

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

INCENTIVES PROGRAM

PROGRAM GUIDELINES FOR THE
MURALS GRANT
May 2022 to April 2023



REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
OF WOOD BUFFALO

MURALS GRANT

GRANT OVERVIEW

The Murals Grant supports property and business owners in making improvements that add vibrancy to their businesses and buildings. Respondents to a 2019 downtown revitalization survey identified mural projects as one of the ways to make the downtown more attractive and build community pride.

The grant supports **mural projects** on building exteriors. A mural is any painting, mosaic or graphic art (big and small) which is applied professionally to all or a portion of an exterior wall of a building for the purposes of decoration or artistic expression. Murals may depict a scene or event of natural, social, cultural or historic significance and may be used to celebrate local history, Indigenous heritage and multiculturalism.

Murals should be completed by a Locally Involved Artist. This means an artist residing in the Municipality or an artist from outside the Municipality who provides mentorship, skill-building, and capacity-building opportunities to local residents in the field of discipline for which they have been hired. Community involvement in the mural project is encouraged.

The program supports the creation of murals on private property. These murals are commissioned, installed and maintained by property owners or business operators.



Examples of mural projects.

GRANT VALUE

The Murals Grant is a reimbursement grant. The grant provides 75 per cent of eligible costs, to a maximum of \$30,000 **per building** for mural projects that are undertaken by a “locally involved artist”.

As a reimbursement grant, applicants receive funding after their projects are complete and verified by the Municipality.

ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

The following must be met to be eligible:

The building or business must:

- Be located within the downtown, as shown on the Program Area Map (page 9).
- Be an **existing Commercial, Institutional or Mixed-use Building**. Home businesses or occupations are not eligible. In the case of government buildings (municipal, provincial, federal), be a ground-level commercial space.

The mural project must:

- Be installed on an exterior wall of a building.
- Be completed by a locally involved artist.
- Be suitable for a culturally diverse audience and for all ages.
- Contain no advertising, logos or offensive content.

All designs and artwork are subject to final approval by the Municipality.

If your building received this grant previously:

- Buildings that received a grant previously may be eligible to reapply if funding remains.
- Please inquire if you are unsure of your building’s prior participation.

APPROVED USES OF GRANT FUNDS

General eligible costs and ineligible costs are provided in Table 1. Grants shall be solely used for the project as described in the grant agreement. A pre-application meeting is strongly recommended.

Table 1: Eligible and Ineligible Costs

Associated Eligible Costs	Costs not Covered by the Grant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Professional fees, including project management, design and engineering, to a maximum of 15 per cent of eligible project costs. Artist fees are not subject to this policy. ✓ Artist fees including design, installation, travel and accommodation (note: artist travel and accommodation costs are at the Municipality’s discretion). ✓ Municipal planning permit fees (development permits, building permits, and trade permits). ✓ Direct project labour costs. ✓ Materials and supplies including shipping and freight. ✓ Rental of tools and equipment. ✓ Goods and Service Tax (GST). ✓ Mural artwork, including materials and supplies. ✓ Site preparation, including rubbish removal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Work considered to be routine maintenance ✗ Insurance and warranties ✗ Costs associated with time and/or labour performed directly by the applicant. ✗ Non-specific costs, including overheads, profit and contingencies. ✗ Incidental costs, such as gas, tools (purchases) *or other consumables ✗ Costs associated with cost overruns. ✗ Changes to the project scope that have not been pre-approved. ✗ Rubbish removal that is not part of a Mural project.
<p>Costs that are not specifically mentioned may be considered at the discretion of the Manager of Planning and Development Department.</p>	

GENERAL INFORMATION

The following information applies to all grant types in the Program

Who can Apply?

- Property owners.
- Tenants, with the authorization of the property owner(s).

Grant Funding

- Funding is provided on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Buildings may receive grants under more than one grant stream. Separate applications are required.
- Grants are not retroactive. Cost incurred before applying and signing an agreement are not eligible. Some exceptions apply:
 - Professional fees related to the project if incurred after June 29, 2020.
 - Municipal planning permit fees (development permits, building permits and trade permits)
 - For the Beautification and Patio Grants, eligible costs incurred up to six months before applying. Any expenses incurred before an application is approved is done at the Applicant's risk.
- Recipients will enter into an agreement with the Municipality that sets out the terms and conditions of participation in the Program.

Contractors and Estimates

- The Municipality encourages applicants to use local contractors. Visit www.rmwb.ca/incentives for a list of community resources.
- Recipients may use the contractor of their choice to undertake their projects.
- Selected contractors must hold a valid municipal business licence.
- Recipients are responsible for all payments to contractors and suppliers.
- Contractor estimates must be comparable and itemize all portions of the project (e.g., professional fees, labour, materials, and permits). Lump sum estimates will not be considered.

Projects in Flood-impacted Buildings and Properties

- The Program is not intended to replace personal insurance or provincial disaster recovery assistance, or cover losses or damages caused by the 2020 flood. For example, the costs for clean-up, demolition, landfill tipping fees, and returning buildings to pre-existing conditions.
- Where buildings have been damaged, Applicants must demonstrate that projects constitute an improvement from pre-flood conditions.
- Applicants shall not apply for improvements they know will be, or likely to be, recovered entirely by personal insurance proceeds, provincial disaster recovery assistance or similar recovery funding.

Reimbursement

- Reimbursement is based on the lower of two contractor estimates and/or the final invoice (if lower).
- The following will be verified by the Municipality once the project is complete:
 - Property taxes must be current and paid;
 - Municipal utility bills must be current and paid;
 - The property is not subject to an unresolved enforcement order, such as a Stop Order;
 - The applicant is not party to a legal dispute with the Municipality; and
 - All municipal permits and permissions have been received, are closed and are without deficiencies.

Key Dates and Timelines

- Complete applications must be received on or before **4:30 PM on April 30, 2023**.
- Projects must complete construction within 12 months of the date on the executed agreement.
- The Municipality may consider extensions to the above timeframes if recipients demonstrate that delays are due to circumstances beyond their control and/or seasonal construction limitations. Recipient must submit requests for extensions prior to the deadline.

- Recipients must notify the Program when their project is complete.
- Recipients must provide documentation to begin the reimbursement process within three months of completing construction.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For questions, pre-application meetings or to apply, please contact:

Downtown Revitalization Incentives Program

Planning and Development Department
Community and Protective Services Department
Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo
9909 Franklin Avenue
Fort McMurray, AB, T9H 2K4
incentives@rmwb.ca
780.743.7000 (PULSE LINE)

For general permitting inquiries, please contact:

Community Development Planning

Planning and Development Department
Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo
309 Powder Drive
Fort McMurray, AB, T9K 0M3
current.planning@rmwb.ca
780.743.7000 (PULSE LINE)

APPLICATION PROCESS

STEP 1: PLANNING YOUR PROJECT

- Applicants are strongly encouraged to participate in a pre-application meeting to obtain early advice on project eligibility. Virtual meeting options are available.
- To schedule a meeting, email incentives@rmwb.ca.

Important things to know

- Allocate time to plan your project. Expect delays in obtaining contractor estimates around holiday times.
- To-scale and legible drawings are required. Improvements must be clearly marked all drawings.
- For projects requiring access to municipal land, please refer to Step 4 for additional authorizations that may be required.
- **Need help finding an artist?** Applicants are responsible for selecting an artist. General advice on selecting an artist and commissioning a design is available from the Community and Protective Services Department at public.art@rmwb.ca. All murals must be applied professionally, including appropriate wall preparation and material selection, to ensure murals last.

STEP 2: APPLYING

- Two options to apply are available:
 - Option 1 Request Pre-Approval** – Applicants who have not yet selected an artist or finalized their mural design may request pre-approval of their project. A partial mural application is required. See page 5 of the application form for items to include in your application. If basic eligibility criteria are met, Applicants will be offered a grant agreement. The remaining checklist items must be submitted once the mural design is finalized and prior to mural installation. The grant agreement will be updated with project details. All artwork is subject to final approval by the Municipality.
 - Option 2: Request Full Approval** – Applicants who have a complete application should request full approval of their mural projects. A complete application contains all the documents listed on the application form.
- See the application form for the document checklist. Forms are available at www.rmwb.ca/incentives.
- Email the application form and supporting information to incentives@rmwb.ca.

STEP 3: APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

- Applications are reviewed on an ongoing basis and in the order received. For current processing times, please inquire to incentives@rmwb.ca.
- Applicants will be contacted if revisions or additional information is required.
- The final decision to award or refuse an application is made by the Manager of Planning and Development Department.
- All decisions are final. There are no appeals.
- Application acceptance does not guarantee that the project will receive municipal permits at the construction stage.
- Artwork and mural designs are subject to final approval by the Municipality.

STEP 4: OBTAINING YOUR PERMITS

- Before construction may begin, applicants must obtain all necessary permits and authorizations.
- The following permits and authorizations may be required:

- **Development Permit** – A development permit may be required. Permitting will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Development permits are issued by the Community Development Planning Branch (Planning and Development Department).

Note: All development must adhere to the *Land Use Bylaw*, even if permits are not required.

- **Building Permits and Trades Permits** – Building permits and trades permits may be required. Permits are required for most major construction projects, including renovations, alterations, repairs, relocations, demolitions or the change of use in an existing building. Trades permits are required for electrical, plumbing or venting work. Permits are issued by the Safety Codes Services Branch (Planning and Development Department).
- **Authorization to occupy municipal land, sidewalks and Public Roads** – Authorizations are issued on a case-by-case basis by the Land Administration Branch (Planning and Development Department). Inquiries sent to incentives@rmwb.ca will be referred to the Land Administration Branch.
- **Business Licence** – All businesses operating in the Municipality require a valid municipal business licence, unless exempt. Business Licences are issued by the Community Development Planning Branch (Planning and Development Department).

Important things to know

- Applicants must contact the Program if their project changes substantially during permitting or construction. A revised agreement may be required.
- Professionally prepared plans (above what is required under the Program) may be required to obtain permits.

STEP 5: CONSTRUCTION

- Construction may begin once the agreement is executed (signed by the Municipality and Recipient) and permits are obtained.
- Once construction is complete (including any permit inspections), applicants must notify the Program.

STEP 6: REIMBURSEMENT

- Applicants must contact the Program to initiate reimbursement within three months of project completion.
- Separate documentation is required for each grant application.
- Applicants must provide the following information:
 - 'After' photos,
 - Original detailed invoices,
 - Permit numbers, and
 - Any other documentation required by the agreement.
- The Municipality will:
 - Complete a site visit to confirm that the project is complete.
 - Verify that property taxes and utility bills are current and paid, that the property is not subject to an unresolved enforcement order, and that the applicant is not subject to a legal dispute with the Municipality, and
 - Verify that all necessary municipal permits were received and are closed and without deficiencies.
- The Municipality will reimburse applicants for eligible costs in accordance with the agreement once the terms and conditions of the agreement have been satisfied.
- The Municipality reserves the right to determine final qualification upon the final inspection of the completed project.

DEFINITIONS

Agreement means the agreement between the Recipient and the Municipality that sets out the terms and conditions for participating in the Program.

Apartment or Extended Stay Hotel means a business that complies with the Income Tax Act and provides self-contained living quarters contained within a building or a part of a building having a principal common entrance. The living quarters are suitable for use by one or more persons, and are furnished, include cooking facilities, and dishes and linen. Maid service, telephone service, or desk service is provided. Check-in facilities are usually provided off-site, at a partner Hotel.

Applicant means a Property owner or a tenant (with the Property owner's permission) who submits an application.

Commercial means a building intended to accommodate the buying or selling of goods and services. Commercial developments include establishments used for the purposes of offices, retail stores, personal services, business services, food and beverage, Hotels, Apartment or Extended Stay Hotel, and entertainment such as theatres and cinemas.

Downtown means the area identified in the Program Area Map (page 9).

Downtown Revitalization Incentive Program ("the Program") means a short-term Grant program for Property owners and businesses in Downtown. The Program is intended to encourage and support the Downtown's revitalization.

Grant means a transfer of monies from the Municipality to a Recipient for a project or purpose according to the requirements outlined in the Downtown Revitalization Incentives Program Administrative Procedure FIN-320-P01 ("Administrative Procedure").

Hotel means a business that complies with the Income Tax Act and provides rooms and suites for short-term, temporary, sleeping accommodation. A Hotel has an on-site check in facility, and generally offers guests a range of complementary services and amenities such as parking, accessory eating and drinking establishments, meeting rooms, personal service shops, and general retail shops.

Institutional means a building developed to serve a community's social, educational, health, cultural, faith, and recreational needs.

Locally Involved Artist means an artist residing in the Municipality or an artist from outside the Municipality who provides mentorship, skill-building, and capacity-building opportunities to local residents in the field of discipline for which they have been hired.

Mixed-use means a building with Commercial uses at-grade and Residential uses above.

Municipality means the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo.

Mural means any painting, mosaic, or graphic art which is applied professionally to all or a portion of an exterior wall of a building for the purposes of decoration or artistic expression, and which depicts a scene or event of natural, social, cultural, or historic significance.

Property means a single titled lot or multiple adjoining titled lots owned by the same individual or entity.

Recipient means an Applicant that is approved by the Municipality to receive a Grant.

PROGRAM AREA MAP

