



Report
Staff Report
 The Corporation of the City of Brampton
 4/8/2024

Date: 2024-03-21

Subject: **Building Improvement Grant Application for 27 & 27A Queen Street East, Ward 3**

Contact: Paul Brioux, Assistant Development Planner, Development Services & Design
 Damanpreet Mathouda, Planner I, Downtown Revitalization

Report number: Planning, Bld & Growth Mgt-2024-284

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the report from Paul Brioux, Assistant Development Planner, Development Services and Design and Damanpreet Mathouda, Planner I, Downtown Revitalization to the Planning and Development Committee Meeting of April 8, 2024, re: **“Building Improvement Grant Application for 27 & 27A Queen Street East”** in Ward 3, be received;
2. That the application BFIP-2023-0009 (27 & 27A Queen Street East) be approved in the amount of \$30,000 under the Downtown Building Improvement Program, subject to the applicant satisfying the rules of the program as set out in the approved Implementation Guidelines of the Central Area Community Improvement Plan, and meeting the following conditions on or before July 12, 2024, unless extended by the Director of Downtown Revitalization, failing which this approval shall be null and void:
 - i. That the applicant enters into the Building Improvement Program Agreement with the City of Brampton.
3. That staff report back to the Planning and Development Committee in Q3 2024 with a comprehensive update and overview of the Building and Façade Improvement Grant Programs.

OVERVIEW:

- The intent of the Building and Façade Improvement Grant Programs are to support the revitalization of the historic downtown, by providing matching grants up to a maximum amount, based on eligibility to landowners and businesses. The Building and Façade Improvement Grant Programs incentivizes private investment to encourage the revitalization of

Downtown Brampton and to support the ongoing maintenance of interior and exterior building conditions.

- **The purpose of this report is to recommend approval of the grant application, file no. BFIP-2023-0009, for 27 & 27A Queen Street East to facilitate interior renovations including repair and replacement of trim, doors, and partitions; electrical improvements; plumbing repairs; HVAC addition; new flooring; and new framing and drywall on the upper and lower levels.**
- **The grant approval will facilitate interior building improvements to 27 & 27A Queen Street East and will also enhance the overall healthcare practice with an updated and expanded clinic space. The proposal is consistent with the Central Area Community Improvement Plan and Building Improvement Grant Program, staff recommend the Applicant is eligible for the maximum \$30,000 grant (as permitted by section 2.4.4 (b) of the program).**
- **Sufficient funding is available to fund this Building Improvement Grant in the amount of \$30,000.**
- **The recommendation in this report aligns with Strategic Focus Area – Growing Urban Centers & Neighborhoods as well as Culture and Diversity. The project fulfills the goals of the grant program as it supports business owners in their efforts to improve the commercial space within their building and to attract new investment and employment opportunities to the downtown.**

BACKGROUND:

The Building and Façade Improvement Grant Programs under the Central Area Community Improvement Plan supports the revitalization of the historic Downtown by providing matching grants, up to a maximum amount, based on eligibility to property and business owners intending to improve their buildings.

Building and Façade Improvement Grant Programs - Overview

The Central Area Community Improvement Plan (CIP), was approved by Council in November 2007 and enacted in January 2008, subsequently amended in June 2010 and September 2019. The Building and Façade Improvement Grant Programs study area boundary generally encompasses the strip of buildings along Main Street and Queen Street, bordered by Vodden Street to the north, Chapel Street to the east, Wellington Street to the south, and McMurchy Avenue to the west, as shown in Attachment 1.

The CIP establishes programs that link land use planning with financial incentives to meet the intensification, vibrancy and city-building goals of the Central Area and historic Downtown Brampton. The CIP aims to support the ongoing revitalization of the historic downtown core, promote the preservation and adaptive reuse of heritage buildings to maintain the area's historical character and cultural significance, encourages opportunities for intensification, and redevelopment to address aging infrastructure.

The CIP is facilitated through a comprehensive toolbox consisting of eight incentive programs, two of which are the Building and Façade Improvement Grant Programs (BFIP). These programs were initiated in 2013 as part of the Central Area CIP:

- The Building Improvement Grant eligible projects focus on internal works, such as structural repairs, installation/upgrade of fire protection systems, and building system upgrades.
- The Façade Improvement Grant eligible projects focus on exterior renovations, such as sign changes, restoration of exterior materials, and window/door upgrades to address issues related to safety and security.

Eligibility Criteria and Maximum Grant Allocations

The Implementation Guidelines of the Building and Façade Improvement Grant Programs outline the eligibility criteria and maximum grant allocations, as noted herein:

- Property owners and tenants are eligible to receive grants of up to \$20,000 per property or up to \$30,000 for properties with multiple storefronts;
- Properties designated under the Ontario Heritage Act are eligible for up to \$50,000;
- Each property is limited to a maximum of \$30,000 within three years or \$50,000 (for heritage property);
- The total value of any grant may not exceed 50 per cent of the total cost of eligible works; and,
- Proposed works under \$2,000 per property are not eligible.

Goals and Objectives of the Building and Façade Improvement Grant Programs

The goals and objectives of the Programs, are as follows:

- Recognizing aging building infrastructure in the downtown core, and incentivizing private investment for improving the overall quality of commercial/mixed use building stock;
- Supporting property owners in their efforts to upgrade their properties and improving the viability of the buildings for new businesses to locate in the downtown core;
- Encouraging and supporting the ongoing active reuse of heritage buildings; and,
- Improving the visual appearance of building façades surrounding the downtown.

Both programs aim to enhance the appeal of the area for businesses, shoppers, and individuals seeking to live, work, or conduct business in the area. By improving the

functionality of the current building inventory, these programs contribute to the economic vitality of the areas. The improved aesthetics elevates property values, enhances space marketability, and attracts both businesses and residents to the local area.

Overview of Applications through the Building and Façade Improvement Grant Programs (2019 – 2024)

The Building and Façade Improvement Grant Programs were initiated in 2013. Since the creation of the Building and Façade Improvement Grant Programs, a total of 50 applications have been received.

Active and Approved Applications

Attachment 2 provides an overview of the total applications received between 2019 and 2024, for the Building and Façade Improvement Grant Programs with a total of 17 applications. Attachment 2 captures applications and data available through Accela. Applications and data that pre-date 2019 exist in hard copy and must be accessed through the archives. Staff intend to conduct this more fulsome review and report back to the Planning and Development Services Committee in Q3 2024 to provide an update on the overall Building and Façade Improvement Grant Programs with a more comprehensive analysis and any additional funding requests, if required.

Since 2019, 2 applications have been completed, and have been issued the approved grant payment, 6 applications have been Council-Approved and works are underway, and 9 applications are in review, with formal submissions undergoing preliminary assessment. The scope of work for these projects varies, including interior improvements such as decorative work, the upgrade of floors, electrical, plumbing, dry wall, and stairs renovations. Exterior improvements consist of signage, security cameras installations, cladding of the façade, windows, and patio enhancements.

Forecasted Applications

In 2024, staff are anticipating approximately 8 applications for the Building and Façade Improvement Grant Programs over the year, with projected grant requests of \$15,000 for the Building Improvement Grant and \$150,000 for the Façade Improvement Grant. Overall, staff anticipate an estimated total grant value of \$165,000 to be reviewed in 2024. These estimates stem from preliminary meetings with landowners, landlords, and business owners regarding their project eligibility and estimated construction cost with no formal application submitted yet.

The interest from landowners, landlords, and businesses demonstrates the importance of improving the overall quality of commercial/mixed-use buildings in the downtown area and the prospective impact on revitalization efforts in the upcoming year.

Funding Summary

The Building and Façade Improvement Grant Programs are funded through Reserve #88 – Community Improvement Plan. Table 1 provides an overview of the grants allocated for the Building and Façade Improvement Grant Programs for Council-Approved Applications from 2019 to 2024. In addition, staff have documented several active applications that are in review and forecasted applications that are anticipated sometime this year. The Programs were last topped up in 2019. Currently, there are insufficient funds to disperse the grant to all active and forecasted applications. However, staff anticipate that only Council-Approved applications are in a status that may require more immediate funding for grant dispersal. As noted in Table 1, there are currently enough funds available to fund the Council-Approved grants.

Staff anticipate acquiring additional funds for the Building and Façade Improvement Grant Programs through a subsequent annual budget process. Staff will be reporting back on the Programs in Q3 2024. In this upcoming report, staff will collaborate with applicants to forecast construction completion dates and anticipated grant dispersal timelines. The Q3 2024 report will address any further funding needs at that time, if required.

Table 1: Community Improvement Plan (CIP) Allocation of Grants for the Building and Façade Improvement Grant Programs (2019-2024)

Community Improvement Plan (CIP) Allocation of Grant (2019 -2024)					
Activity Description	Approved Budget	Spending to Date (Completed)	Uncommitted Balance	Council Approved Applications	Remaining Balance
Building Improvement Pgm Grant	\$150,000	\$34,999	\$115,001	\$65,726	\$49,275
Façade Improvement Pmg Grant	\$150,000	\$17,367	\$132,633	\$60,505	\$72,128
Total	\$300,000	\$52,366	\$247,634	\$126,231	\$121,403
Financial status based on information from March 2024 Defined Terms: •Approved Budget: Total Council approved grant allocated to the Building and Façade Improvement Grant Programs. •Spending To Date: Total amount of grant spent on complete (closed) applications and that is disbursed to the applicant. •Uncommitted Balance: Remaining balance for Building and Façade Improvement Grant Programs. •Council Approved Applications: A formal application has been submitted, the initial review process is complete, and the grant amount has been approved by Council. The applicant is in progress to completing works and demonstrating compliance to the requirements of the grant.					

Benefits and Outcomes of the Grants to the Downtown

Spending and Investment

Historically, the Building and Façade Improvement Grant Programs have shown a significant return on investment. For every \$1 distributed in grants to offset costs for landowners, landlords, and business owners, there has been an equivalent economic investment of \$4. This observation was noted in an earlier staff report in 2018/2019.

From 2019 to 2024, based on all active, approved, and complete (closed) applications, for every \$1 spent by the City, it has equated to approximately \$2.47 of privately invested dollars. Going forward, staff will further evaluate the impact of the City's investment in the grant program, recognizing that there is value and qualitative benefits to the community, such as creating a vibrant and attractive place for gathering and inspiring further investment, increases in property value, etc., which is not fully captured in the amount that is privately invested ratio.

The total projected value of construction renovations and improvement within the last six years accumulated to \$2,200,405.33, of which, private landowners, landlords, and tenants are projected to have spent, or intend to spend, a total of \$1,809,110.54 on their properties and businesses. This includes all active, approved, and complete (closed) applications. The City has been able to offset the cost for landowners, landlords, and tenants through these programs, providing an approved total grant of \$126,230.75 and overall, the total grant value is \$391,294.80 for all active, approved, and complete (closed) applications within the last five years.

Increase in Number of Applications

Over 2019 to 2024, the City received a high number of applications, most notably in 2023 with a total of 7 applications or 43% of the total applications intake in those six years. The last time the program received this many applications in any given year was 2015 with 8 applications received. This increase in application underscores the importance of the grant program in supporting business, especially given the reduction in applications between 2020 to 2022, likely due to the pandemic, which had slowed the overall construction industry.

Completed Projects

Since 2013, the grant program has improved the downtown area's building exteriors and interiors. The City has processed the completion of 23 applications. Examples of successful projects from the grant include 43 Queen Street East and 35 Queen Street East (Façade Improvement), and 18 Main Street South (Building Improvement).

In addition to the revitalization of building exteriors and interiors, the grant program has supported the emergence of new businesses, including the following:

- Pizzanini – 18 Main Street South;

- Street Bitz – 20 Main Street South; and,
- Glamore Beauty Bar – 16 Main Street South.

Overall, the Building and Façade Improvement Grant Programs provide benefits to the community by incentivizing private investment in structural and cosmetic building improvements. The Program contributes to economic vitality, supports the maintenance of downtown's character, and enhances downtown image by the rehabilitation of older building stock, beatifying façades, making businesses more attractive, and increasing floorspace for improved business operations.

CURRENT SITUATION:

This report provides recommendations on the grant application BFIP-2023-0009 for 27 & 27A Queen Street East. A location map showing these properties is attached as Attachment 3.

Project Description

The applicant has applied for a Building Improvement Grant Program for improvements for interior works, including repair and replacement of trim, doors, and partitions; electrical improvements; plumbing repairs; HVAC addition; new flooring; and new framing and drywall on the upper and lower levels of 27 and 27A Queen Street East. The purpose of the interior renovations is to construct additional treatment rooms, upgrade flooring, lighting, and a security system to improve the overall clinic space and healthcare practice. Continuous improvements to building systems and interiors ensure that buildings are properly maintained and do not deteriorate. Expansions also allow the business to increase client and patient intake, including greater employment opportunities. The floor plans for the expansion are attached as Attachment 4.

The applicant has submitted two project estimates of \$109,892.50 and \$129,950.00 for the work at 27 & 27A Queen Street East in line with the program requirements. As per the approved Implementation Guidelines, the lesser of the two submitted quotes is used for the calculation of the total grant eligibility. Given the submitted lesser quote of \$109,892.50, the applicant is eligible for the maximum \$30,000 grant (as permitted by section 2.4.4 (b) of the program). Based on this application, for every \$1 spent by the City, it equated to approximately \$2.66 privately invested dollars.

Recommendation

The proposed building improvement work would increase the variety of health care services offered by the business to address changing healthcare needs. The expansion of interior space in the building will allow for greater flexibility of the clinic practice and allow for more patient visits. The project will have a positive impact on the downtown and fulfills the goals of the grant program as it encourages private investment, supports business owners in their efforts to improve/increase commercial space and to attract new employees and new patients to the downtown.

The application fulfills the grant program's objectives to maintain and improve the interior of the existing building in Downtown Brampton. The project is eligible for a maximum of \$30,000 under the Building Improvement Grant Program. It is recommended that, subject to the conditions, that the application be approved for the maximum grant under the Building Improvement Grant Program.

Next Steps

The next step in the grant process is for the owner to continue to satisfy the requirements of the Council approved Implementation Guidelines and enter into an agreement with the City of Brampton. The agreement is expected to be fully executed no later than July 12, 2024. Once an agreement is executed the next steps can be further outlined.

Staff intend to report back to the Planning and Development Services Committee in Q3 2024 to provide an update on the overall Building and Façade Improvement Grant Programs with a more comprehensive analysis and any additional funding requests.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications

Sufficient funding is available in capital project # 197827-001 to fund this Building Improvement Grant in the amount of \$30,000 for the application BFIP-2023-0009 (27 & 27A Queen Street East).

Project #	Project Name	Balance Available
197827-001	Building Improvement Grant	115,001

Other Implications

There are no other corporate implications associated with the application.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA

The application is consistent with the Strategic Focus Area – Growing Urban Centers & Neighborhoods as well as Culture and Diversity. This proposal will facilitate the growing of Brampton's local economy, the maintenance of cultural heritage assets, and support activation of spaces and cultural diversity through business.

CONCLUSION

Providing incentives such as the Building and Façade Improvement Grant Programs serve to support and improve the economic vitality of Downtown Brampton and enhance the marketability of commercial spaces. The grant program has demonstrated its

effectiveness in incentivizing private investment to upgrade and revitalize the historic core's aging building stock.

In addition, the approval of the grants for 27 & 27A Queen Street East will build on the success of previously approved projects, and also contribute to Downtown Brampton's economic growth and vibrancy.

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Attachments:

- Attachment 1 – Building and Façade Improvement Grant Programs Study Area Boundary
- Attachment 2 – Overview of Total Applications Received (2019 – 2024)
- Attachment 3 – Location Map for 27 & 27A Queen Street East
- Attachment 4 – Floor Plan for 27 & 27A Queen Street East