



PROGRAM GUIDE

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Introduction

This document describes how to qualify for Downtown Vibrancy Strategy funding and provides details about the program. Funding is limited and will be awarded based on availability of funds and on a one-time basis.

Questions can be directed to: Tom Girvan, Program Manager; tom.girvan@edmonton.ca

Who Can Apply

Businesses and organizations with an interest in Downtown vibrancy are eligible to apply.

- **Businesses** must have a City of Edmonton business licence, or be exempt from requiring one, before a funding agreement is finalized and funding is provided.
- Must be a legal entity.

How Much Funding is Available?

Available Downtown Vibrancy Strategy funding is \$5,000,000. There is no minimum or maximum amount for individual projects.

Eligibility

The program supports projects that align with the following actions from the Downtown Vibrancy Strategy:

Action 1 - Expand public spaces for more people and in new ways.

Action 2 - Optimize four season experience for pedestrians, parks and patios.

Action 3 - Make it easier to live downtown.

Action 4 - Welcome package for new residents, students, businesses and startups.

Action 5 - Support an innovative and smart downtown.

Action 6 - Customized business retention and expansion support.

Action 7 - Support return to work and reopening strategies.

Action 8 - Ensure adequate data and information is available to support vibrancy.

Action 9 - Entice retailers to remain in and open downtown.

Action 10 - Promote downtown.

Action 11 - Prioritize making downtown more fun.

Action 12 - Position vibrancy as an ongoing goal.

Action 13 - Make it easy and fun to get around.

Action 14 - Implement quick light-touch improvements to public spaces.

Action 15 - Encourage inclusive, connected, walkable streets.

Action 16 - Enhance safety.

Action 17 - Expand urban wellness thinking and practices.

Action 18 - Empower stewardship of public spaces.

Action 19 - Improve appearance of vacant lots and future development sites.

Action 20 - Formalize a downtown collaborative to advance vibrancy work.

This funding supports projects that promote vibrancy in our downtown. Projects eligible for funding will align with at least one Action listed above. Additionally, the application must provide the following:

- The expected number of visits per day/week/month generated by the project
- The \$ invested/ partner \$ (ratio) for the project
- The number of participating partners

This grant is not meant to:

- Support businesses or organizations with operational funding for rent, mortgages, bills, debt servicing, or fees for memberships or professional associations.
- Support ongoing initiatives or events.
- Provide funding for permit or licensing fees.

If the project has previously received funding from another City program, it may still be eligible for Downtown Vibrancy Strategy funding at the discretion of the review committee. If you are unsure if a project or program is eligible for funding, please contact the Grant Manager for more information.

Eligibility Checklist

For reference while completing an application:

In order to be eligible for Downtown Vibrancy Strategy funding, all of the following criteria must be met:

- The applicable Business must have a City of Edmonton business licence, or be exempt from requiring ones, before a funding agreement can be finalized
- The applicable Business Association must be an active legal entity.
- The applicable Business or Business Association cannot be a non-Resident Business Licence holder, or government organization.
- Funding will not be used for those costs deemed as ineligible costs, including
 - Funding will not support organizations with operational funding for rent, mortgages, bills, debt servicing, or fees for memberships or professional associations.
 - Funding will not support ongoing initiatives or events.
 - Funding will not be used for permit or licensing fees.

Costs may be deemed ineligible costs at the discretion of the Committee.

Application Process and Timelines

Applicants may apply for funding by completing and submitting a [Downtown Vibrancy Strategy Intake Form](#) to the City. Details about what questions are asked are found in the following section. Funding will be spread over the two year implementation period of the Downtown Vibrancy Strategy, as opposed to first come, first served. If a paper copy is required, an applicant may contact the Grant Manager.

Applications may be submitted until the program budget is fully allocated.

Applications will be reviewed on a biweekly, rolling basis. It may take up to 3 weeks from the time of application for approval decisions to be communicated to applicants. Additionally, 1-2 weeks will be required after that time for a funding agreement to be entered into.

Approval decisions will be communicated via email, and may add additional time to the review period.

Timelines are subject to change and are dependent upon program volumes and resource needs.

Application Questions

The following questions must be answered while submitting a Downtown Vibrancy Strategy funding request application:

- Project Lead name
- Email Address
- Phone Number
- Legal Name of applicant
- Provide the project name
- Provide a project description
- Provide the project location
- Is the proposed project within the boundary identified in the Downtown Vibrancy Strategy map
- Provide the expected start date
- Provide the expected end date
- Provide the expected number of visits per day/week/month generated by the project
- Provide the \$ invested/ partner \$ (ratio) for the project
- Provide the number of participating partners
- Select which actions the project supports
- Provide a short description of how the project applies an equity lens (Gender Based Analysis Plus GBA+)
- Provide the total project cost
- Provide an itemized list of all project costs
- Provide the total funding amount requested

Core Partners Committee

The Core Partners Committee (Committee) includes City of Edmonton administration and downtown partners, including those below. The Committee evaluates funding applications and awards funding. Questions about this program can also be directed to the following:

Chris Buyze, Downtown Edmonton Community League; president@decl.org

Paul Hawes, Explore Edmonton; phawes@exploreedmonton.com

Puneeta McBryan, Downtown Business Association; puneeta@edmontondowntown.com

Anand Pye, NAIOP; anand@naiopedmonton.com

Application Review

The review process is generally described below:

- Submit application.
- Applications are reviewed as they are received.
- The Committee will review the applications for alignment with the actions of the Downtown Vibrancy Strategy, the project or program's feasibility, the project or program's proposed outcomes and the eligible costs. Priority will be given to projects that leverage investment from additional partners.
- The Committee may recommend to the City that applications be approved, not be approved, be conditionally approved (meaning approved pending changes to the proposed project or plan), or may recommend to the City that applicants need to submit additional information.
- Additional information provided will be reviewed as it is received.
- Approved projects/programs will enter into a funding agreement.
- Funding will be issued in the form of a cheque and sent by mail.
- The applicant will do the work.
- The applicant will submit their final report

An applicant will not be eligible to receive funding until they have entered into a Funding Agreement with the City.

Funding Agreement

Projects awarded funding shall receive one hundred percent (100%) of the funding in one installment within a reasonable time after a funding agreement has been fully executed.

Reporting Requirements

Once a funding agreement has been entered into, and the applicant has completed their project, they will be required to submit a final report. This template will be included in the funding agreement

Grant Audit

The City may audit all financial and related records associated with the funding agreement and the use of the funding. This audit may include a review of all documentation associated with the project.

Program Definitions

Throughout the Downtown Vibrancy Strategy there are several terms that are defined below. Note - any definitions present within the Downtown Vibrancy Strategy supersede these definitions.

Business Association - The lead applicant that is a legal entity or a member of a partnership and has a mandate to support the business interests and commercial success of their members or the community. This includes community groups.

Business - A legal entity that is carrying on a business within the city of Edmonton that will have or will have obtained a City business licence to operate a business in the city of Edmonton. If a business is located within the city of Edmonton and the legal entity carrying out this business is exempt from obtaining a business licence to operate a business within the city of Edmonton, they

