

Corner Store Interior Grant

Program Guide and Application Package

Edmonton

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Contact the Corner Store Program

Phone: 780-442-7148

Email: cornerstore@edmonton.ca

Website: edmonton.ca/cornerstore

What is the Corner Store Interior Grant?

Interior improvements to commercial units can help property owners and new business tenants fill vacant storefronts, create better first impressions for businesses, and support vibrant street life in the city's mature neighbourhoods. The City of Edmonton encourages property and business owners to invest in interior renovations to their vacant spaces by providing matching reimbursement grants to cover a portion of the eligible costs. The program is open to property owners and commercial tenants, although the property owner must approve of the project.

This document provides information on the program, how it works, and how to apply.

Eligibility

Targeted to Neighbourhood Commercial Areas

An area of commercial development within a residential neighbourhood located inside the Anthony Henday Freeway that is intended to meet and enhance the commercial needs of local residents, and support the revitalization of Edmonton's mature and established communities. For the purposes of the Corner Store Program Policy, Neighbourhood Commercial Areas may be:

- One **Small Commercial Centre** containing a low rise building with at least three commercial retail units at ground level, may also be referred to as small strip malls or mini-malls, and often have onsite parking lots at the front of the building, and on a property of no more than one hectare in area;
- a collection of several directly adjacent **Standalone Commercial Buildings**, each housing one or two commercial retail units at ground level, and all generally contained within no more than one full blockface; or
- a collection of several commercial properties/buildings at the intersection of two roads, with commercial retail units at ground level on at least two corners of the intersection.

Other Eligibility Requirements

To apply to the Corner Store Program, you must be the property owner or someone approved by the property owner to act on their behalf.

Eligible commercial buildings must answer yes to all of the following:

- Commercial unit is located on the main floor.
- Construction work has not started.
- Located within a commercially zoned property with an area of less than 1.0 hectare.

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- Not be located in a [Business Improvement Area](#) or other Target Areas.
- Not have previously received an Interior Corner Store Grant.
- Have a vacant ground floor commercial interior space for at least six months prior to application, or has been underutilized for a period of at least three years.
- At the end of the project, the property will have a two year minimum lease with a business tenant.
- Building will have clear, unobstructed street-level windows once construction is complete and for the five year maintenance period.
 - Window tints, vinyl wraps, tinted or frosted glass, large window decals, and window perforations that obscure views in and out of the building are not permitted.
 - Typically, security bars or rolling shutters are not permitted over windows or doors once construction is complete and for the five year maintenance period. The use of shatterproof clear glass or security films on windows is encouraged instead.

Please contact the Program Manager if you are unsure whether or not your building meets the eligibility criteria.

Grants Offered

There are two grant streams available for Eligible Commercial Properties with varying grant amounts.

1. The **Corner Store Stream** is available to Eligible Properties located in recent or active Neighbourhood Renewal Areas. Refer to this list of active or recent [Neighbourhood Renewal Areas](#). Consideration is given to neighbourhood commercial areas where there are opportunities to align with other City projects or initiatives.
 - Small Commercial Centres are eligible for a reimbursement grant of up to 50% of eligible construction costs for improvements to a ground floor underutilized or vacant commercial interior space to a maximum of \$20,000 per building.
 - Standalone Commercial Buildings are eligible for a reimbursement grant of up to 50% of eligible construction costs for improvements to a ground floor underutilized or vacant commercial interior space to a maximum of \$10,000 per building.
2. The **Small Business Support Grant** is available to any City of Edmonton Licenced or exempted business located within a property that is approved and participates in the Corner Store Exterior or Interior Grant Program.

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- Eligible businesses located within a participating property are eligible for a reimbursement grant of up to 50% of eligible costs for initiatives that will improve the capacity, efficiency, productivity, and/or competitiveness of the business to a maximum amount of \$1,000 per business.

Eligible Costs

Below you will find a list of eligible and in-eligible expenses for the Corner Store Interior Grant. You are encouraged to source eligible projects or services locally wherever possible.

Eligible costs could include, but are not limited to:

- Demolition
- HVAC
- Framing
- Structural repair
- Accessibility features
- Equipment rentals
- Electrical
- Flooring
- Drywall / paint
- Concrete
- Health and safety
- Labour costs
- Plumbing
- Doors
- Fire safety
- Permanent fixtures

Eligible costs that can be reimbursed through the program also include architectural, design, or engineering fees to a maximum of 20% of eligible work costs, project management and administration fees to a maximum of 10% of eligible work costs, and demolition, equipment rentals and labour costs. **Work must be performed by a contractor with a valid City of Edmonton business licence.**

Ineligible costs include, but are not limited to:

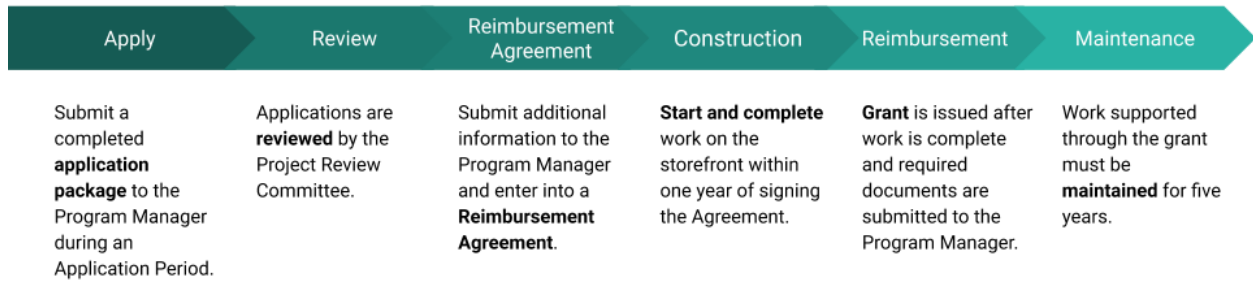
- Hazardous abatements
- Furniture
- Exterior windows
- Consumable products
- Non permanent fixtures
- Window coverings
- Exterior doors
- Services fees
- Appliances
- Lightbulbs
- Insurance
- Permits

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The Application Process



Step 1: Apply to the Program

- **Application form is included in this package.**
- All applicants must contact the Program Manager prior to submitting an application package to discuss grant eligibility.
- The Program Manager or a delegate will visit the site prior to approval of an application.
- Projects that have begun or are completed prior to signing an Interior Corner Store Grant are ineligible to receive the grant.
- Submit completed applications to the Program Manager.

Step 2: Application Review

- Completed applications are reviewed by the Project Review Committee against the design principles and intent of the program.
- Applicants will hear back from the City within three to four weeks of the application period closing.
- Approval of applications is subject to the availability of funding and the project's alignment with grant eligibility criteria.
- All decisions to approve or refuse an application are final and cannot be appealed.

Step 3: Reimbursement Agreement

- The Reimbursement Agreement outlines the responsibilities of the City and the applicant, along with the scope of work approved, maximum grant amounts, and general terms.
- The City will pull the Land Title and a Corporate Registry Search to confirm ownership of the property.
- Applicants must submit all documentation necessary to draft an Interior Corner Store Grant Reimbursement Agreement within three months of approval.
 - Approved applications must submit a minimum of two quotes for all eligible work, including a cost breakdown. This could be two quotes from two general contractors, or two quotes per subcontractor for each category of work.

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- Applicants are responsible for applying for all relevant City of Edmonton permits and must share permit applications with the program.
- The Reimbursement Agreement must be signed by all parties within one month of sharing the draft.
 - The property owner must always sign the Reimbursement Agreement, even if the tenant will be doing the work and receiving the grant.
 - If the documentation is not submitted or the Reimbursement Agreement signed in a timely manner, the file will be closed and funding reallocated. The applicant may re-apply to participate in the program in the next application period.

Step 4: Construction

- Projects must be completed within one calendar year.
 - Projects that are not completed within one year may apply for an extension if there are extenuating circumstances. Otherwise, the file will be closed and the funding reallocated.

Step 5: Reimbursement

- The grant will be issued after:
 - All work is complete,
 - Invoices, proof of payment, permit service reports and a cost summary has been submitted to the Program Manager,
 - All required inspections are conducted with a successful outcome, and
- All documentation must be submitted and inspections completed within the one year timeframe specified in the Reimbursement Agreement.
- If the documentation is not submitted in a timely manner, the file will be closed and funding reallocated.
- In order to be eligible to receive the grant, the property owner must submit a signed two year (or longer) lease agreement for the eligible commercial unit.

Step 6: Maintenance

- The applicant must maintain all improvements supported through the program for a minimum of 5 years, including clear and uncluttered windows and doors. It is important to clarify with your tenant that they can comply with this requirement.
 - If the improvements are not maintained, up to 50% of the matching grant must be repaid to the City of Edmonton.

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Important to Know

The Program Manager will support you through the program process but here are some important things to understand about the program to ensure success.

- The project will not receive a grant if work starts before a Reimbursement Agreement is signed by all parties.
- It is your responsibility to obtain all required permits, such as electrical, mechanical, plumbing, gas and building.
- It is your responsibility to manage contractors and keep track of invoices.
- You must request approval for any design changes after the Agreement is signed.
- It is your responsibility to be aware of deadlines. If you miss a deadline to submit relevant documentation, the program file will be closed and the grant funding reallocated.
- Grant amounts will not be increased due to changes in project scope or cost overruns.

How to Apply / Contact Us

1. Review the program guidelines to ensure your project meets the eligibility requirements.
2. Complete and submit your application to the Program Manager.

Projects that have started construction before an approval letter is sent to the applicant are not eligible to receive a grant.

Contact the Program Manager if you have any questions.

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Application

Application packages must be completed in full, including all of the following:

Part 1: Applicant and Project Information

Part 2: Eligibility Criteria

Part 3: Applicant Declaration and Authorization for Agent of the Property Owner (if tenant applying)

Part 4: Attached Documents

Part 5: Statutory Declaration

Your name, contact information, and project information is collected in accordance with 33(c) of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP). This information will be used to administer the Corner Store Program. If you have any questions about the collection and use of your personal information, contact the Corner Store Program Manager at (780) 442-7148, 9th Floor 10111 104 Ave, Edmonton Alberta, T5J 0J4. Please note the name and location of the buildings, building details, building designs, grant amounts, and total costs of projects may be released to various organizations, the media, and the public, in connection with the Corner Store Program

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Part 1: Applicant and Project Information

***Fill out all the fields. Incomplete applications will not be considered or kept on file.**

Date _____

Applicant name _____

Applicant is the property owner agent of the property owner tenant

Mailing address _____

Telephone number _____

Email address _____

If the applicant is not the property owner, please fill out the following:

Property owner name _____

Telephone number _____

Email address _____

Building address _____

Legal address ----- Lot: _____ Plan: _____ Block: _____

Which vacant storefront is this application for _____

If vacant, how long has this storefront been vacant _____

If underutilized, list the businesses that have occupied this space over the last 3 years:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Have you or do you intend to apply for any other City of Edmonton grant programs to support this project? Which ones _____

Part 2: Eligibility Criteria

Eligible projects must include at least two of the following improvements. Check the two or more improvements that will be included in the project:

- Structural repairs
- Electrical upgrades
- Plumbing upgrades and fixtures
- HVAC
- Flooring and/or interior doors and/or ceilings
- Demising walls
- Drywall and/or painting
- Improved accessibility (ramps, handrails, accessible washrooms)
- Fire safety compliance
- Improvements related to health and safety

Renovations that improve the operational energy savings and reduce greenhouse gas emissions are encouraged. This should also reduce your utility bills. Check the energy efficiency improvements that will be included in this project:

- Hiring professional services to model the building's potential energy and cost savings as part of project planning and implementation of recommendations.
- Building envelope improvements use high-performing, energy efficient materials and are insulative and air-tight. Examples include installing >R20 wall insulation, fast acting doors or trip glaze windows.
- Equipment chosen for improvements to the building's mechanical, electrical and lighting systems should be certified as energy-efficient (Energy Star, DLC, etc) to reduce building energy consumption.
- Lighting fixtures should be high-efficiency LED and make use of daylight and/or occupancy sensors so that lighting is automatically turned down when there is enough daylight or when there is no one present.

Please tell us how you are incorporating the energy efficient items you checked above.

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Eligible work that can be reimbursed by the program also includes demolition, equipment rental and labour costs.

Reimbursement for architectural, design and/or engineering fees may not exceed 20% of eligible costs.

Reimbursement for project management fees may not exceed 10% of eligible costs.

All contractors must have a City of Edmonton business licence. Work performed by subcontractors without a City of Edmonton business licence is ineligible for reimbursement.

Part 3: Applicant Declaration

I understand that submitting an application package does not guarantee funding under the Corner Store Program Interior Grant. I further certify that:

- I/we have reviewed the Program Guide and I/we understand the conditions attached to the funding;**
- This application includes all relevant documentation;
- All information in this application and supporting documents is true and complete to the best of my knowledge;
- Incomplete applications and those that do not meet the eligibility criteria will not be evaluated or kept on file;
- I/we acknowledge that it is my/our responsibility to determine whether or not my/our Corner Store Interior Grant project needs a permit to complete and therefore obtain any necessary permits. Reimbursement will not be granted to projects completed without required permits;
- I/we understand that all decisions regarding applications are final and cannot be appealed;
- If a grant is approved, work will be completed as outlined in the application. Any deviations must be evaluated and approved by the Program Manager. Approval is not guaranteed.

Applicant name (print) _____

Applicant signature _____

Date _____

Authorization for Agent of the Property owner

I/we, (print name) _____ the owner of the
subject property hereby authorize (print name) _____ to act
on my behalf with respect to the application.

Signature of Property Owner

Date

Part 4: Attached Documentation

To complete the application package, please attach the following documents:

- A copy of your current City of Edmonton Property Tax Notice
- Three photos of the existing interior.
- All relevant project design details, including:
 - A site plan
 - A floor plan
 - Building construction details
 - Wall/roof/floor assembly details
 - Mechanical and/or electrical plans
 - Detailed drawings, photos, samples or brochures of key features
 - Elevation drawings or renderings showing the finished project
- Signed Statutory Declaration (attached to the end of this application)
 - The Statutory Declaration must be printed, signed and scanned.

The City will pull the Land Title and perform a Corporate Registry Search to confirm the legal address and property ownership.

Additional information may be required depending on the nature of your project. The Program Manager will contact you for more information if necessary.

Completed applications may be submitted to the Program Manager

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Part 4: Attached Documentation

CANADA)
Province of Alberta) In the matter of applying for the Corner
To Wit:) Store Interior Grant
)

I, _____, of the City of Edmonton in the Province of Alberta,

do solemnly declare that:

The building with the municipal address _____ has had a vacant storefront(s)/commercial retail unit(s) for at least six months immediately prior to application to the program, or an underutilized storefront/commercial retail unit(s) defined as three or more business licences issued to one address within three years.

AND I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing it to be true and knowing that it is of the same force and effect as if made under oath, and by virtue of the Canada Evidence Act.

Declared before me at City of Edmonton, in the Province of Alberta,

this _____ day of _____ 20__