

COMMERCIAL ENERGY LOAN PROGRAM



PROGRAM GUIDE

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Contact email	BetterBuildings@saskatoon.ca
Website	saskatoon.ca/CELProgram

This guide details eligibility criteria, terms and conditions, eligible upgrades, technical documentation requirements, and how to apply for the Community Energy Loan Program. Please review before applying.

Program Overview

The Commercial Energy Loan Program (CEL Program), offered by the City of Saskatoon, helps eligible commercial, institutional, non-profit, multi-unit residential, and affordable housing property owners finance energy efficiency, water efficiency, renewable energy, and climate resilience upgrades.

Approved project costs are financed through a loan repaid through municipal property taxes. The program is designed to:

- Support long term building performance
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from existing buildings
- Decrease utility and operating expenses
- Enhance building comfort, safety, and resilience
- Reduce upfront capital barriers
- Promote local green jobs and economic activity.

The Program is intended for existing buildings in Saskatoon, with priority given to small- and medium-sized commercial properties (up to 10,000m² or 100,000 ft²), non-profit organizations, affordable housing providers, and multi-unit residential buildings.

Why Get a C-PACE Loan?

A commercial property assessed clean energy (C-PACE) loan provides low-interest, long-term financing to help eligible property owners complete building improvements that reduce energy and water use, support renewable energy generation, improve climate resilience, or enable electric vehicle charging.

The loan is deferred and repaid through property taxes. Because it is attached to the property rather than the owner, it may transfer to a new owner if the property is sold before repayment is complete, subject to program requirements and the terms negotiated between the buyer and seller. The outstanding balance may also be repaid early without penalty.

A PACE loan can help reduce upfront project costs while supporting long-term operational savings, improved tenant comfort, lower emissions, improved asset value, and stronger building performance.

Am I Eligible?

Applicant Eligibility To apply for the Program, you must: • be the legal property owner or an authorized representative of the property owner; • be in good standing with the Saskatchewan corporate registry, where applicable; • have owned the property for at least three years; • be current on property taxes for the past three years and the current year; • be current on property-secured debt, such as mortgages and liens; • have no active bankruptcy proceedings; • notify all holders of existing mortgages secured against the property and obtain their written consent; • participate in the City's Commercial Energy Planner as a condition of eligibility; and • receive City approval and sign a Deferral Agreement before starting work.	Property Eligibility Eligible properties must: • be located within Saskatoon city limits; • be an existing building, not new construction; • be a commercial, institutional, non-profit, or multi-unit residential property; • be operated by an affordable housing provider that demonstrates, to the City's satisfaction, that at least 15% of units, or a minimum of 5 units, are affordable to low-income households with incomes at or below the Saskatchewan Household Income Maximums, and that housing costs do not exceed 30% of household income or the maximum funding available under the shelter benefit; • have an approximate total leasable area of 100,000 square feet or less; • have an active property tax account; • carry liability insurance with a minimum of \$2 million and standard commercial property insurance; • have no unresolved liens, judgments, ownership disputes, or foreclosures; • have no outstanding life safety building orders or unresolved permit or enforcement matters that could affect compliance for the proposed upgrades; and • meet all other eligibility requirements established by the City.
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Financing Overview

The CEL Program provides low-interest financing for eligible project costs. Approved loans are repaid through property taxes. The final loan amount is based on eligible project costs, available program funding, property value limits, and confirmation that all program requirements have been met.

Key program terms include:

Loan Terms	Details											
Loan Amount	Minimum loan amount is \$10,000. Maximum loan amount is \$1.5 million per building. Financing cannot exceed 20% of the property’s assessed value or appraised value, as accepted by the City.											
Repayment Terms	Loan terms may be 5, 10, 15, or 20 years, depending on the effective useful life (EUL) of the approved improvements. EUL means the estimated period that an upgrade is expected to remain functional and provide value before it needs replacement. For projects with multiple measures, the term may be based on the measure with the longest EUL, subject to City review and approval. Loans may be repaid early with no penalty. Example: If a project includes LED lighting with a 10-year effective useful life and rooftop solar PV with a 20-year effective useful life, the CEL Program financing term may be approved for up to 20 years, subject to program coordinator review and approval.											
Interest Rates	Interest rates are fixed for the full loan term once the Deferral Agreement is signed. Rates are updated annually for new loans. 2026 interest rates are: <table><tr><th>5 Year</th><th>10 Year</th><th>15 Year</th><th>20 Year</th></tr><tr><td>3.24%</td><td>4.03%</td><td>4.68%</td><td>4.83%</td></tr></table>				5 Year	10 Year	15 Year	20 Year	3.24%	4.03%	4.68%	4.83%
5 Year	10 Year	15 Year	20 Year									
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Payment Terms	Approved payments are made directly to contractors. Deposits may be issued for up to 50% of the approved cost of an eligible retrofit. Deposit and installment payments combined cannot exceed 90% of the total approved project cost before final completion. Final payment is issued after the City reviews and approves completion documentation. Interest begins to accrue as soon as the City issues any payment on behalf of the participant, including a deposit, installment, reimbursement, or other approved payment. Payments are processed according to the City’s net 30 payment terms and cannot be expedited.											
Repayment Method	Repayment is made through the property tax bill. If the property is enrolled in a monthly TIPPS, monthly payments may be adjusted to include the loan repayment.											
Security and Transferability	The loan is attached to the property, not the property owner, and may be transferred to the new owner if the property is sold and the new owner signs a deferral agreement. After the agreement is signed, the City registers a miscellaneous interest											

	on the property title. A miscellaneous interest is an interest registered on title that shows the property is subject to the C-PACE loan. This interest helps ensure the loan is addressed if the property is sold or transferred. For more information, review the Miscellaneous Interest Factsheet .
Selling Before Repayment	A PACE loan will appear on a title search, and you have an obligation to disclose it to interested buyers. You must notify the City prior to an impending sale. When the property is sold, the full amount owing must be paid, unless the subsequent owner signs a deferral agreement and agrees to take responsibility for repaying the outstanding balance. For more information, review the Buying or Selling a Property factsheet .
Administration Fee	Standard properties pay a one-time administration fee of \$750 for loans up to \$40,000. For any amount above \$40,000, an additional fee of 1.6% applies. For non-profit organizations and affordable housing providers, the administration fee is waived for loans below \$40,000, and a reduced fee of 1% applies to any amount above \$40,000.
Affordable Housing Provider Verification	Affordable housing provider eligibility is based on the Program bylaw definition and the Saskatchewan Housing Income Maximums (SHIMS) . Applicants must demonstrate, to the City's satisfaction, that they provide housing to low-income households with gross annual household incomes at or below the SHIMS, and that housing costs do not exceed 30% of gross annual household income or the maximum funding available under the shelter benefit. Applicants applying under the affordable housing stream must complete the Affordable Housing Income Verification Form, where applicable, to support the City's verification review. Also check out the City's Affordable Housing Program and Resources City of Saskatoon .
Heritage housing	Projects involving designated heritage properties or properties located within a heritage conservation area must meet all applicable City requirements. Heritage-related work may require additional review and approval, including review by the applicable heritage committee, in accordance with City regulations. For more information check out the City's Heritage Properties and Programs webpage.
Staged Upgrades	Applicants may apply more than once for the same property, subject to City approval and the maximum deferred taxes amount not being exceeded. Example: A property owner may first apply for financing to complete a lighting retrofit and later apply for a separate HVAC upgrade, provided each project is approved by the City and the combined deferred taxes for the property do not exceed the eligible maximum loan amount for the property.
Contingency	Any project cost increase that exceeds the original quoted loan value is the participant's responsibility.

Rebates	Applicants are encouraged to review available rebates, grants, incentives, and other funding sources before finalizing their Program Funding Request. See Stacking with Other Programs section below for more information.
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Stacking with Other Programs — Rebates, Incentives, and Funding

Applicants are encouraged to review the [Commercial Energy Resources webpage](#) for current rebates, grants, tax credits, financing, and other incentives that may further support eligible building upgrades. Eligibility, deadlines, documentation, funding amounts, and stacking rules vary by program and should be confirmed by the applicant. Program participation does not guarantee eligibility for other funding, and rebates, grants, tax credits, or incentives for eligible costs may reduce the final Program-financed amount.

Eligible Upgrades

Program financing may be used for environmental improvement projects that are permanently affixed to an eligible property and support energy efficiency, renewable energy, water efficiency, climate resiliency, or other eligible project-related work.

All eligible measures must be reviewed and approved by the City before work begins. Projects must meet applicable program requirements including technical specifications, code requirements, permit requirements, and all other relevant municipal and provincial regulations, and/or specified documentation requirements. The City determines final eligibility in all cases.

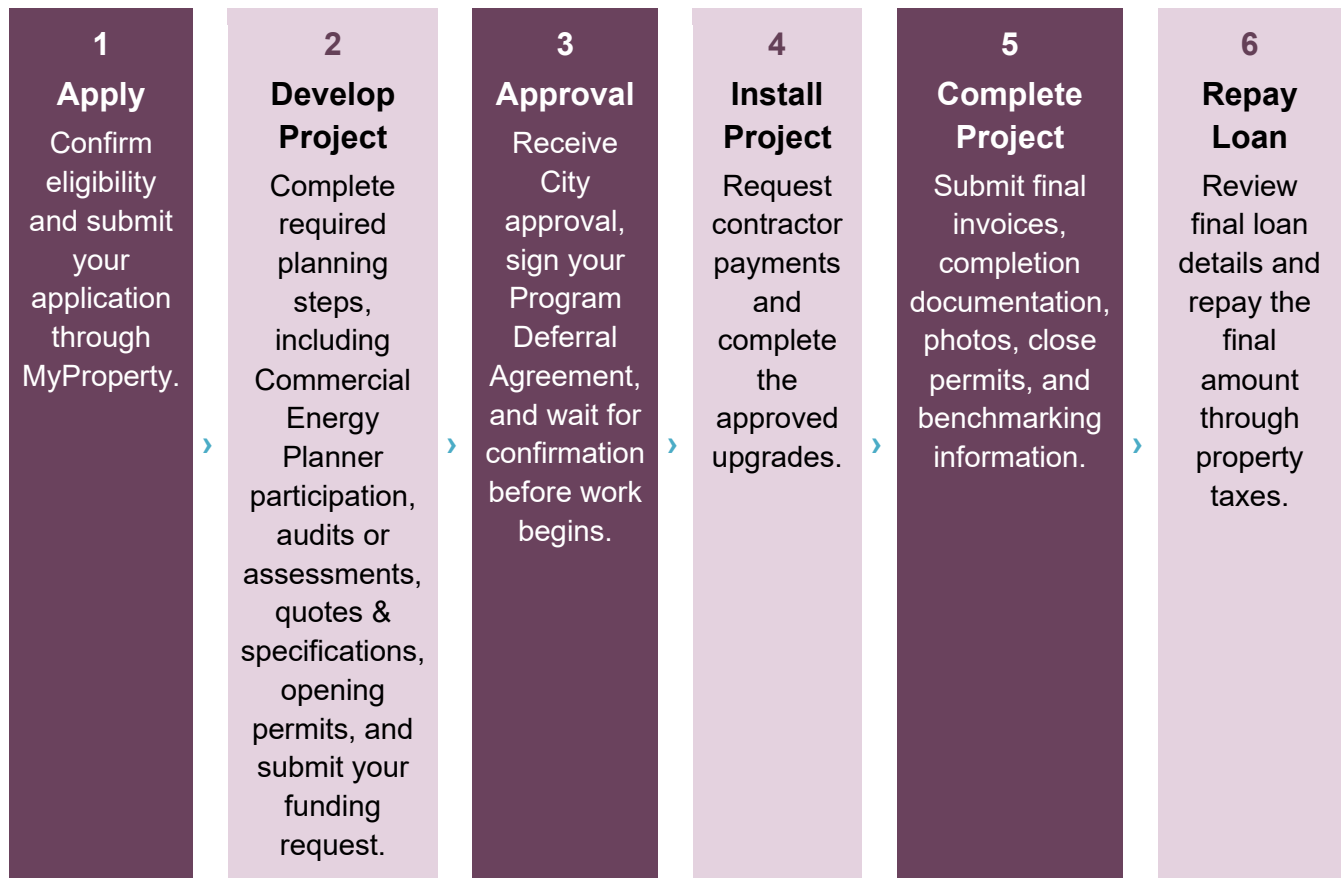
- **Energy efficiency:** eligible projects may include chillers; insulation upgrades; LED lighting fixtures and controls; motors, pumps, fans, and drives; water heating systems; building automation systems, controls, and thermostats; energy recovery systems; rooftop units; high-efficiency furnaces; high-efficiency condensing boilers; heat pumps; energy efficient windows and exterior doors; and air sealing.
- **Renewable energy:** eligible projects may include solar photovoltaic systems and solar thermal systems, including required design, structural, and interconnection-related work where approved by the City.
- **Water efficiency:** eligible projects may include low-flow fixtures; efficient irrigation and landscape management features; replacement of once-through cooling systems; and building automation systems that support water efficiency, including leak detection, shut-off systems, irrigation controls, monitoring, and alarms.
- **Climate resiliency:** eligible projects may include wind hardening installations; ventilation improvement projects; cooling features such as reflective or low-albedo roofing, shading, landscaping, shutters, and awnings; flood mitigation installations; stormwater management, including green roofs and onsite water management; backup power; and battery storage.
- **Other eligible project-related work:** eligible projects may include Level 2 electric vehicle charging stations; asbestos, radon, mold, or other remediation work required to complete another eligible project; other incidental work required to complete another

eligible project, such as electrical work or roof repairs backup power; and battery storage.

For a detailed project list, technical requirements and required supporting documentation, see the [Eligible Retrofit Measures and Supporting Technical Requirements document](#).

How the Program Works

The Program process has six main steps, guiding applicants from eligibility confirmation and project planning through installation, project completion, and loan repayment.



Before You Apply

- Before applying, review all [eligibility requirements](#) and confirm that you and your property meet the Program criteria.
- Apply for a Property Information Disclosure through the [City's ePermitting system](#) and include it with your application in MyProperty.
- If you do not have a [MyProperty](#) account, you will be required to set it up on your first login.
- If applying under the affordable housing stream, complete the required Affordable Housing Income Verification Form and include it with your application in MyProperty.
- Have proof of property and liability insurance ready for upload to MyProperty.

STEP 1: APPLY

- Log into [MyProperty](#) and start the program application.
 - Once logged into MyProperty, select *Tax Deferral Programs* to locate the Program application form. This is located on the right-hand side menu under *My Properties*.
- Submit the application information for City review.
- The City will review your application and notify you through MyProperty if you are approved to proceed to the project development stage.
- **Initial application approval does not authorize retrofit work to begin.**

STEP 2: DEVELOP PROJECT

You have **four months** from the date of your Program application approval email to submit your complete Funding Request package and sign a Program Deferral Agreement with the City. If these steps are not completed within that time frame, your participation in the Program may be discontinued unless the City provides a written extension approval.

This stage is where you develop the project details, complete required assessments, gather technical and financial documentation, open required permits, and submit your Funding Request for City review. During this stage, you will:

- Participate in the [Commercial Energy Planner](#), including benchmarking and utility data sharing and disclosure.
- For Energy Efficiency Projects complete an ASHRAE Level II audit, equivalent virtual assessment, or other City-approved assessment with engineer attestation for energy efficiency projects, where required. For more information check out this [Commercial Energy Audit factsheet](#).
 - Buildings must achieve at least a 20% energy reduction through one or more eligible measures, based on the energy modelling report. Measures may be completed in phases with Program Coach approval.
 - For simpler projects, such as single-measure upgrades, LED lighting retrofits, or solar photovoltaic installations, the City may waive the audit requirement, subject to Program Coach approval. If you think your project may be applicable, please reach out to the [Program Coach](#) for confirmation and guidance.
- For climate resiliency projects, submit the [Climate Resiliency Risk Assessment Form](#) completed by a qualified professional.
- For all projects, prepare the [Business Case Form](#), include the project scope, proposed costs and savings, calculated savings-to-investment ratio, project timeline, contractor quotes, and required technical specifications.
- Confirm that the project meets the [required minimum cost-effectiveness and energy performance thresholds](#), where applicable.
- Collect contractor quotes and product specifications for each proposed upgrade.
- Open required [permits](#) and confirm applicable utility interconnection, code, and other approval requirements.

- Submit your complete Funding Request package through MyProperty, including all required technical, financial, permit, and supporting documentation.
- Allow time for the Program Coach to review your Funding Request and request additional information, if needed.

Important: Do not make deposits, purchase materials or equipment, hire contractors, or begin work until your Program Deferral Agreement is fully signed and the City confirms you may proceed.

STEP 3: APPROVAL

After the City approves your Funding Request, the Program Coach will prepare your Deferral Agreement. This agreement is the contract between you and the City for your loan and confirms the approved project scope, loan amount, repayment terms, and program obligations.

Before you begin any work, the following steps must be completed:

1. The City prepares your Deferral Agreement.
2. You review and sign the agreement electronically through Adobe.
3. The City signs the agreement.
4. A miscellaneous interest is registered on the property title.
5. You must pay the administration fee for your project within 30 days of receiving the invoice, which will be sent out at the same time as your Deferral Agreement. To pay your administrative fee, please reach out to [Corporate Revenue](#).
6. The City provides confirmation that all requirements have been met and that you may begin the approved project.

To check your project status at any time, log into MyProperty.

If your project changes after the Program Deferral Agreement is signed, contact the Program Coach before making changes. Changes to scope, equipment, contractors, costs, or timelines may require City approval and an amendment to your agreement.

Important: Do not make deposits, purchase materials or equipment, hire contractors, or begin work until your Program Deferral Agreement is fully signed and the City confirms you may proceed.

STEP 4: INSTALL PROJECT

Once the City confirms you may proceed, you may begin the approved project.

- Complete only the retrofits approved in the Program Deferral Agreement.
- Request optional contractor deposit or installment payments through MyProperty.
- Keep all invoices, receipts, proof of payment, before and after photos, permit records, inspection approvals, commissioning records, and related documentation.
- Complete the approved project within 12 months of signing the Program Deferral Agreement, unless the City approves an extension.

- **Contact the Program Coach before changing the project scope, contractors, equipment, cost, or timeline.**

Deposit and installment payment requests are submitted through MyProperty. The City will review payment requests and may approve payment to the designated contractor or request additional information.

The City may pay contractors directly for deposits of up to 50%, installment payments of up to 90%, and final payments. If participants pay contractor costs upfront, they may be eligible for reimbursement after project completion.

Payments are processed according to the City of Saskatoon's net 30 payment terms and cannot be expedited. Applicants should plan for standard processing timelines when scheduling contractors, ordering materials, or arranging project work.

Note: If you pay eligible contractor costs upfront, you may request reimbursement at project completion, subject to program requirements and City approval.

STEP 5: COMPLETE PROJECT

You have 12 months from the date you sign your Program Deferral Agreement to complete your approved project. If your project may take longer, contact the Program Coach before the deadline to discuss whether an extension may be available.

When your project is complete, follow this checklist:

- Gather final contractor invoices, receipts, proof of payment, before and after photos, and commissioning records, as applicable.
- Confirm all required permits have been closed.
- Submit completion documentation through MyProperty, including the final [Project Completion Certificate form](#).
- Complete any required on-site verification or follow-up, if requested.
- Continue annual benchmarking, reporting, and utility data sharing for up to five years after project completion.

After the City reviews your documents, the City will process approved reimbursements, pay any remaining approved contractor amounts, and finalize your loan balance.

For a printable checklist of required application, funding request, and project completion documents, see [Appendix A: Required Documents Checklist](#).

STEP 6: REPAY LOAN

- Once your project is complete and all eligible payments have been processed, the City will provide your final loan and repayment details through MyProperty.
- You will be able to view your final loan amount, repayment term, interest rate, and repayment schedule.

- Repayment is collected through the property tax bill. Please reach out to [Corporate Revenue](#) with any payment related questions.
- If you plan to sell the property before your loan is fully repaid, contact the Program Coach before the sale. The loan may be paid off by the seller or assumed by the new owner, subject to program requirements and the agreement negotiated between the buyer and seller.

Changes to Approved Projects

Applicants must notify the Program Coach before making changes to an approved project, including scope changes, contractor changes, equipment substitutions, cost increases, schedule changes, or permit changes. Unapproved changes may be deemed ineligible for financing.

Permits, Codes, and Project Compliance

Applicants are responsible for ensuring their retrofit project complies with all applicable municipal and provincial regulations, codes, permit requirements, utility interconnection requirements, manufacturer installation requirements, occupational health and safety requirements, and other legal requirements. Program approval does not replace approvals required from permitting authorities, utilities, inspectors, lenders, mortgage holders, insurers, or other regulators. Applicants must obtain and close all required permits. For more information, check out the [Homebuilding, Renovations & Improvements | City of Saskatoon](#).

Failure to obtain or close required permits may delay payments, delay final project approval, or result in some costs being ineligible for Program financing.

Applicant and City Responsibilities

Applicant responsibilities include:

- Selecting and hiring contractors and qualified energy professionals;
- Confirming that the project meets all eligibility and technical requirements;
- Providing required utility data and benchmarking information;
- Obtaining required mortgage holder consent or other consents, as required;
- Obtaining required permits and approvals;
- Providing complete and accurate documentation through MyProperty;
- Completing approved work within required timelines;
- Notifying the City before making changes to the approved project;
- Confirming and applying for external rebate, grant, or other incentive programs;
- Submitting completion and verification documentation; and
- Repaying the loan through the property tax bill.

City responsibilities include:

- Reviewing applications, funding requests, and completion documentation;
- Confirming eligible project costs and approved financing amounts;
- Preparing and administering deferral agreements;

- Processing approved deposit, installment, reimbursement, and final payment amounts;
- Registering the required interest on title;
- Applying loan repayment amounts to the property tax account;
- Supporting program coordination with the Commercial Energy Planner; and
- Providing program guidance and support.

Important: The City does not guarantee contractor performance, energy savings, equipment performance, rebate eligibility, approval from other permitting authorities, lender consent, utility approvals, insurer approvals, or funding program approvals.

Contact Information

Need help with your Program application?

Contact the Program Coach for support with your application, Commercial Energy Planner participation, eligible upgrades, technical documentation, or next steps.

Email: BetterBuildings@saskatoon.ca

Phone: [306-986-1658](tel:306-986-1658)

Website: saskatoon.ca/CELProgram

Appendix A: Required Documents Checklist

Done	Category	Required Document
1. Application documents		
☐	Mandatory	Property Information Disclosure
☐	Mandatory	Proof of insurance (property and liability)
☐	Property, ownership specific	Affordable Housing Income Verification Form, if applying under the affordable housing stream
2. Funding request documents		
☐	Mandatory	Completed Business Case form
☐	Mandatory	Contractor quote(s), bids, or estimates for all proposed improvements
☐	Project-specific documents	Building permit application or permit documentation, where required. This may include drawings, plans, or other supporting technical documentation relevant to the project
☐	Project-specific documents	ASHRAE Level II energy audit and report, Virtual Decarbonization Plan, equivalent energy model, or other documentation acceptable to the Program
☐	Project-specific documents	Climate Resiliency Risk Assessment Form for proposed climate resilience or resiliency measures, including a consultant-prepared assessment where required
☐	Project-specific documents	Water-use calculations, product specifications, or other supporting documentation for water conservation measures
☐	Property, ownership, and financing approval specific	Mortgage lender consent form
☐	Property, ownership specific	Condominium board written approval or consent form
☐	Property, ownership, and financing approval specific	Property appraisal, where applicable
3. Project completion documents		
☐	Mandatory	Final contractor invoices

☐	Mandatory	Receipts and proof of payment
☐	Mandatory	Final completion certificate form
☐	Mandatory	Before and after photos
☐	Project-specific documents	Closed permit documentation
☐	Project-specific documents	Commissioning records, where applicable