

Façade Conservation & Enhancement Grant PROGRAM GUIDE



Credit: Tourism Saskatoon/Carey Shaw Photography

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This guide is intended to assist you with planning, designing, and applying for the Façade Conservation and Enhancement Grant Program. Additional information on how the program is administered, what type of work is eligible and helpful tips for a successful application have been included. This guide should be used in tandem with the Façade Conservation and Enhancement Grant Program Policy.

1.0 What is the Grant

The City of Saskatoon encourages the conservation and enhancement of commercial building façades by providing grant funding to cover a portion of the eligible costs of the façade improvement and/or conservation work. Thoughtfully designed façades support local business and help to create safe, comfortable, attractive, lively commercial areas and public spaces in our city. The conservation of heritage façades helps promote sustainable building practices and celebrates the history of our city's built form.

1.1 Available Incentives

The program has three incentive streams which an applicant may be eligible for:

1. The Façade Conservation and Enhancement Incentive;
2. The Heritage Conservation Incentive; and,
3. The Building Refresh Incentive.



Above: 619 Main Street

1.1.1 The Façade Conservation and Enhancement Incentive

This incentive is intended to support larger, comprehensive façade redevelopment projects. This grant funds up to 50% of the total cost of the project to a maximum of \$16,000. Project work may include:

- Re-cladding or restoration of façade (includes new or removal of deteriorated material to expose historic and or original façade material);
- New window openings or replacement of existing glazing;
- Installation of canopies;
- New or improved storefronts/entry ways;
- New or upgraded architectural details and features (Ex. cornice, parapet, sills, pilasters, keystone elements, trims, etc.);
- New or upgraded doors;
- New or upgraded lighting;
- Paint (in conjunction with other improvements);
- Signage (in conjunction with other improvements); and,
- Contractor labour, professional design services.





Above: 301 1st Avenue North

1.1.2 The Heritage Conservation Incentive

This incentive is intended to support the conservation of heritage façades. The Heritage Incentive funds up to 10% of total costs to a maximum of \$4,000 for projects that include Heritage Conservation Elements. The incentive is awarded based on the level of heritage conservation achieved. Eligible projects must:

- undertake conservation of character defining elements of the façade; and
- be listed on the Saskatoon Register of Historic Places or in the built heritage database.

Note: The Heritage Conservation Incentive and the Façade Conservation & Enhancement Incentive can be used in tandem if an applicant qualifies for both.

What is a Character Defining Element?



A character defining element is a historic architectural feature and is a reason the building was included on either the Saskatoon Register of Historic Places or into the Built Heritage Database.

“Thoughtfully designed façades support local business and help to create safe, comfortable, attractive, lively commercial areas and public spaces in our city.”

1.1.3 Building Refresh Incentive

This incentive is to support small maintenance and improvement projects.

This incentive is in the form of a grant equivalent to 50% of the total costs to a maximum of \$2,500. Applications received for Building Refresh Incentives will be reviewed by the Program Coordinator until all annual funding has been allocated for the year. Project work may include:

- Signage;
- Façade paint;
- Window and door repairs;
- Cladding repairs;
- Cleaning;
- Awning repairs;
- Repairs to entrance steps/landing;
- Power washing;
- Installation of bike racks and benches;
- Installation of planters;
- Pedestrian animation installations (murals/painting of ghost signs);
- Replacement of damaged or deteriorated materials that are impractical to save.



Example of a frontage in disrepair.



What are Ghost Signs



A ghost sign is an old hand painted advertisement on a building. These signs were popular from the 1900s to the 1960s and many are still visible. These signs can be spotted around the city central neighbourhoods. As the years pass, the signs have decayed and faded. These signs can represent an interesting part of Saskatoon's economic heritage from old businesses to products from a by-gone era. Applicants interested in preserving these unique features of our city should discuss their eligibility for the Heritage Conservation Incentive with the Façade Program Coordinator.

2.0 Eligibility

2.1 Which properties are eligible?

2.1.1 Location - Façade Conservation and Enhancement Incentive and Building Refresh Incentive

Funding is allocated geographically in the City's established commercial areas. See the Location map below.

LOCATION MAP

LEGEND



Contact the Program Coordinator to see if your building qualifies.



2.1.2 Location - Heritage Conservation Incentive

Funding is allocated geographically in the City's established commercial areas. Buildings must be listed on the Saskatoon Register of Historic Places or on the Built Heritage Database (BHD) to receive this incentive.

2.1.2 General Conditions

The following general conditions must be met for a project to be eligible:

- Projects involve the conservation, rejuvenation, or improvement of the façade; or,
- Include design features that have a benefit to the public realm of a commercial building.
- Only the "storefront" façade will be eligible for funding. The storefront is on the frontage of a building that is delineated by features to indicate a separate or distinctive frontage and typically contains an entrance;

- Properties that are in tax arrears or under an Order to Remedy with the City of Saskatoon are not eligible; and,
- Projects on buildings without heritage elements which are only maintenance are only eligible for funding under the Building Refresh Incentive. Exceptions to this provision may be granted at the discretion of the General Manager, Community Services Division.

2.2 Eligible Costs

Under this section you will find a list of expenses which are eligible for funding. If you have any questions or notice that one of your costs is not explicitly listed under any of the three funding streams, please contact the Program Coordinator for more information. Under all three-funding stream's, administrative costs, legal fees, and own labour (work that is performed by the applicant and/or property owners) are not eligible project costs. Work must be completed by a professional and/or contractor to be eligible.

2.2.1 Façade Conservation and Enhancement Incentive Eligibility

Projects that are eligible for the larger Façade Conservation & Enhancement Incentive should be undertaking a larger re-design and enhancement of the overall storefront and/or façade. Projects that substantially conserve and/or improve high-quality heritage materials and features are also eligible. Projects on buildings without heritage elements which only include maintenance work will not be eligible under this incentive stream. Project work may include:

- Re-cladding or restoration of façade (includes removal of deteriorated material to expose historic and or original façade material);
- New window openings or upgrades of existing glazing;
- Installation of canopies;
- New or improved storefronts/entry ways;
- New or upgraded architectural details and features (Ex. cornice, parapet, sills, pilasters, keystone elements, trims, etc.);
- New or upgraded doors;
- New or upgraded lighting;
- Paint (in conjunction with other improvements);
- Signage (in conjunction with other improvements); and,
- Contractor labour, professional design services.

2.2.2 Heritage Conservation Incentive Eligibility

Projects must undertake conservation of character defining elements (historical architectural features and details) of the façade to be eligible for the incentive. The proposed work must be sympathetic to the building character and streetscape. All conservation work should follow The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada. The incentive is awarded based on the level of heritage conservation achieved. Project work may include:

- Conservation of historic façade materials
- Upgrades to glazing that is sympathetic to the original design.

- Conservation of architectural details and features (ex. cornice, parapet, sills, pilasters, keystone elements, trims, etc.)
- Conservation or installation of heritage signage;
- Pedestrian animation installations (murals/painting of ghost signs);
- New or upgraded lighting that highlights architectural features;.

2.2.3 Building Refresh Incentive Eligibility

This incentive is to support small maintenance and improvement projects.

Project work may include:

- Signage;
- Façade paint;
- Window and door repairs;
- Cladding repairs;
- Cleaning;
- Awning repairs;
- Repairs to entrance steps/landing;
- Power washing;
- Installation of bike racks and benches;
- Installation of planters;
- Pedestrian animation installations (murals/painting of ghost signs);
- Replacement of damaged or deteriorated materials that are impractical to save.

What is Maintenance Work?



Projects which only include maintenance work on your façade will only be eligible for the Building Refresh Grant. It is important to understand what is considered maintenance work before you finalize your design plans.

Maintenance work is defined in the Policy as: routine, cyclical, non-destructive actions necessary to slow deterioration. It entails periodic inspection; routine, cyclical, non-destructive cleaning, minor repair and re-finishing operations; replacement of damaged or deteriorated materials that are impractical to save.

3.0 Program Process & Administration

The following section will provide information on the application requirements, and the adjudication and review process for each of the three incentive streams.

3.1 Initial Application Requirements

A completed application must be submitted to the Program Coordinator. Completed applications should be submitted prior to commencement of the work. Failure to do so could result in not qualifying for funding.

3.1.1 Façade Conservation and Enhancement and Heritage Conservation Incentive Intake Periods

The Façade Conservation and Enhancement and Heritage Conservation incentive intake periods will take place in the Spring and Fall. Applications must be received prior to the intake period deadline. Exact deadline dates to apply for this incentive will be determined by the Program Coordinator and provided on the City of Saskatoon website.

3.1.2 Façade Conservation and Enhancement and Heritage Application

A completed application must include:

- Signed and completed application form;
- Full project description outlining scope of project, and detailed description of materials to be used;
- Scaled drawings/renderings of the proposed project;
- A line-by-line cost breakdown of project components related to the façade only;
- Current photos of the building façade prior to construction beginning;
- Any historic photos of the building (if available); and,
- If tenant is applying, a letter of understanding from the property owner must be provided indicating they are aware of the work being undertaken and the tenant is completing the work and will be the one to receive the incentive.

3.1.3 Building Refresh Incentive Intake Period

The Building Refresh intake period runs all year until all available funding has been allocated.

3.1.4 Building Refresh Application

A completed application must include:

- Signed and completed application form;
- Full project description outlining scope of project, and detailed description of materials to be used;
- A line-by-line cost breakdown of project components related to the façade only;
- Current photos of the building façade prior to construction beginning;
- If tenant is applying, a letter of understanding from the property owner must be provided indicating they are aware of the work being undertaken and the tenant is completing the work and will be the one to receive the incentive.
- Depending on the project, supporting renderings, drawings, or images may be required.

Note: Applicants are responsible for obtaining all necessary permits and approvals for the proposed work from the City of Saskatoon. If permits are required, grant payment will not be issued until permits are provided to the Program Coordinator.



3.2 Adjudication Process

More information on the evaluation criteria for all three incentives are available in Section 5.0 of this Program Guide.

3.2.1 Façade Conservation & Enhancement Incentive and the Heritage Conservation Incentive Adjudication Process

- Adjudication for the Façade Conservation & Enhancement Incentive and the Heritage Conservation Incentive take place twice annually in Spring and Fall. Deadlines for applications will be posted to the City of Saskatoon webpage. Following your
- submission, the Committee will meet and adjudicate on all applications received during that period. If your application is a successful recipient of a grant, you will be notified and informed what the grant amount will be. The final grant amount is determined by the adjudication committee, full funding is not guaranteed for any application.
- Should the work not be completed as per the approved application your grant may be reduced or revoked. You may be required to sign a memorandum of understanding, that work is expected to be completed in accordance with your application.



Before



After

Above: 1112 Central Avenue



Before



After

Above: 813 Broadway Avenue

- Reasonable changes to either the design or finish level of your project should be brought to the attention of the Façade Grant Program Coordinator as soon as possible. If the changes are appropriate and remain in line with the overall quality and purpose of your project your grant status may remain valid. This will be determined at the discretion of the Committee upon receiving and reviewing the changes you have proposed.
- Any changes should be submitted before construction on them begins, if changes are made to the design of the project without contacting the Program Coordinator the grant could be voided.

3.2.2 The Building Refresh Incentive Evaluation Process

- The Building Refresh Incentive is not adjudicated on by the Committee, instead it is evaluated by Administration.
- Applications may be received throughout the year until funding for the year has been depleted. For this reason, applicants are encouraged to apply as early as possible.

- Following the submission of your application administration will review and evaluate your proposal and determine a final grant amount.
- Should the work not be completed as per the approved application your grant may be reduced or revoked. You may be required to sign a memorandum of understanding, that work is expected to be completed in accordance with your application.
- Reasonable changes to either the design or finish level of your project should be brought to the attention of the Façade Grant Program Coordinator as soon as possible. If the changes are appropriate and remain in line with the overall quality and purpose of your project your grant status may remain valid. This will be determined at the discretion of the Administration upon receiving and reviewing the changes you have proposed.
- Any changes should be submitted before construction on them begins, if changes are made to the design of the project without contacting the Program Coordinator the grant could be voided.



4.0 Permits and Licensing

All projects are required to apply for and obtain the necessary building permits and licenses for their improvements. The types of building permits and licenses will vary from project to project depending on the work planned. All applicants for the grant program should contact the City of Saskatoon Building Standards Department prior to completing their application to ensure they have a complete understanding of the work required. If permits are required, grant payment will not be issued until permits are provided to the Program Coordinator along with receipts for project work.

Building Standards

P 306-975-2645

E building.standards@saskatoon.ca

W saskatoon.ca/buildingpermits

5.0 Design Principles and Evaluation

The Façade Grant Adjudication Committee will recommend approval or denial based on the submitted application and its alignment with program goals and purpose. The Evaluation Matrix will be used to adjudicate on applications. The complete matrix is available at saskatoon.ca/facadeprogram. Below is a breakdown of how each category will be considered by the Committee:

Design Criteria and Maximum Points	
Category	Points
Overall Economic Benefit	40 Points
Neighbourhood Character	20 Points
Visual Interest	20 Points
Activity, Safety and Comfort	20 Points
Total	100 Points

Note: Applicants should familiarize themselves with the Evaluation Matrix

5.1. Overall Economic Benefit

The project demonstrates an overall benefit to the neighbourhood, supports economic development or business growth, and may improve the perception of an area. The specific context of the local area may be taken into consideration when reviewing the project's overall improvement to the area. This category is intended to be an opportunity for the adjudication committee to have some flexibility on the review of applications, allowing them to consider the context of the area in addition to specific improvements or design elements.

Points awarded for:

This category allows the applicant to explain why their project is important and how it might meet a need that is specific to their location or area. Examples could include:

- If a building has struggled to maintain tenants, then improvements to the building may have an increased impact at that location.
- If there is a history of graffiti being a problem on a façade then the proposed upgrades will provide more benefit than if they were in an area that doesn't have a similar problem.
- If a location is subject to a wind tunnel created by surrounding buildings, then the impact of a protective awning will be greater.
- If there have been several break ins or criminal activity adjacent to the building, then lighting may be more important there.
- If the project improves the perception of an area by replacing poor quality materials, or other elements which have detracted from an area.

Applicants should avoid changes to their façade that are insensitive to the surrounding neighbourhood. Work should not have a negative impact on the adjacent properties. For example, a poorly design façade renovation should not cause a wind tunnel effect on the sidewalk, or cause run off water onto the adjacent stores.



Before



After

Above: 219 21st Street East



Before



After

Above: 839 20th Street West

5.2. Neighbourhood Character

The project complements the surrounding buildings, and design elements enhance the visual character of the neighbourhood.

Points awarded for:

- The façade improvement uses materials, signage, colours, or design elements to compliment the surrounding buildings;
- The work enhances the visual character of the neighbourhood;
- If there are architectural guidelines for the area the façade is consistent with them; and,
- The façade improvement is complementary to the established character of an area.



5.3. Visual Interest

The project uses high quality materials that are both attractive and durable and employs design that adds interest and texture to the area.

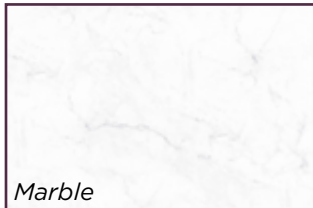
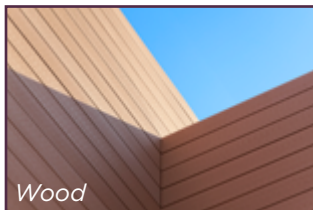
Unique or attractive architectural features may also contribute to a high scoring application.

Points awarded for:

- Cladding Materials are high quality, durable (for example: brick and stone);
- Lighting installations are architecturally interesting;
- Architectural Features make the façade improvement interesting or unique examples could include cornices, pilasters, sills, hoods or pedestrian signage;
- Colour and Texture is used to give a warming impression in winter, texture creates visual interest; and,
- Improvements are made at the ground level.

The following sections provide some ideas that can enhance the visual appeal of your project:

Materials: Use high quality cladding materials such as brick and stone.



Architectural Elements: Architectural Features make the façade improvement interesting or unique examples could include cornices, pilasters, sills, hoods, or pedestrian signage.



Colour and Texture: Colour and texture can be used to give a warming impression during the winter months, and interesting textures can create visual interest along a façade.



Lighting: Interesting lighting features will not only create a warm and inviting impression but can also highlight your storefront at night.



Awnings: Awnings not only add dimension to a storefront, they can be designed in an aesthetically pleasing way while also offering shelter from rain, snow, and sun.



Pedestrian Signs: High quality signs that are unique and attractive, and at a height, orientation, and scale intended for pedestrians passing by can be an effective way to attract customers into your store while enhancing the building façade and public realm. Signs can also be an effective way to complement the architectural style of the building façade without detracting from it. Sign types can include banners, blade signs, flat signs, and/or icon signs, and can be illuminated. Generally, backlit box signs are not considered effective pedestrian signage.

245 3rd Avenue South



Left: banner sign example;
Above: blade sign example.



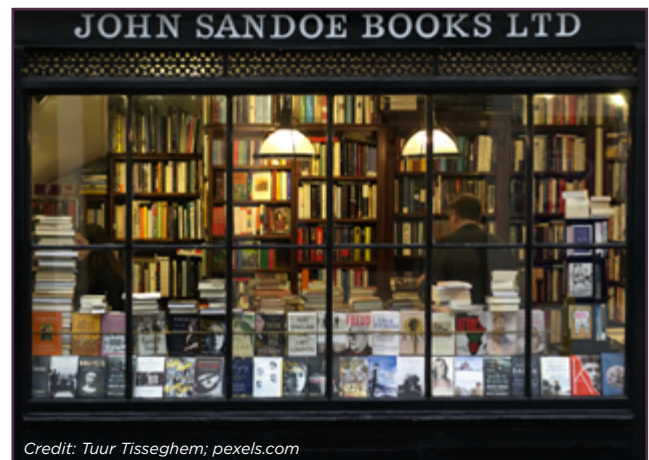
Above: icon sign example;
Left: flat sign example.

Creative Elements: A façade can become more visually interesting by getting creative, this can mean unique light features as pictured below, or other non-invasive designs that can connect your storefront with the public realm. Gobo projectors (an object placed inside or in front of a light source to control the shape of the emitted light and its shadow), interactive lighting, artistic features, and creative signage can make your business stand out and add to the character of your neighbourhood.



Window Displays and Visible Shop Interior:

Consider an interesting window display that allows people on the street to look in at your store, and to allow customers in your storefront to look out at the street. This type of interaction should encourage not only a safer area but invite people into your business.



Planter Boxes: Planter boxes under windows, or planters out on a stoop can be an inviting way to welcome someone to your store while also contributing to peoples experience while walking down the street. Planter boxes can be placed in front yards, side yards, patios or stoops, but must be contained on the private property.



Credit: Nataliya Vaitkevich; pexels.com

5.4. Activity, Safety and Comfort

A successful project should contribute to a vibrant neighbourhood that encourages community interaction and is safe and accessible to everyone.

- The project includes the addition of new entrances or windows;
- The design allows interaction between the inside and outside of the building (for example: adding windows or removing any screening from existing windows);
- Lighting: Does the lighting included in the design illuminate public areas?;
- Natural Surveillance: Does the work increase the potential for “eyes on the street”?;
- Are the building openings close to the sidewalk, or do patrons have to cross a parking lot or other barriers;
- Do façade improvements provide shade or protection from inclement weather?; and,
- Is the project accessible to people of all ages and abilities?

For more information on safety and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) please see the resources available at saskatoon.ca/neighbourhoodsafety.

The following are ways you can help improve the perceptions of safety for your storefront:

Consider these do's and don'ts that can contribute, or detract from, the activity, safety and comfort experienced at your store:

NATURAL SURVEILLANCE

✓ Do

Consider additional window openings and adding views onto the streetscape and into your storefront. Restaurant patios that open onto the street by opening large patio doors is another great way to do this.



801 Broadway Avenue

✗ Don't

Many businesses choose to block out the interior of their storefront opting instead for window displays with an opaque backdrop, or window film and marketing stickers that block the view for passersby. Opaque Window Displays or Screening can reduce the perception of safety in an area by lowering the amount of “eyes on the street”. While it may be tempting to insert a large marketing ad on your window film, a decal or window display that still invites visitors to engage with your shop, and for customers to interact with the streetscape outside, can be more inviting.



LIGHTING

✓ Do

Visual appeal is not the only reason to consider adding interesting lighting fixtures to your storefront. Light can also improve the perception of an area and make people passing by feel safer at night.



✗ Don't

Use harsh lighting that floods an area leaving the environment in front of your shop feeling stark. Harsh light may also make the surrounding area appear darker than it is as people must adjust their eyes to the drastic change.

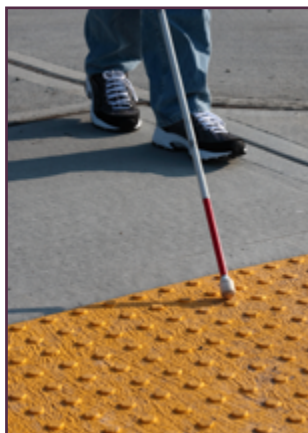


ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility for people with disabilities is a priority for the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission and the City of Saskatoon. It makes good business sense to identify and remove barriers faced by persons with disabilities. Barriers can be physical, attitudinal, or systemic. Removing barriers allows for fuller participation by all members of society.

✓ Do

Consider ensuring your storefront entrance is either at grade, or has a engineered slope or ramp up to the door to ensure people of different mobility are able to access your storefront. High visibility colours and tactile cues (such as a change in paving stone, or tactile bumps), can be a good way of providing better accessibility to people with visual impairments.



✗ Don't

Inadequate entrances, or poorly designed mobility aids can further isolate people from accessing your store. Try to avoid entrances that aren't grade level and don't provide an engineered slope for easy access. Poorly designed ramps can be just as cumbersome as steps.



PROTECTION FROM THE ELEMENTS

Saskatoon is known for its dynamic weather, from extremely hot and sunny summers to extremely cold and windy winters. It is important to offer protection from these kinds of harsh elements and encourage people to continue shopping and visiting your store and street throughout the year.

✓ Do

Trees, especially conifer trees, offer shelter from the wind and can be a source of colour during the winter months.

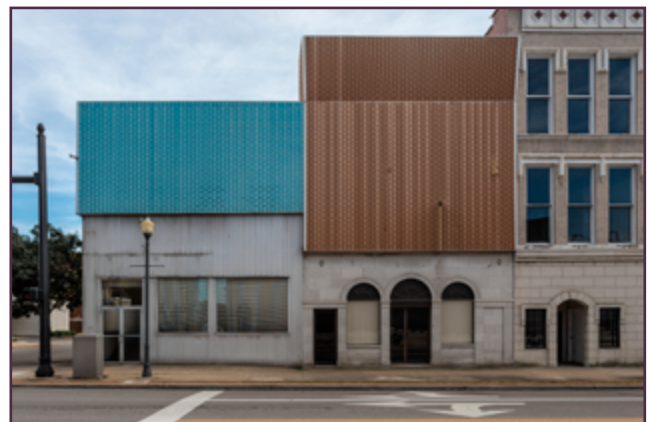


Awnings can be an excellent protector from harsh sun rays, rain, and snow.



✗ Don't

Don't leave your storefront over exposed, this can not only result in the feeling of a stark streetscape, but will offer little to no protection when visiting your street throughout the year.



“A successful project should contribute to a vibrant neighbourhood that encourages community interaction and is safe and accessible to everyone.”

5.5 Additional Considerations

5.5.1 Winter City Design

WintercityYXE celebrates what makes Saskatoon an inviting, vibrant, safe and prosperous place in winter. The concept of designing a “winter city” is about drawing focus and access to the wonderful things winter brings while reducing the barriers. Applicants are encouraged to design their façades with all seasons in mind. This can be done in a variety of ways:

- Adding colours that have a “warming” effect during the winter;
- Incorporate awnings and other features that provide shelter from inclement weather;
- Plantings, particularly conifers, provide greenery throughout the year; and,
- Patio heaters, and lights can extend your outdoor seating season.



5.5.2 Architectural Control Districts

Saskatoon currently has an Architectural Control District (ACD) located in the Broadway BID. The ACD Overlay for the B5B – Broadway Commercial Corridor Zoning District can be found in the City of Saskatoon Zoning Bylaw at saskatoon.ca/zoningbylaw and came out of the Broadway 360 report. It is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure their design will meet the requirements of the ACD. Compliance with the ACD will be reviewed as part of the permitting process, if your façade is required to change because it does not meet the conditions of the ACD after you’ve been awarded one of the incentives, you will need to submit your changes to the Façade Grant Program Coordinator for consideration.

6.0 Contact information

If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Program Coordinator by email at facade.program@saskatoon.ca.



Appendices

Façade Conservation and Enhancement Incentive Adjudication Matrix

Note: Further information on adjudication criteria may be found in the Façade Conservation and Enhancement Grant Program Guide.

EVALUATION		
CATEGORY	KEY INDICATORS	EARNED POINTS (for Adjudication Committee use)
Overall Economic Benefit	The project demonstrates an overall benefit to the neighbourhood, supports economic development or business growth, and may improve the perception of an area. <i>Grading Key:</i> 0-10 Little, Negative, or No Impact 11-20 Minimal Positive Impact 21-30 Moderate Positive Impact 31-40 Significant Positive Impact	/40
Neighbourhood Character	The project complements the surrounding buildings, and design elements enhance the visual character of the neighbourhood. <i>Grading Key:</i> 0-5 Little, Negative, or No Impact 6-10 Minimal Positive Impact 11-15 Moderate Positive Impact 16-20 Significant Positive Impact	/20
Visual Interest	The project uses high-quality materials which are both attractive and durable and employs design and adds interest and texture to the area. Unique or attractive architectural features may also contribute to a high-scoring application. <i>Grading Key:</i> 0-5 Little, Negative, or No Impact 6-10 Minimal Positive Impact 11-15 Moderate Positive Impact 16-20 Significant Positive Impact	/20
Activity, Safety and Comfort	The project contributes to a vibrant, safe, and accessible neighbourhood by providing direct views between business interiors and the street. The project provides entrances that are accessible to everyone. <i>Grading Key:</i> 0-5 Little, Negative, or No Impact 6-10 Minimal Positive Impact 11-15 Moderate Positive Impact 16-20 Significant Positive Impact	/20
TOTAL SCORE		/100
Heritage Conservation	The improvements include conservation of Character-Defining Elements on a building either listed on the Saskatoon Register of Historic Places or in the Built Heritage Database. <i>Grading Key:</i> 0-3 Little, Negative, or No Impact 4-5 Minimal Positive Impact 6-8 Moderate Positive Impact 9-10 Significant Positive Impact	/10
TOTAL SCORE:		/10



saskatoon.ca/facadeprogram

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Planning & Development

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