

COUNCIL REPORT

To: Mayor and Council
From: Administration
Date: October 23, 2023
Subject: NDIT - Business Façade Improvement Program 2024

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the District of Mackenzie supports the application to the Northern Development Initiative Trust from the District of Mackenzie for a grant of up to \$20,000 for the Business Façade Improvement program from the Prince George Regional Development Account;

AND THAT the Chief Administrative Officer be authorized to execute the grant application and, if the application is successful, any related documentation.

BACKGROUND:

The Business Façade Improvement program, funded through the Northern Development Initiative Trust (NDIT), provides municipalities \$20,000 in annual grant funding to enhance economic development by encouraging private sector investment in exterior upgrades.

The District has offered the program since 2016 and has seen a positive uptake by many local business owners and not-for-profit organizations. From 2016 to 2022, the program has contributed \$70,994 towards business façade improvements. Should all participants in the Business Façade Improvement Program 2023 finish their enhancements by the close of 2023, it will certainly be a remarkable year, boasting a generous \$20,000 dedicated to enhancing business facades with \$13,910.21 allocated for accessibility improvements.

Program Funding History

2016	\$12,079
2017	\$15,000
2018	\$ 4,771
2019	\$10,500
2020	\$ 1,250
2021	\$19,615
2022	\$ 7,779
Total	\$ 70,994

Overall, the Business Façade Improvement program has seen generous support from our local business community and has helped make enhancements to the commercial core, which has encouraged more people to utilize the local business services and improve revenues for our business sector.

2023 Program Update:

Northern Development Initiative Trust has made some modifications to the Program Guide in 2023. The change included the allowance for businesses to reapply for the program. This provides an opportunity for businesses to expand on their improvements. For example, a business may have received funds for the painting of the exterior of their building, and now have decided to reapply to update their lighting fixtures. The 2023 Program Guidelines also included accessibility improvements to the outside of the building without the need to be part of a larger façade improvement project.

BUDGETARY IMPACT:

This program is 100% funded by the Northern Development Initiative Trust.

COUNCIL PRIORITIES:

Economic Vitality

- The District is a leader on efforts aimed at diversifying the community's economy, supporting local businesses, and attracting new investment to the community. Diversification, a strong business sector and new investment are key to our economic vitality.

Strong Governance and Finances

- As the municipality's elected governing body, we serve all residents and businesses in the community. We engage residents and stakeholders on important issues and make our decisions through open and transparent processes. We are careful in our use of resources, mindful of the need to maintain programs and services, while also meeting the community's infrastructure needs.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Rachelle Dumoulin, Economic Development Clerk

Reviewed By: Corporate and Financial Services

Approved By: Chief Administrative Officer