

4.5 Façade Improvement, Landscape & Signage Grant

The Façade, Landscape and Signage Improvement Grant Program seeks to enhance the aesthetic appeal of the Downtown Local Centre, through façade, public realm and signage improvements, as well as street-front redevelopment, and any resultant economic spin-off effects. A key goal of this program is to support the achievement of the linked system of courtyards.

Under the Façade, Landscape and Signage Improvement Grant Program, matching grants will be offered to eligible property owners within the portion of the Downtown Local Centre area identified as the Richmond Hill Business Improvement Area (BIA), as determined by by-laws passed by Richmond Hill Council to determine the extent of such area. The grant is for building facing, rear and front lot landscaping (publicly accessible parts of private properties), exterior signage improvements or any combination of these categories of property enhancement.

The program structure is identified below, in Table 1 - Façade, Signage and Landscaping Grant Program Structure:

Table 1 - Façade, Signage and Landscaping Grant Program Structure

Façade Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matching grant of up to 50% of eligible costs or a maximum grant of \$15,000 per property for a single facade, whichever is less. Matching grant of up to 50% of eligible improvement costs or a maximum grant of \$25,000 per property, whichever is less for façade improvement projects involving more than one façade. This includes buildings located on a corner lot (a property with frontage on two municipal streets) or on a lot with access onto the linked system of courtyards. The minimum grant is \$2,500 per property. Project applications including matching assistance of less than \$2,500 will not be considered.
Signage Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matching grant of up to 50% of eligible costs or a maximum grant of \$2,500 per property, whichever is less. The minimum grant is \$1,000 per property. Project applications including matching assistance of less than \$1,000 will not be considered.
Landscaping Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matching grant of up to 50% of eligible costs or a maximum grant of \$2,500 per property for a single frontage, whichever is less. For combined street-front and side-lot or rear-lot landscaping improvements: Matching grant of up to 50% of eligible costs or a maximum grant of \$5,000 per property, whichever is less. The minimum grant is \$2,000 per property. Project applications including matching assistance of less than \$2,000 will not be considered.

4.5.1 Program-specific Eligibility Criteria

In addition to the General Eligibility Criteria set out in Section 4.2 of this CIP, the following program-specific eligibility criteria apply:

1. The subject property is located within the Richmond Hill Downtown Business Improvement Area (BIA) area and accommodates a non-residential use.
2. Notwithstanding provision (1), the subject property may also accommodate a multi-unit residential use and/or a converted residential building now used, in part or in whole, for commercial/office use.
3. An improvement of one or more building façades occurs and/or an improvement of signage and/or an improvement of landscaping and the public realm is proposed for the subject property.
4. For the purpose of the Façade Grant and Landscaping Grant components of this program, eligible façades include:
 - a. Frontage façade;
 - b. Side façade, where the side of a property is facing a public and/or private street and/or public park and/or public gathering space;
 - c. Rear façade, where the rear of a property is facing a public and/or private street or public park or public gathering space or parking area that is accessible to the general public.
5. Notwithstanding provision (4), improvements to rear façades and/or rear landscaping improvements shall be considered secondary for purposes of allocation of funding under this program.
6. The proposed improvements are in keeping with the design objectives of the Downtown Local Centre Secondary Plan and other applicable urban design guidelines.
7. Two quotes are prepared by qualified professionals demonstrating the valuation of the works and identifying **eligible costs**.

Applications for this program may also be eligible for support under the Town of Richmond Hill's Heritage Grant Program as further described in Section 5.1 Heritage Grant.

4.5.2 Eligible costs

Eligible costs include:

1. costs associated with the enhancement, replacement and rehabilitation of eligible non-residential facades, doors and windows;
2. restoration of existing façade and surfaces (woods, tuck pointing, cleaning);
3. new surface materials;
4. improvements and enhancements to street front landscaping and signage;
5. materials, labour, equipment and professional fees related to external building works specifically for façade improvement and/or signage

- development and/or implementation of landscape improvements;
- 6. new enhancement or replacement of exterior lighting fixtures;
- 7. street-front patio development;
- 8. upgrading of paving materials that support the development and enhancement of a linked system of courtyards;
- 9. signage replacement/enhancement; and,
- 10. any other costs identified by the Town.

4.5.3 Additional provisions

Additional provisions regarding this program are set out in Appendix A – Schedule of Program Details.