



# COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND MULTI-UNIT RESIDENTIAL REINVESTMENT PROGRAM GUIDE

Development Incentive Program





## INTRODUCTION

This information package was created to help property owners apply for the Development Incentive Program – Commercial Development and Multi-Unit Residential Development reinvestment grants. It contains an explanation of the programs, program requirements and how to apply.

### *Development Incentive Program New Commercial Development and Multi-Unit Residential*

The Development Incentive Program is a grant program offered to building owners and developers in Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) to encourage them to invest in higher density commercial or residential development. This could be new construction or the conversion of an existing building to mixed-use or residential use.

## AVAILABLE GRANTS

New Commercial and Residential projects are eligible for a New Retail and Commercial Development Grant, a Mixed-Use Multi-Unit Residential Grant or a Multi-Unit Residential Grant. Grants are reimbursement grants and are awarded after the work has been completed.

### *New Commercial Building Development*

- + A reimbursement grant equal to the amount of 10% of the total construction value, to a maximum amount of \$50,000 per new building. The building must be constructed for commercial or retail use, must have a minimum construction value of \$250,000 and must be at least two storeys.

Construction value is the total cost of the construction project including the building, mechanical and electrical components.

### *Multi-Unit Mixed-Use or Residential Development*

- + A reimbursement grant of \$12,000 per new dwelling for a mixed-use, market housing project, to a maximum of 36 new dwellings. Project must create new dwellings predominantly located above ground floor retail or commercial uses located in the same building.

- + A reimbursement grant of \$7,000 per new dwelling to a maximum of 36 new dwellings for a multi-unit market housing project with no commercial component. At least 10 new dwellings must be created.

All new housing created through the Development Incentive Program must be market housing – this means that all housing is supplied by the private market without direct government subsidies.

### *Before You Begin*

- + A property is eligible for one grant.
- + Conversions must be from an alternate use to residential. Upgrades to existing residential units are not eligible.
- + Do not start work until an agreement has been signed by all parties. If you start work before the agreement is signed, the project is no longer eligible to participate.
- + The grant will be issued once all work is complete and all documentation has been submitted. If documentation is not provided in a timely manner, you will no longer be eligible for reimbursement.
- + You are responsible for obtaining all necessary permits.
- + Any retail and commercial use space created under this program must be utilized for eligible retail and commercial uses for at least five years, otherwise the reimbursement monies must be refunded.
- + Regardless of whether or not the property owner retains ownership of the building for 10 years, any dwelling that receives grant funding must remain a dwelling for at least 10 years, otherwise the grant monies must be refunded.
- + Regardless of whether or not the property owner retains ownership of the building for 10 years, any commercial area of a multi-unit residential dwelling must be used for eligible commercial uses for at least 10 years, otherwise the grant monies must be refunded.
- + Any building with six or more new residential units must obtain Crime Free Multi Housing certification in order to be eligible for funding. The Crime Free Multi Housing program is offered by the Edmonton Police Service.

## Program Objectives

### What can the program do for me?

- + Attract tenants and customers
- + Enhance property values
- + Create or support additional rental income

### What can the program do for the city?

- + Support the revitalization of Business Improvement Areas
- + Improve the marketability of the local business area
- + Build civic pride among the local business community
- + Contribute to the quality of life of residents, workers and visitors.

This information package contains the basic guidelines for submitting an application package. Contact the Program Manager for further information before you make an application.

*Projects that have started construction before completing the application process and signing a legal agreement are no longer eligible for the program.*

## OPTION 1: NEW COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

The applicant must be the property owner or their designate.

Applicants must answer "yes" to all of the following questions in order to be eligible to apply for a reimbursement grant through the New Commercial Development Program.

<i>Eligibility Questions</i>	<i>Yes</i>
Is the properties or building(s) located within the boundaries of a Business Improvement Area or other area approved by City Council?	
Is the proposed project a newly constructed commercial use building with a minimum construction value of \$250,000?  Construction value is the total cost of the construction project including the building, mechanical and electrical components.	
Is the proposed project at least two storeys?	
Does the proposed project have commercial retail space on both the ground floor and second floor?	
Does current Zoning allow for the anticipated commercial and/or business uses?	
Is the anticipated business tenant(s) one of the following eligible ground floor retail and commercial uses:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ General Retail Stores (except Adult-oriented Stores)</li> <li>+ Convenience Retail Stores (except Adult-oriented Stores)</li> <li>+ Restaurants</li> <li>+ Specialty Food Services</li> <li>+ Personal Service Shops (except Adult-oriented Stores)</li> <li>+ Minor Secondhand Stores (except Pawn Shops)</li> </ul> <p>Ineligible businesses include: Adult-oriented Services, Adult-oriented Stores, Minor and Major Alcohol Sales (i.e., liquor stores), Cannabis Retail Sales, Bars and Neighbourhood Pubs, Nightclubs, Pawn Stores, loan offices or financial uses.</p>	

*Projects that have started construction before completing the application process and signing a legal agreement are no longer eligible for the program.*

## OPTION 2: MULTI-UNIT RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

The applicant must be the property owner or their designate.

Applicants must answer “yes” to all of the following questions in order to be eligible to apply for a reimbursement grant through the Multi-Unit Residential Development Grant Program.

<i>Eligibility Questions</i>	Yes
Is the property or building(s) located within the boundaries of a Business Improvement Area or other area approved by City Council?	
Is the project one of the following building types: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ A mixed-use building that creates new dwellings located above retail/commercial uses on the ground floor?</li> <li>+ New construction, or conversion of an existing building to residential use?</li> <li>+ A multi-unit residential building that creates a minimum of 10 new dwellings?</li> </ul>	
Is your business above ground floor retail and commercial uses and permitted in existing CB1 and CB2 zones?	
Is your business one of the following eligible ground floor retail and commercial uses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ General Retail Stores (except Adult-oriented Stores)</li> <li>+ Convenience Retail Stores (except Adult-oriented Stores)</li> <li>+ Restaurants</li> <li>+ Specialty Food Services</li> <li>+ Personal Service Shops (except Adult-oriented Stores)</li> <li>+ Minor Secondhand Stores (except Pawn Shops)</li> </ul> <p>Ineligible businesses include: Adult-oriented Services, Adult-oriented Stores, Minor and Major Alcohol Sales (i.e., liquor stores), Cannabis Retail Sales, Bars and Neighbourhood Pubs, Nightclubs, Pawn Stores, loan offices or financial uses.</p>	

## DESIGN GUIDELINES

Design guidelines are intended to help you understand how the City of Edmonton will evaluate your application. Projects will be evaluated against the criteria listed below. Successful projects will make a positive, impactful contribution to the Business Improvement Area.

Project design must be approved by the City of Edmonton's Project Review Committee before applying for permits and starting construction.

### ENHANCE THE STREET FOR PEDESTRIANS.

Building should be friendly and attractive to people walking by. A building entrance must be located close to the sidewalk and at ground-level, with clear and direct access from the sidewalk to the building entrance. There should be no obstructions between the sidewalk and the entrance, such as a parking lot or a staircase. If there is a small space between the building and the sidewalk, the space should be used for outdoor seating, landscaping or other attractive displays.

### HUMAN-SCALED DESIGN.

Human-scaled design means that the building is scaled to be comfortable for people on the sidewalk to view, enter and exit. Signage should be aimed at people walking by. Narrow buildings, buildings with lots of windows to look through and short distances between doors are more interesting and attractive to pedestrians. Different colours and textures on the building can also help make the building look more appealing. Landscaping with flowers, trees and plants can help make the overall development look appealing.

### BUILDINGS ARE ACCESSIBLE.

As much as possible, your building should be accessible to every potential customer, regardless of age or ability. This could include parents with strollers, people in wheelchairs, people using crutches or walkers, and people who are visually impaired. Consider including:

- + No-step ground level entrances or ramps
- + Wide doorways that open easily or automatically
- + A large, easy-to-read address and business signage
- + Handrails on staircases and colour contrast on the edge of all steps
- + Obvious identification of any physical barriers (such as signs indicating "Watch Your Step" or "Please ask for assistance")

### ADDRESS WINTER CONDITIONS.

New construction or renovations should use design features that make it easier for people to navigate winter in Edmonton. For example, a building should maximize sun exposure and provide protection from the wind and snow. Consider including:

- + A permanent, four-season patio
- + Awnings or balconies that offer shelter from falling snow but don't block sunshine
- + Warm, bright colours
- + Landscaping that can provide colour and texture in winter months and block wind
- + Natural gas heaters or wood-burning fireplaces to give warmth to outdoor areas
- + Lighting to brighten dark evenings and interesting shadows to enliven the daytime
- + Non-slip materials for building entrances

Please see the City of Edmonton's Winter Design Guidelines for more information on winter city design.

### INNOVATIVE, ARTISTIC DESIGN.

Consider how elements in the signage or façade could reflect the unique character and identity of the building and the business. Texture, pattern, colour and shapes could be incorporated into the design to create an urban work of art. Take note of the context of the area and the architectural features and materials used on different types of buildings. Incorporate durable, quality materials into your design. Your building should actively contribute to the streetscape and character of the area.

### CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN.

Your building should have clear sightlines from the inside to the street. Avoid exterior nooks and crannies that can attract unwelcome behaviour. Consider:

- + New windows or increasing the size of existing windows
- + Glass doors
- + Clear glass rather than frosted or tinted glass, or glass obscured by posters and signs
- + Avoid roller shutters and exterior bars on windows
- + Adding downcast lighting that lights up the perimeter of the building but does not shine directly into the sky

## BEFORE YOU APPLY

Contact the Program Manager to arrange for a pre-application meeting for the Development Incentive Program. You will meet with the Program Manager on-site to discuss the program and to see if your project is a good fit.

You will need permits. The City of Edmonton provides a Pre-Application Meeting for development proposals that require a Major Development Permit. It is strongly recommended that you book a Pre-Application Meeting for Major Development Permits. Please inform the Development Incentive Program Manager of the date and time of your meeting.

At a Pre-Application Meeting for Major Development Permits, you will meet with a team of City staff from different departments to review your proposal and gather input on any issues. At the meeting, City staff will focus on items that

will help you submit a well-informed development permit submission, including:

- + Flagging issues to address, such as variances to the Zoning Bylaw
- + Sharing information that needs to be considered, such as required separation from existing accesses
- + Identifying additional required reports or information
- + Identifying whether or not the project is located within the Edmonton Design Committee Geographic Jurisdiction

Your development permit application that responds to the Pre-Application Meeting information will help to reduce review and processing times. A thorough application can save time by limiting the back and forth communications between you and the City.

## APPLICATION PACKAGE

Once you have met with the Program Manager and had a Pre-Application Meeting with Development Services, you may submit your application package. The following list identifies all the documentation and information necessary to submit a complete application to the Development Incentive Program. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed. Depending on the nature of your application, additional information may be required. The Program Manager will contact you to let you know.

<i>Application Package</i>		<i>Check when complete</i>
<b>APPLICATION FORM</b>	Submit a completed application form.	
<b>COPY OF REGISTERED LAND TITLE FOR THE PROPERTY</b>	This can be obtained from any authorized agent for Alberta registries for a nominal fee. <i>The copy cannot be more than 30 days old.</i>	
<b>COPY OF CORPORATE REGISTRY SEARCH</b>	A Corporate Registry Search is required if the property owner is a company. <i>The copy cannot be more than 30 days old.</i>	
<b>PROJECT SUMMARY DESCRIPTION</b>	<p>A brief written description of the project must be provided that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ How the proposed project will fulfil the objectives of the Development Incentive Program</li> <li>+ A description of why you are undertaking this work</li> <li>+ A description of the scope of work</li> </ul>	

<i>Application Package</i>		<i>Check when complete</i>
<p><b>PROJECT SUMMARY DESCRIPTION CONT</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Highlight any construction practices and design features that pertain to health and safety, energy efficiency, environmentally friendly design, winter city design and/or universal accessibility</li> <li>+ How the project will benefit the new business and/or residential tenants</li> <li>+ How the project will benefit the Business Improvement Area and community or neighbourhood</li> </ul>	
<p><b>EXISTING DEVELOPMENT SITE CONDITIONS</b></p>	<p>Provide photos of all four elevations of the property or site and a brief description of the existing development site.</p> <p>Provide photos and a brief description of the surrounding neighbourhood context.</p>	
<p><b>PROJECT DESIGN DETAILS</b></p>	<p>Consult with a City of Edmonton representative regarding Development and Building Permit application requirements and details.</p> <p>The project applicant is responsible for obtaining all necessary approvals, including City of Edmonton Development and Building Permits.</p> <p>Project plans and drawings of sufficient detail for a Development and/or Building Permit Application. Please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ A Site Plan</li> <li>+ A Landscaping Plan (note: the Landscaping plan may be combined with the Site Plan)</li> <li>+ Floor Plans                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ A seating layout and/or occupancy capacity where applicable (e.g. restaurants, clubs, schools, churches, and other assembly uses).</li> <li>+ Restaurants/bars/other food and drink services should have the public space shown on the plans</li> </ul> </li> <li>+ Building Elevations</li> <li>+ Building Construction Details</li> </ul>	
<p><b>PROJECT SCHEDULE</b></p>	<p>Include a tentative timeline for construction. At minimum the schedule must provide the start date and the end date of construction.</p>	

**NOTE: To be eligible for reimbursement, do not start work until a Reimbursement Agreement has been fully executed.**

All application packages become public documents and may be used in publications at a future date.

## PROJECT REVIEW COMMITTEE

The Project Review Committee reviews complete application packages. This Committee consists of Business Improvement Area Executive Directors and City employees from relevant work areas, including Development Services, Urban Design and Heritage. The work must be pre-approved by the Development Incentive Project Review Committee in order to be eligible for reimbursement.

The Project Review Committee will assess your application and respond with:

- + Approval
- + Approval with conditions
- + Refusal

Once your project design is approved, you will need to submit additional documentation that will be used to draft a Reimbursement Agreement. A Reimbursement Agreement is a legal contract between the applicant and the City that identifies the work that will be done and the amount of the reimbursement. A draft Reimbursement Agreement will be created after all the required documentation has been submitted.

*The required documentation includes:*

<i>Required documentation</i>	
<b>REVISED DRAWINGS AND PLANS</b>	If your application was Approved with Conditions, you will need to submit revised digital drawings and/or plans that show how the conditions are being met.
<b>COST SUMMARY</b>	<p>A cost summary identifying:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ The selected vendor(s)</li> <li>+ A detailed, itemized breakdown of the work and the corresponding costs.</li> </ul> <p>Eligible costs include materials and labour.</p>
<b>CONTRACTOR QUOTES</b>	<p>Provide a minimum of three independent sets of contractor quotes for the proposed work. All contractors must provide their business license numbers on the quotes.</p> <p>Quotes must be written or typed on business letterhead that provides a company name and phone number.</p> <p>All subcontractors and trades must be licensed to work in the City of Edmonton. Applicants may act as their own general contractor but will be reimbursed for materials only.</p>
<b>DEVELOPMENT AND BUILDING PERMIT APPLICATIONS</b>	<p>Work must comply with all applicable City of Edmonton regulations and permit requirements, Provincial building codes and meet all associated regulations and Bylaws.</p> <p>The applicant/property owner is responsible for obtaining all necessary permits.</p>

**NOTE: To be eligible for reimbursement, do not start work until a Reimbursement Agreement has been fully executed.**



## CONSTRUCTION

You have 24 months from the date that the Reimbursement Agreement was signed to complete the work.

### Grant Payment

Send the Program Manager a letter or email indicating that the work is complete and that you are requesting a final inspection. You will also need to submit a document package containing:

- + A two year (minimum) lease agreement with a new commercial tenant and the commercial tenant's City of Edmonton business license
- + A copy of all required permit service reports and/or Occupancy Permits
- + At least three "after" photos showing the completed work
- + A cost summary of the itemized breakdown of the improvements and corresponding costs, the selected vendor(s)/contractor(s) and the City of Edmonton business license number of the contractor(s)
- + Invoices with demonstrations of proof of payment
- + A Property Tax Notice demonstrating payment of taxes is up-to-date

The reimbursement grant will be issued after all the documentation has been submitted in full.

## CONTACT US

Contact us to ask further questions about the program, discuss your project or to submit your application.

Call us: [780-496-6196](tel:780-496-6196)

Email us: [development.incentive@edmonton.ca](mailto:development.incentive@edmonton.ca)

Read More: [www.edmonton.ca/DIP](http://www.edmonton.ca/DIP)

City staff can assist with

- + Step-by-step guidance
- + Language translation
- + Application assistance