



Downtown PoCo BIA Beautification Grant Program – What You Need to Know

The City is pleased to support the Downtown BIA's Beautification Grant Program and encourages business and property owners to make their facades and entries welcoming and interesting for residents and visitors to the downtown. Businesses and owners are encouraged to ensure renovations and upgrades are consistent with the Downtown design guidelines, which promote a high quality of character and pedestrian orientation to our downtown high streets.

We encourage you to read through this handout to understand what City permits or approvals may be necessary for your project. If in doubt, please give us a call!

Refreshing or Replacing Your Sign

Installing or changing a sign will require a Sign Permit to ensure the sign is placed in a proper location, is an appropriate scale and design character and is erected in a safe manner. More information, including a copy of the Sign Bylaw, can be found here: <https://www.portcoquitlam.ca/business-development/application-guides/sign-permits/>

When planning for a new sign, consider the following:

- Signs within the downtown should enhance the character of the development, and be decorative rather than institutional in character.
- Covering large portions of windows with signage or decals reduces the visual permeability of storefronts and is inappropriate on downtown high streets. The size and coverage of window signs are regulated by the Sign Bylaw.
- Sandwich board signs need to be placed in a manner that does not obstruct pedestrian movement and wheelchair accessibility, and may only be placed directly in front of the business they are advertising.

If there is an approved Development Permit for your property, you will need to make sure the proposed sign is consistent with the approved form and character. Please contact the Planning Division for more information.

Exterior Features – including awnings, patios and landscaping

The City encourages businesses to make the exterior their business inviting and active by having display areas, customer seating and landscaping. When planning for these spaces, first confirm if the features or displays you would like to install would be on your private property or within the public right-of-way (e.g. sidewalk or roads). This information may be obtained from the building plans or a property survey. Also consider matters such as maintaining safe access for customers and pedestrians, retaining walkways and parking.

Exclusive use of the public right-of-way for activities such as display of good, permeant landscape features or seating may require an encroachment permit. Encroachment permits may also be required for awnings and signs that extend over the property line onto sidewalks. Please contact the City's Property Use Coordinator at business@portcoquitlam.ca or by phone at 604-927-5266 for more information.

Please also contact the Planning Division to discuss changes to landscaping (excluding movable planters, pots and flower containers). The City encourages maintenance of landscaped areas whenever possible, especially trees and landscaping approved through a Development Permit.

Replacing Windows or Exterior Façade

Generally, minor exterior façade upgrades such as replacing windows and refreshing exteriors (e.g. painting, replacing exterior siding with similar materials) do not required approval of a Development Permit. Please do contact the Building Division to confirm if the proposed widow or façade upgrades are structural in nature and require a Building Permit.

Do I need a Development Permit?

Most of the projects anticipated under the BIA Beautification Grant are not expected to require approval or amendment of a Development Permit. If you are also planning more significant renovations or upgrades to the exterior of your building, please give the Planning Division a call – we would be happy to discuss your proposed project and confirm what permits and approvals would be necessary!

More Information

- Visit www.portcoquitlam.ca/bizhub for more information about business, development and permits.
- The Downtown Development Permit Area guidelines can be found in section 9 of the Official Community Plan, downloadable at <https://www.portcoquitlam.ca/business-development/planning/official-community-plan/>
- For more information about the City's downtown revitalization initiatives, visit <https://www.portcoquitlam.ca/business-development/planning/revitalizing-our-downtown/>

Contact

Planning Division
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Building Division
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Property Use Coordinator
604-927-5266
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