



2024 Downtown Vibrancy Fund Guidelines

Introduction

In the city of possibility, downtown is the face and the place of Calgary's future. Our city's continued success relies on downtown being a 24/7 destination where Calgarians and visitors can live, work, learn and play. The City is working to enhance the downtown experience by activating public spaces to build community, foster creativity and stimulate economic growth in the heart of our city.

City Council has prioritized downtown revitalization as one of the seven focus areas within the current [Strategic Direction](#). The City of Calgary's Downtown Vibrancy Fund supports projects that create engaging and meaningful experiences, enhance the wellbeing of residents and visitors, and increase vibrancy.

Eligible Participants

- Government or public entity
- Not-for-profit organization in good financial standing
- Academic institutions and researchers
- Neighbourhood groups with a proven track record of delivering successful projects
- Individuals with proven experience in placemaking and with a public portfolio (e.g., registered architects, landscape architects, engineers, artists, etc.)
- Private landowners in the greater downtown
- Business owners in the greater downtown



Project Requirements

1. The City has identified four project types that align with our priorities. Applications are required to align with at least one of these **project types**.

Project Type	Definition	✓ Examples of Eligible Projects	✗ Examples of Ineligible Projects
Amenity	Creating spaces that can be utilized as residents' 'backyards' is an important component of creating a healthy neighbourhood. Amenities in parks, open spaces, streetscapes, and publicly accessible vacant storefronts provide opportunities for residents to spend time outside of their private dwellings, meeting their neighbours and building community.	Temporary park or plaza on private property with a public access easement agreement, temporary amenities in existing public parks (seasonal sports courts, pop-up stage, gym equipment, play equipment, seating), vacant storefront revitalization, seasonal street closures and transformations, etc.	Permanent infrastructure not pre-approved by The City (new playgrounds, permanent sports courts), new park that requires the purchase of land.
Programming	Regular programming of public, private, and civic spaces is an important component of downtown revitalization. There are many opportunities to generate ongoing programs that will add vibrancy and activity to our downtown.	Free inclusive programming that supports various populations living in downtown Calgary, annual cultural holiday celebrations, events focused on reconciliation, free add-on	Single-day or multi-day programming that does not reoccur (see other sub-categories for alternative options), programming that is cost-prohibitive or not accessible.

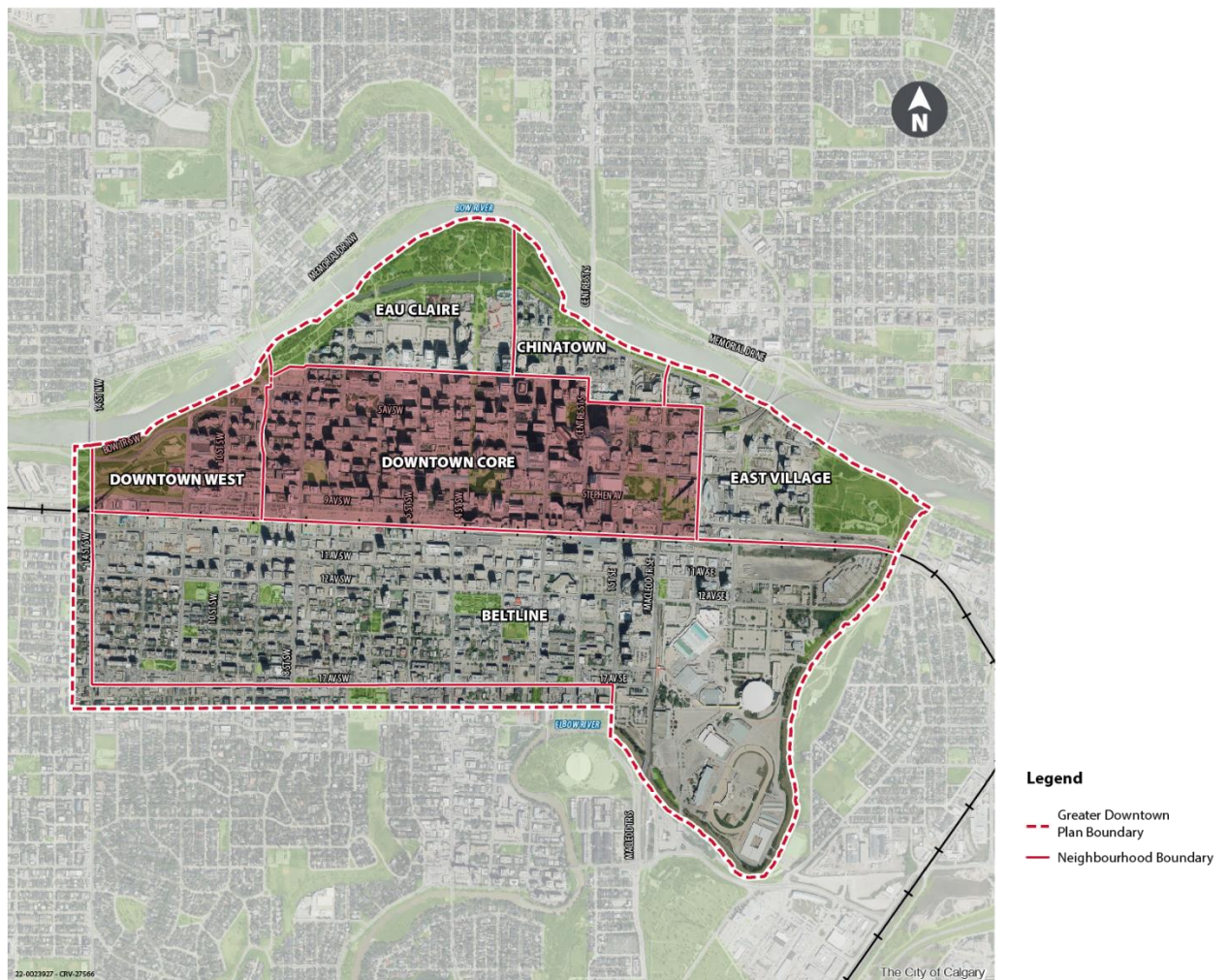


		programming as an addition to an annual ticketed festival or event (e.g., free stage program), Children's festivals, etc.	
Place-Based Activation/Installation	Fun, participatory, and inclusive spaces are part of attracting new residents and visitors to Calgary's downtown.	Engaging and interactive spatial installations (beautification may be considered if it is a component of a larger intervention), temporary built structures or forms that add interest to the streetscape, etc.	Murals, public art that is not interactive.
Capacity Building	Supporting and creating additional capacity with civic partners and other community groups contributes to a resilient downtown. By building placemaking capacity, community needs can be addressed directly, and further promote a culture and sense of place within Calgary.	Educational speaker series with local and/or international placemakers, community focused placemaking training, etc.	Conference registration fees, one-time events, funds that support capacity building for a single individual, 'meet & greet' type events that are exclusive or 'by invitation'.

2. Applications are required to align with one or more of the following **priority areas**:
 - Serve families, equity-deserving groups and/or vulnerable populations
 - Incorporate a self-sustaining model over time
 - Activate downtown spaces during the winter months (November – March)
 - Enhance safety in the downtown
 - Promote environmental sustainability
 - Leverage additional funding sources and partnerships
3. Applicant/organization must have prior experience and an established track record of delivering successful projects aligned with their proposal.
4. Applicant/organization must be located in Calgary or have a presence in Calgary.

5. All projects must be within the [Greater Downtown Plan](#) boundary, as shown on the map below. Projects in the Downtown Core or Downtown West are encouraged and will be prioritized.

Note: Please ensure you review [Appendix A | Evaluation Matrix](#), to understand how projects are evaluated.



Note: If your application is successful and located on City of Calgary property, you will need to obtain no less than 2 million dollars in Commercial General Liability insurance, with The City as an additional insured. The costs associated with obtaining insurance are an eligible expense and may be included in your budget.



Funding

Funding will be allocated to a maximum of \$250,000 per project. Projects under \$20,000 do not qualify for the Downtown Vibrancy Fund. Other funding sources should be considered for these.

Note: Multi-year application requests or applications over \$250,000 may be considered. Please contact downtownstrategy@calgary.ca to discuss prior to applying.

Expenses

Eligible Expenses

- Professional fees
- Technical fees
- Artist fees
- Permit fees
- Space rental
- Materials
- Marketing & promotion
- Honorariums
- Infrastructure rental
- Insurance fees

Ineligible Expenses

- Capital Assets
- Organizational operating expenses unrelated to the project
- Equipment or permanent infrastructure
- Others not listed in “Eligible Expenses”

Note: If your proposal has capital asset or equipment needs that would further the projects goals and outcomes, please email downtownstrategy@calgary.ca, as there may be other funding opportunities.

The eligible and ineligible expenses listed are given as examples and are not exclusive. If you are unsure about expenses, please email downtownstrategy@calgary.ca before applying.



Definitions

This funding cannot be used to purchase Capital Assets. See the definition below for further details.

Capital Assets: For the purposes of this fund, [Capital Assets](#) are expenditures with the aim of maintaining, refurbishing, or creating new assets. This includes expenditures for the acquisition of land, major equipment, and for the construction of buildings, infrastructure, and includes renovations that extend the useful life of the asset and other permanent improvements. This expenditure will typically result in an increase in the value of the asset stock and the output will have a life of greater than one year.

How to Apply

1. Review this document in its entirety, including relevant links, prior to filling out the application form.
2. Complete the [application form](#). Only complete applications will be reviewed.
3. Submit the application form by email to downtownstrategy@calgary.ca with the subject line: "Downtown Vibrancy Fund Application – [Insert Your Project's Title]".

If you have questions, please contact us at downtownstrategy@calgary.ca.

Note: Additional items and information may be requested once the application is received and the initial review has been completed.

Application Period

Applications for 2024 will be accepted on a rolling basis from **August 8, 2024** until **December 31, 2024 at 11:59 pm MST OR until all funding is committed**. Projects granted funding within this timeframe must be completed by March 31, 2025. Updates on the 2025 intake process will be posted on Downtown Strategy's [website](#).

Application Review Process

All applications will undergo a consistent review process. Proposals will be screened for eligibility and priority by The City's Downtown Strategy team. Other subject matter experts, including external community interest groups may be consulted, as needed.



Applications will be assessed in the following areas:

- Application is received by the deadline with all fields complete.
- Applicant meets eligibility requirements.
- Proposal aligns with the criteria of this fund, including eligible expenses.
- Proposal adequately satisfies the evaluation criteria as determined by the Downtown Strategy team. See Appendix A for the Evaluation Matrix.

The 2024 intake period may end prior to December 31, 2024 if all funds are allocated.

After You Have Applied

Proposals will be assessed on a rolling basis. The Downtown Strategy team will seek to review applications within requested timelines if a funding decision is required by a certain date. Otherwise, all applicants will be notified on the outcome of their proposal no more than 60 calendar days following submission.

Applicants may be asked to submit additional documents or answer follow up questions to support the review and decision process.

Successful applicants will be required to execute a funding agreement with the City of Calgary.

Unsuccessful applications may request feedback on why their proposal was not successful and what could be adjusted in the future. Requests for feedback should be sent to downtownstrategy@calgary.ca.

Reporting

All successful applicants will be required to submit a final report with detailed outputs and outcomes of the project as well as how successfully the evaluation criteria were met. Specific performance measures will be included in the funding agreement and may include:

- Number of visitors or participants
- Social media and/or website traffic results
- Other economic impact and event measures as applicable

Additionally, financial reporting will be required as part of the final report that outlines all costs associated with the project. Invoices and receipts will also be required to verify costs for eligibility. Final reports will be due 30 calendar days after the completion of the project and no later than April 30, 2025.



Additional Information

Additional guiding documents, information, and helpful links are included below to assist you in developing a business case.

- [Council Strategic Direction](#)
- [Calgary's Downtown Strategy](#)
- [Calgary's Greater Downtown Plan](#)
- [#ExploreDowntownYYC](#)

Contact Us

Questions can be directed to downtownstrategy@calgary.ca.



Appendix A | Evaluation Matrix

Project Considerations	Description	Evaluation	
		Yes/No	1 (Low) - 5 (High)
Eligibility	Is the applicant located in Calgary or do they have a presence in Calgary?		
	Is the proposal located in the Greater Downtown?		
Relevance	Does the proposal adhere to one of the four project types?		
	Does it align with one or more priority areas?		
	Does it fill an identifiable need or gap in Calgary's downtown?		
	Does it indicate a strong impact to the community and economy of downtown?		
	Does it have evaluation tools in place to measure success?		
	Does it align with Council approved outcomes for downtown?		
Future-Oriented	Is it ongoing or recurring?		
	Does it include adequate plans for becoming self-sustaining in the future?		
	Does it consider environmental sustainability?		
Inclusive & Safe	Does it ensure there are no barriers to participation and use?		
	Does it engage specifically with families, equity-deserving groups and/or vulnerable populations?		
	Is safety for all appropriately considered?		
	Are safety enhancement measures included?		
Innovative	Is it innovative?		
	Is the concept new or untested in Calgary?		
	Are winter elements incorporated?		
	Does it strengthen downtown Calgary's brand?		
Budget & Timelines	Is the budget proportionate and well-aligned with the intended outcomes?		
	Are quotes provided from vendors?		
	Are there other funding sources and/or partnerships being leveraged?		



	Does it propose reasonable timelines to accomplish its goals?		
	Is there a plan to address potential risks?		
	Is it nimble and adaptable?		
Applicant's Experience	Does the applicant have a proven track record of delivering projects of a similar scope and scale?		
	Does the applicant have the financial capacity to execute?		
	Is the applicant in good-standing with The City?		

Note: While The City will evaluate complete and eligible applications against the criteria listed above, the right to fund projects that are exemplar and aligned with the [Greater Downtown Plan](#) is reserved and at the discretion of the Downtown Strategy team.