline;
- The subject property shall not be in a position of tax arrears;
- If the property has designation under the Ontario Heritage Act, the improvement shall not compromise the reasons for designation;
- If the applicant is a tenant they have full approval of the property owner to participate in the program

If the applicant is successful in approval for a grant, they must ensure:

- All applicable permits shall be applied for and approved prior to construction;
- Where possible, the application is approved prior to any work commencing related to the grant;
- The work is completed within the year the grant was approved or give notice of need for an extension before December 31<sup>st</sup>;
- Advise the municipal office designate in writing if the applicant no longer wishes to complete the work the grant was approved for;
- To submit a copy of all paid project receipts following the completion of the work in order to receive their grant

## **General Provisions**

The Central Huron Municipal Façade Grant Program provides grants to property owners who improve and/or enhance the cosmetic appeal of their property from a streetscape viewpoint. The grant amount is 50% of the cost to improve the appearance of the façade up to a maximum of \$5,000.00.

The eligible improvements should consider the character of the building or property and promote cohesiveness in core business areas. The list of eligible improvements in this Program include:

- Façade restoration of brickwork, wood, masonry, and metal cladding;
- Replacement or repair of entablature, eaves, parapets, and other architectural details;
- Window and door repair or replacement;
- Signage in accordance with the Municipality of Central Huron's by-law(s) respecting signs and the Ontario Building Code and Regulations;
- Painting or cleaning of the façade exterior;
- Exterior lighting;
- Repair, replacement or addition of awnings, marquees or canopies;
- Replacement of façade elements originally in place during initial construction of the building;
- Entranceway/walkway modifications such as sidewalks, steps, and landscaping associated with the entranceway and walkway (not entire property), including provisions to improve accessibility for those with mobility limitations;
- Redesigned shop fronts;
- Professional fees;

- Other improvements/additions to the building exterior as may be approved by the municipal Chief Building Official or their designate

The Clerk's department reserves the right to determine the eligibility of projects.

## **Administration**

The Clerk's department, or their designate, in consultation with Council are responsible for the administration of the Central Huron Municipal Façade Grant Program. The Council of the Municipality of Central Huron in its sole discretion may change or discontinue this Program at any time.

The funding for the Program should be determined by Council in the beginning of the annual budget process via pre-approval.

### Application Process

Interested property owners or tenants who are eligible for the Central Huron Municipal Façade Grant Program are encouraged to apply when the portal on the municipal website opens each January. Applications are accepted until the end of March each year and to be considered by Council no later than the first Regular Meeting of May.

Applications must include:

- Information about the property
- Declaration of outstanding work orders or tax arrears
- Description of the project/improvements
- Quotes or cost estimates from independent contractors/suppliers
- A financial breakdown of the project/work to be completed
- Description of the project benefit from such façade improvements

Applications should be submitted online via the portal on the municipal website, however, paper copies or alternative methods are available upon request to the Clerk's department. Applications must be received by the deadline as advertised and be a fully completed application in order to be considered for funding. There may only be one application per property per year.

Prior to the submission of an application, applicants may request a pre-consultation meeting with the Clerk's department to review the requirements of the program.

Notice of the application period will be advertised on the following, but not limited to, and at the discretion of the Clerk's department:

- Municipal website;
- Social media accounts;
- Local newspaper(s);
- Municipal digital sign

The advertisement will include the deadline for applications.

### Approval Process and Consideration

During annual budget discussions, Central Huron Council allots an amount to the Central Huron Municipal Façade Grant Program. If the amount budgeted is not entirely used within the year it was budgeted it does not carry over into the following year. All applications will be assessed on funding availability and proportionate to the amount requested. This assessment will be completed by the Clerk's department or their designate; the Clerk's department will seek confirmation from the Building, Fire, and Finance department that there are no outstanding work orders or tax arrears on the subject property.

The Clerk's department will present to Council in a formal report for approval which shall include the budgeted amount for the Program, the number of applications submitted, a description of all eligible applications, and the amount requested by each application.

Council will be provided with three options of allocation for consideration:

- Allocating full amounts requested
- Prioritizing first-time and less often applicants within the budgeted amount
- Proportionate allocation of the request within the budgeted amount

The decision of Council regarding distribution of the Program funds will be confirmed by a resolution of support.

### Notification Process

All applicants will be notified in writing by the Clerk's department whether their application was successful or not within one (1) week of Council's resolution. Successful applicants will be notified in writing via mail with the approved grant amount.

Successful applicants and the grant amount as part of the Program shall be publicized on the municipal website.

### Applicant Reporting

All successful applicants are required to submit a copy of their paid invoices upon completion of the façade project before December 31<sup>st</sup> each year. Upon receipt of the paid invoices, the Clerk's department will have a cheque issued for the approved amount. If the approved amount is more than 50% of the submitted paid invoices then a cheque for 50% the paid invoices will be issued (for example if the approved amount was \$4000 with submitted paid invoices totaling \$6000 then a cheque would be issued for \$3000). Failure to submit paid invoices or request an extension by December 31<sup>st</sup> results in the forfeit of the grant.

Copies of paid invoices can be submitted via email ([facadegrant@centralhuron.com](mailto:facadegrant@centralhuron.com)) or mail (P.O. Box 400, 23 Albert Street, Clinton ON, N0M 1L0).

If the project will not be completed within the year the grant was approved then a request for an extension must be given in writing to the Clerk's department either via email ([facadegrant@centralhuron.com](mailto:facadegrant@centralhuron.com)) or mail before December 31<sup>st</sup>. Extensions may be granted on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Clerk's department for a maximum of six (6) months. Failure to request an extension results in the forfeit of the grant.

If the applicant no longer wishes to complete the project that the grant was approved for they must advise the Clerk's department in writing as soon as possible.