

TOWN OF NORRIDGEWOCK FACADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM GUIDELINES

1. GOALS AND STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

The Norridgewock Facade Improvement Program (NFIP) promotes economic development and stimulates business through public-private partnerships by offering economic incentives for renovation, restoration, and preservation of privately-owned commercial building exteriors within the Town of Norridgewock through façade improvements or to enhance the viability of local commercial businesses by providing a cost-effective means for business owners to improve the outward appearance of commercial property. The goals of the NFIP are:

- To increase the economic vitality and enhance the commercial properties located within the Town of Norridgewock; and
- To restore and preserve the character of Norridgewock; and
- To heighten awareness of Norridgewock's thriving commercial environment; and
- To increase foot traffic and sales for businesses through aesthetic improvements.

2. DEFINITIONS.

Applicant shall mean any property owner(s) of an Eligible Property or a lessee of an Eligible Property who provides proof of such status along with proof that all owners of the Eligible Property have approved the facade plans and the lessee's application for participation in the NFIP.

NFIP shall mean the Norridgewock Facade Improvement Program.

Town shall mean the Town of Norridgewock.

Administrator shall mean the Town Manager or his/her designee.

Branding shall mean the marketing of an idea or image of a specific product or service so that it is recognizable and identified with a certain company.

Cost of Construction shall mean the cost associated with the actual construction of the Facade Improvements approved by the Norridgewock Select Board.

Design Guidelines shall mean any Land Use Zone Design Guidelines developed by the Planning Board and adopted and incorporated into the Land Use Ordinance, and are stated herein by this reference for all intents and purposes.

Eligible Buildings/Property shall mean those buildings which are within the Town of Norridgewock and contain commercial businesses. Mixed use structures may be eligible, at the discretion of the Select Board but must be pro-rated and clearly demonstrate the potential economic impact. Residential structures are not allowed.

Facade shall mean the exterior of an Eligible Building or Property visible from a public way.

Facade Improvements shall include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Exterior facade treatment (i.e., cleaning, painting, installation of siding, brick, stucco, etc.) for the building;
- b. Repair, replacement, or installation of exterior doors and door hardware, windows and trim work located on the exterior;
- c. Repair, replacement, or installation of awnings and business signs on the structure;
- d. Repair, replacement, or installation of roofing that is visible from the roadway;
- e. Exterior brick or tile repair or replacement;
- f. Repair, replacement or installation of steps, walkways, and ramps to improve accessibility and conform to ADA requirements;
- g. Structural improvements to Facades;
- h. Electrical or lighting improvements made to Facades, and;
- i. Substantial landscaping and/or groundwork that improve curb appeal.

3. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION:

- A. *In General.* The Town shall administer the NFIP and will execute documents necessary for project initiation and completion consistent with federal, state, and local requirements.
- B. *Administrator.* The Administrator will serve as the contact person for all procedures and processes and program eligibility. The Administrator will have direct responsibility for the regular administration of the NFIP.
- C. *Tax Increment Financing Advisory Committee ("TIF Committee").* The TIF Committee shall:
 1. Review and recommend revisions to these NFIP Guidelines;
 2. Review applications, recommend for approval/disapproval, and prioritize the proposed projects based upon the following:
 - a. Significance of the project and relative contribution to the revitalization of the Town and/or Downtown District;
 - b. Job creation and the magnitude of the Applicant's matching contributions;
 - c. Readiness to proceed;
 - d. Conformity with the Town's codes and ordinances as well as the Tax Increment Financing Project Guidelines; and
 - e. Other factors which the TIF Committee considers relevant;
 3. Make recommendations to the Select Board regarding plans and specifications of the projects subject to these guidelines; and
 4. Make recommendations to the Select Board on projects based upon their conformity with the approved plans and specifications.
- D. *Select Board.* The Select Board shall review recommendations on the program, as presented by the Tax Increment Financing Advisory Committee. The Board shall approve

plans and specifications; the Board shall accept/reject projects based upon their conformity with the approved plans and specifications.

- E. *Board of Appeals*. The Board of Appeals shall hear and decide appeals from decisions of the Select Board; provided such appeal is made in writing within ten (10) days of the decision being appealed and is submitted to the Town Clerk.
- F. *Annual Funding*. The annual funding of the Façade Improvement Program shall not exceed 20 percent of the total annual revenue received into the Norridgewock Transit-Oriented Development and Natural Gas Omnibus Municipal Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District.

4. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

- A. The Town, through NFIP funding, will provide façade improvement assistance to Applicants for improvements to Facades of Eligible Buildings as approved by the TIF Committee. Such Facade Improvement assistance will be in the form of a grant. A grant shall be paid on a reimbursement basis after completion of the project and acceptance of the same as being in conformity with the plans and specifications approved by the TIF Committee. The amount of the grant shall be a minimum of \$1,500, not exceed \$25,000 per single property (i.e. total Construction Cost of Construction between \$3,000 and \$50,000).
- B. A matching requirement of 1:1 is required.

5. PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

- A. The Eligible Property must be occupied or available for sale or lease; Applicant must show rights to the Eligible Property and be able to provide written permission from any effected parties that each is agreeable to the terms of the proposed application.
- B. Applicant must start Facade Improvements within ninety (90) days of entering into an agreement with the Town and complete the same within the time period specified in the agreement; the time period shall not exceed one year. Should construction exceed beyond one (1) year, the Applicant must provide the Town with photos and a written progress update.
- C. Facade improvements, along with their plans and specifications, must be reviewed and approved by the TIF Committee. After the Facade Improvements, together with the plans and specifications have been approved, no change may be made thereto unless Applicant obtains the Administrator's prior written approval thereof. Unapproved changes will not be refunded.

- D. All required NFIP documents must be executed before any renovation work to be paid for under the NFIP may begin.
- E. Total Cost of Construction for Façade Improvements must exceed \$3,000 to qualify under the NFIP. Applicant must demonstrate to the TIF Committee that the Cost of Construction for which they have applied will in fact improve the appearance of the Facade in accordance with the goals and purpose of NFIP. Grants will not be made to applications where the proposal does not improve the appearance of the Facade as measured against the goals of the program.
- F. The Town shall at no time be responsible to reimburse the Applicant for any amount which exceeds the NFIP limits specified in Section 4A herein above or which exceeds the amount to which the Applicant and the Town have agreed in writing prior to the performance of the renovation work. The Applicant shall be responsible for the Cost of Construction. Any expenditure that exceeds the approved grant amount will not be subject to reimbursement.
- G. All Facade Improvements must be in compliance with all applicable Town and State codes, and any Design Guidelines, if and when approved.
- H. The NFIP is administered on a reimbursement basis. Following submission of a reimbursement request, the Administrator or his/her designee will inspect the work. No funds shall be reimbursed to the Applicant until (i) the Town receives a certificate from the Applicant stating that the work is completed and conforms to the plans and specifications approved by the TIF Committee and (ii) the Administrator inspects the Facade Improvements and certifies that such are complete and are in compliance with the Town's and State's codes.
- I. Must obtain certification that there are no code enforcement actions, tax liens, or judgment liens against the property. Must be able to provide tax certificate indicating that all ad valorem taxes are current.
- J. Applicant must not be indebted in any way to the Town.
- K. Applicant must provide proof of sufficient insurance coverage and willingness to maintain insurance on the Eligible Property for a period of no less than five (5) years.

6. PROGRAM INELIGIBILITY

The following businesses are ineligible:

- A. Bars, marijuana retail and medical facilities, pawn shops, cash checking or money transfer, bail bonds, furniture and appliance rental shops
- B. Non-profit organizations, banks, savings and loan associations

C. Non-independently owned establishments

D. Used car lots

7. APPLICATION PROCESS:

A. Applicants may obtain an application and the guidelines from the Administrator. The Administrator will explain the NFIP and answer any questions regarding the NFIP.

B. In the NFIP application, Applicants must:

1. Designate one person who will be the Applicant's contact person for all purposes regarding the application;
2. Certify that there are no code enforcement actions, tax liens, or judgment liens against the property;
3. Provide tax certificates indicating all ad valorem taxes are current;
4. Certify that the Applicant is not indebted in any way to the Town;
5. Provide proof of owners' ownership of the Eligible Property, proof of insurance, and a signed statement from each lienholder of the Eligible Property verifying that the Applicant is current on all indebtedness that does or could impact the value or ownership of the Eligible Property;
6. Describe the proposed Facade Improvements and provide plans and specifications for the same;
7. Indicate the proposed commencement date and completion date of the project;
8. Describe the significance of the project and relative contribution to the revitalization of the Town of Norridgewock;
9. Provide an itemized cost estimate for the project. Professionally engineered plans may be required.

C. Applications will initially be reviewed for program eligibility and funding by the Administrator.

D. The Administrator shall forward eligible applications together with accompanying recommendations regarding funding and program priorities to the TIF Committee.

E. The Select Board will select the Project to receive reimbursement under the NFIP, under the recommendation of the TIF Committee.

- F. The Applicant, the owners of the Company and/or Eligible Property, if different from the Applicant, and the Town shall execute the program agreements.

8. APPLICANT'S RESPONSIBILITIES:

The responsibilities of Applicant listed in this section apply to both the Applicant and the owners of the Eligible Property if the Applicant is a lessee.

- A. The Façade must be repaired, restored, renovated and/or improved in accordance with the plans and specifications approved by the TIF Committee. Work for projects under the NFIP must begin and be completed within the time frame agreed upon in the contract between Applicant and the Town.
- B. Applicant agrees to maintain the Facade Improvements at a similar or higher level/quality for a minimum of five (5) years after the completion and acceptance by the Town of the same.
- C. Building exteriors, including the Facade Improvements, must be maintained in accordance with Town & State building codes.
- D. Any sales or leases of the Eligible Property within five (5) years after completion and acceptance by the Town of the Project Improvements will include language requiring prior approval by the NFIP of any subsequent alteration to Facades and be in accordance with the design and review standards of the NFIP.
- E. Buildings renovated under this program must be occupied by or made available for sale or occupancy at all times during the five-year period after completion and acceptance of the Project Improvements.
- F. All representations which Applicant made in its application shall be pursued and obtained within the time period indicated in the application and approved by the TIF Committee.
- G. If, for any reason, the Facade shall be damaged or destroyed, either in whole or in part, the Applicant will, without cost to the Town, promptly repair or rebuild the façade in accordance with the approved façade design, or such other TIF Committee approved plan consistent with the Town's codes and Design Guidelines. Repair or reconstruction must be commenced within three (3) months of the date of the damage and completed within the time period established by the TIF Committee.
- H. Applicant agrees to maintain sufficient insurance coverage for the building on the Eligible Property throughout the five (5) year period after completion and acceptance by the Town of the Project Improvements and provide updated copies of certificates evidencing such coverage throughout such period.