

Barton Village BIA Property Improvement Matching Grant Program Guidelines

Program Overview

The Barton Village BIA Property Improvement Matching Grant Program is designed to support property owners and commercial tenants who are investing in improvements that help attract new businesses, activate vacant units, or retain existing businesses within Barton Village. Through this program, the BIA will provide **50/50 matching funding** of up to **\$2,500** per property to support projects that enhance the appeal, functionality, and marketability of commercial spaces within the Barton Village BIA.

Program Purpose

This program is intended to encourage investment in commercial properties that strengthens the business district by:

- Improving the attractiveness of commercial spaces to prospective tenants
- Supporting upgrades that help existing businesses remain and succeed in Barton Village
- Activating vacant storefronts to increase vibrancy, deter vandalism, and build foot traffic
- Enhancing the overall viability of commercial properties within the BIA

Funding Details

- This is a **50/50 matching grant** program.
- The Barton Village BIA will reimburse **up to 50% of eligible project costs**, to a maximum of **\$2,500 per property**.
- Funding is provided as a reimbursement after the project is completed.
- Each property is eligible to apply **once only** under this program.

Applicant Eligibility

To be eligible, applicants must:

- Be the property owner or commercial tenant of a property located within the Barton Village BIA.
- Be proposing improvements that support business attraction, vacancy activation, or business retention.
- Commit to completing the project within the **2026 calendar year**.

- Agree to provide all required application materials and final reimbursement documents.
- If the applicant is a tenant, provide written approval from the property owner or landlord.

Eligible Projects

Eligible projects may include improvements that increase the appeal, usability, or competitiveness of a commercial property, including:

Exterior Improvements (Curb Appeal)

- Exterior painting or refinishing
- Restoration or repair of brick, stone, or other exterior materials
- New or improved storefront windows and doors
- New exterior lighting
- Signage improvements
- Awnings or canopies
- Decorative facade features or architectural enhancements

Interior Leasehold Upgrades (Market-Readiness)

Interior improvements may be eligible when they clearly support attracting a new tenant or retaining an existing business, such as:

- Accessibility-related upgrades (e.g., ramps, door hardware, washroom accessibility improvements)
- Improvements that make a vacant unit more market-ready for a new business (e.g., basic leasehold upgrades that improve usability or compliance)

Vacant Unit Activation

Projects that activate vacant storefronts and improve the streetscape experience may be eligible, such as:

- Window display installations or coverings that make empty storefronts look vibrant
- Temporary pop-up activations or short-term uses that animate a vacant unit (e.g., weekend markets, mini-exhibits)

Other

- Other property upgrades that clearly support business attraction, vacancy activation, or business retention

The Barton Village BIA reserves the right to determine whether a proposed project is eligible for funding.

Ineligible Projects

The following projects and expenses are not eligible for funding:

- Routine maintenance or general repairs that do not add value to the property or improve its marketability
- Work completed before application approval
- Temporary or seasonal decorations that are not part of an approved vacant unit activation plan
- Labour completed by the applicant without third-party invoices or receipts
- Permit fees, taxes, financing costs, or other administrative expenses
- Projects that do not comply with applicable municipal by-laws, codes, or permit requirements
- Projects that do not demonstrate a clear connection to attracting a new business, activating a vacant unit, or retaining an existing one

The Barton Village BIA reserves the right to determine whether a proposed project or expense is ineligible.

Application Requirements

Applicants must submit the following as part of their application:

- Completed application form
- Current **before** photos of the property or area to be improved
- Clear **after** plans showing the proposed improvements
- A detailed project budget, including:
 - Total project cost
 - Amount being requested from the BIA (up to 50%, max \$2,500)
 - Applicant's matching investment (minimum 50%)
 - Breakdown of expected expenses
- A brief explanation of how the proposed project will help:
 - attract a new business, *and/or*
 - activate a vacant unit, *and/or*
 - retain an existing business
- **Outcome type (select one):** Attraction / Activation / Retention
- Written landlord approval, if the applicant is a tenant

Incomplete applications may not be considered until all required materials are received.

Project Requirements

- Approved projects must be completed no later than **December 31, 2026**.

- The completed work must align with the plans submitted in the application.
- Any significant changes to the approved project scope should be communicated to the Barton Village BIA before completion.

Reimbursement Process

Funding will be issued only after the project is complete.

To receive reimbursement, applicants must submit:

- Final receipts for all eligible project expenses
- Confirmation that the project has been completed in 2026
- Any final project photos if requested by the BIA

Reimbursement will be provided after the Barton Village BIA reviews the submitted documentation and confirms eligibility.

Outcomes & Reporting

To help the Barton Village BIA measure the impact of this program (and support reporting requirements for funding partners), approved applicants may be asked to provide the following at project completion:

- **After photos** showing the completed improvements
- A brief **impact summary** (2–3 sentences) describing the outcome, such as:
 - o whether the unit is now leased or actively being marketed
 - o whether a pop-up or activation occurred (dates and a short description)
 - o whether the improvements supported an existing business to remain, expand, or improve customer access

The Barton Village BIA may use submitted photos and impact summaries for program reporting and promotional purposes.

Additional Notes

- Approval is subject to available program funding.
- Submission of an application does not guarantee funding.
- The Barton Village BIA reserves the right to request additional information to support an application.
- The Barton Village BIA reserves the right to deny applications that do not meet program requirements.