



City of Elliot Lake Community Improvement Plan Building Façade Improvement Grants Design Guidelines

Purpose

Having enacted a Community Improvement Plan, the City of Elliot has further adopted the following guidelines for consideration in evaluating applications for façade improvement grants. Applications will be reviewed for consistency with these guidelines as part of the evaluation process. Substantial deviation from these guidelines may lead to an application being rejected. A separate Design Review Questionnaire is also included, specific to each of the following areas, and will form the basis of evaluation:

- Central Commercial Area (Area 1) – Downtown Core
- Central Commercial Area (Area 1) – Highway #108 Frontage
- South Industrial Area (Area 2)

Intent

The guidelines are intended to provide direction for the architectural design of façade improvements in the areas included in the Community Improvement Plan. The guidelines aim to ensure that public funds provided as incentives for the improvement of privately owned façades are applied in ways which enhance the quality of the urban environment, build continuity and the unique character of Elliot Lake. The guidelines are not intended to prescribe the rigid adherence to a standardized ‘theme’, but rather to encourage a level of quality in design and construction which supports the objectives of the Community Improvement Plan.

Guidelines

Please give consideration to the following guidelines in the developing the design of façade improvements for which improvement grants are sought. The guidelines are geared primarily toward the Downtown Core portion of the Central Commercial Area (Area1), where buildings acting together create urban, public space and pedestrian movement is a critical consideration. Along Highway #108 and the South Industrial Area buildings can be expected to be more free-standing and autonomous, with little responsibility for the creation of public space. Nonetheless, good design practices and consideration of the public image are important to achieving the goals of the CIP.

Design

Objective: To ensure that façade improvements are well designed.

Applies to: All areas

1. Consider engaging an architect to prepare a design.
2. Study the facade to ascertain original design intent and extent to original elements which remain.
3. Identify maintenance problems and design potentials.
4. Research the history of the building and collect heritage photographs to show original design.
5. Consider design guideline recommendations.
6. Consider technical issues such as proper wall construction, Ontario Building Code and Zoning Bylaws.
7. Prepare drawings and visualizations to consider and communicate the design.
8. Research materials and gather samples.
9. Prepare estimates of probable construction cost.

Accessibility

Objective: To improve the safe access to buildings for all users including those who use wheelchairs, walkers and other aids to mobility and the visually impaired.

Applies to: All areas

1. Barrier free accessibility should be an important consideration of any design improvement.
2. Entrance doors should be a minimum 915mm wide with a clear opening not less than 865mm.
3. Where possible install automatic door operators.
4. Eliminate steps into the building or provide ramps or sloped walkways in accordance with the Ontario Building Code (coordinate with the City of Elliot Lake the design of entrances relative to public sidewalk elevations).
5. Eliminate any changes in elevation greater than 16mm, such as door thresholds.
6. Use door hardware (pulls, latches, thresholds, etc.) which are recommended for barrier-free accessibility.
7. Entrance vestibules should allow 1200mm clear between open doors.
8. Where possible provide 600mm clear wall space on the pull side of an entrance door to allow a wheel chair to pull to the side while opening a door and 300mm clear on the push side.
9. Consider the needs of the visually impaired persons including:

- a. contrasting demarcation at changes in floor elevation and avoid barriers to the use of canes and projections
 - b. Keep routes free from overhead projection hazards and provide a cane-detectable barrier anywhere that the overhead clearance is less than 2030mm.
 - c. Wall projections which are greater than 680mm and less than 2030mm above the ground should project no more than 150mm.
10. Consult with the City of Elliot Lake Accessibility Committee for additional recommendations.

Preservation

Objective: To preserve and restore architectural elements instead of destroying or concealing.

Applies to: Downtown Core

1. Where possible, maintain original façade components and materials, and repair rather than replace damaged components where possible.
2. If replacement of materials is necessary, replicate original parts and materials, or if necessary, substitute with materials similar in colour, texture dimensions proportions and design to the original.
3. New windows should be of the same proportion and sub-divisions as original.
4. Do not cover original design elements with lesser-quality materials such aluminum or steel siding.
5. Where possible, remove previous concealment efforts and restore original elements.

Material Quality

Objective: To promote the use of enduring, high quality materials.

Applies to: All areas

1. Use commercial quality construction materials.
2. Use materials which are of high quality, tactile, and durable particularly at ground level, such as brick, stone, porcelain tile, wood, metal panels, glass block, etc.
3. Do not use residential quality materials such as vinyl windows, insulated steel panel doors, vinyl siding, etc.

Continuity

Objective: To preserve and enhance the continuity of building façades that form the “street wall”.

Applies to: Downtown Core

1. Maintain a consistent relationship of buildings to the street to form a continuous wall, i.e. no set backs.

2. Maintain consistent heights of front facades.
3. Maintain consistent floor to floor heights.
4. Strive for continuity and regularity in the treatment of upper facades, parapet lines, window proportions, spacing etc.
5. In blocks of similar buildings develop consistent horizontal lines using elements such as storefront cornices, sign bands, base panels or awnings and downplay verticals.
6. Consider relationship of storefront to upper façade treatment, align verticals, maintain symmetry or other compositional strategy.



avoid discontinuity between buildings

Transparency

Objective: To preserve or enhance transparency at street level.

Applies to: All areas

1. Maximize the transparency of storefront windows and entrances.
2. If smaller display windows are necessary, create casework in larger window setting.
3. Avoid tinting glass for sun control because it restricts the view into the display, consider other means of sun control such as awnings.
4. Do not replace storefront glazing with opaque walls.
5. Recover lost storefront glazing wherever possible.
6. Night-lighting of storefront displays is encouraged.



Avoid opaque facades at pedestrian level

Architectural Style

Objective: To build upon the architectural heritage and character of Elliot and avoid the importation of architectural heritage elements, foreign to Elliot Lake.

Applies to: Downtown Core

1. Utilize design elements consistent with ‘Moderne’ and ‘International Style’ design in improving buildings of that origin.
2. Emphasize horizontal lines, expressions of movement, metal and curves.
3. Emphasize planes, volumes, and continuity of space, as opposed to solids/voids, and rigid symmetry.
4. Vertical and horizontal structure can be articulated and differentiated from the wall (infill between structural elements). This will often imply windows with panels or siding above and/or below, rather than windows formed as ‘punched’ openings in a solid brick mass. Infill walls may also be differentiated by a different (weaker) brick coursing such as stack bond.
5. Do not apply inappropriate heritage detailing such as cornices, quoins, entablatures, etc.
6. Maintain and build upon the vocabulary of strong horizontal bands distinguishing the division between ground and upper floor.
7. Retain fixed horizontal projections where they exist and consider replacing those that have been removed.



Style Moderne



International Style

Colour

Objective: To promote permanent architectural elements in colours which are appropriate and not foreign to the context of Elliot Lake.

Applies to: Downtown Core

1. Consider colours which are 'earthy', enduring and related to the natural landscape of Elliot Lake – in particular look to the stone rock faces prominent in downtown. (yellow, ochres, reds).
2. Use natural materials with inherent colour where possible (brick, stone, wood, metals, etc.)
3. Avoid using bold bright colours as base-building architectural finishes to distinguish a building and attract attention for marketing purposes. Consider instead a façade of enduring, more natural colours and use signage and awnings and more temporary features if needed to attract attention.



consider colour of natural elements

Roofscapes

Objective: To improve the appearance of visible roofscapes.

Applies to: Downtown Core

1. Where roofscapes are unavoidably visible, construct higher parapets or create separate screening structures on the roof to disguise mechanical equipment.

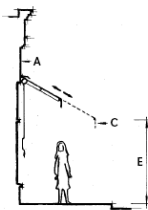
2. Keep roofs clean and free of debris and maintain flashings and roof projections.
3. When reroofing, consider mechanically fastened single ply membranes for flat roofs such as PVC or modified bituminous membranes which are available in different colours and can be more attractive.
4. Minimize exposed mechanical equipment on visible roofs and locate necessary equipment and penetrations in an ordered and considered manner.

Awnings

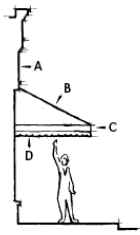
Objective: To promote the use of awnings to provide pedestrian shelter, solar control, visual interest and continuity.

Applies to: All areas

1. Work with adjacent business owners to develop a consistency in awning design.
2. Consider retractable awnings which provide variable sun shading and weather protection and a variation in appearance.
3. Fixed awnings should be of traditional sloped top shape, with open or closed side panels and fascia skirting.
4. Fascia skirts are a good opportunity for lettering signage.
5. A range of fabrics colours offer opportunities for individual expression.
6. Utilize weather and solar resistant fabrics and avoid use of vinyl.
7. Do not use fixed “bubble-shaped” or interior lighted awnings.
8. If awnings are fixed consider down-light below.
9. Consider fixed awnings over second storey windows for solar control and colour.
10. Retractable awnings should be retracted at night to facilitate sidewalk lighting.



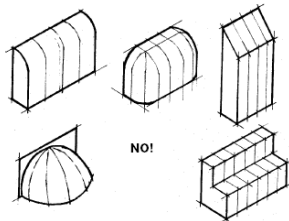
consider retractable awnings



or fixed awnings



consider fascia lettering



avoid "bubble" awnings and vinyl

Lighting

Objective:

To develop a consistent, high-quality approach to the lighting of buildings.

Applies to:

All areas

1. Work with adjacent business owners to develop a consistency approach to building lighting.
2. Night-lighting of storefront displays at pedestrian level is encouraged.
3. Consider personal security issues by lighting recesses and potentially dark corners.
4. Provide lighting under fixed awnings.
5. Consider projecting lights (singular or strip) to light signage.
6. Consider energy efficiency in lighting choice.
7. Direct light at building surfaces and avoid directing light up toward the sky.
8. Surface mounted facade lighting should articulate building design (i.e. structural rhythm or organizing principle).



consider front-lighting of signs and facades

Signage

Objective: To promote quality signage design and construction which enhances rather than detracts from the visual character of Elliot Lake.

Applies to: All areas

1. Opaque, surface mounted, front-lit signs are preferred over internally lit, metal framed box signs.
2. Consider metal, wood or high quality plastic lettering applied directly to a building face for primary building signage.
3. Small hanging signs projecting perpendicular to the building face are encouraged within the pedestrian environment.

4. Larger 2-sided signs projecting perpendicular to the building face are not foreign to the 'moderne' vocabulary, but should be restricted to the upper storey of a facade. These can be internally lit if of a higher quality.
5. Reduce visual clutter, by keeping signage to a reasonable limit.
6. Organize a variety of signage in a hierarchical manner, from smaller signs oriented to the pedestrian, to larger signs aimed at identifying the business from a distance.
7. The largest signs should be limited to business identification not 'loud' promotional opportunities (i.e. not 50% OFF SALE! ; DISCOUNT MERCHANDISE!, etc.).
8. Utilize vinyl lettering on storefront glass and doors, and be consistent in scale, colour and lettering.



consider opaque, front-lit signs

Screening

Objective: To appropriately screen from view those features which are not appealing such as mechanical ventilation equipment, loading functions, waste management and storage.

Applies to: All areas

1. Locate functions such as loading, waste management and storage to the rear of buildings where possible and if such functions cannot be located to the rear, the side is preferable to the front.
2. Provide screening of unappealing functions by using privacy fencing, walls or dense planting material.
3. Maintain such areas in an orderly fashion, and free of uncontained debris and clutter.
4. Visible mechanical ventilation equipment (roof or ground mounted) should be screened where possible, through careful location, fencing or constructed screens.



unscreened units



example of unit-mounted screen

Design Review

As part of the application process for façade improvement grants, the City of Elliot Lake will review the design for which a grant is being requested, and evaluate its relative compliance with these guidelines. The reviewers appointed by the City will ask themselves the questions contained in the attached Design Review Questionnaire (specific to each area) in order to assess relative compliance and make a determination. The questions are structured such that 'yes' is the desired answer, if the question applies to the improvement proposed.

Some questions ask whether a feature or characteristic is 'sustained' or 'enhanced'. 'Sustained' is intended to mean that the feature will be no better after the work contemplated, but will not be worse. 'Enhanced' would mean that the work would improve that element or characteristic of the façade. If the façade work contemplated makes a condition worse, relative to recommended guidelines, it would neither sustain nor enhance that characteristic and yield an answer of 'No'.

These guidelines have been developed through a process of consultation facilitated by:

Mitchell Architects Inc., North Bay

November, 2008

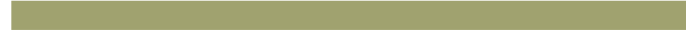


**Community Improvement Plan
Central Commercial Area (Area 1)**
Downtown Core

Address of Project: _____

Applicant: _____

Application Date: _____



CIP Funding Application

Design Review Questionnaire

If applicable to the facade improvement project proposed, the desired response to all of the following is “yes” :

- | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|----|
| 1. Has the design been adequately described (drawings, text, samples)? | N/A | Yes | No |
| 2. Has the design been developed by a design professional?..... | N/A | Yes | No |
| 3. Are the materials proposed of a commercial (not residential) quality? | N/A | Yes | No |
| 4. Does the design sustain or enhance existing transparency at the pedestrian level?..... | N/A | Yes | No |
| 5. Does the design preserve valued, original architectural elements? | N/A | Yes | No |
| 6. Is the design appropriate, and not foreign, to the architectural heritage
of Elliot Lake? | N/A | Yes | No |
| 7. Does the design preserve or enhance the horizontal continuity of the
'street wall'?..... | N/A | Yes | No |
| 8. Is the design of the ground floor facade integrated with upper floors? | N/A | Yes | No |
| 9. Does the design sustain or enhance the building entrance(s)? | N/A | Yes | No |
| 10. Does the design sustain or improve accessibility for wheelchairs, walkers, etc.? | N/A | Yes | No |
| 11. Is the appearance of the roof scape sustained or enhanced (i.e. not worsened)?..... | N/A | Yes | No |

...continued



Community Improvement Plan South Industrial Area (Area 2a)

Address of Project: _____

Applicant: _____

Application Date: _____



CIP Funding Application

Design Review Questionnaire

If applicable to the facade improvement project proposed, the desired response to all of the following is "yes" :

- | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|----|
| 1. Has the design been adequately described (drawings, text, samples)? | N/A | Yes | No |
| 2. Has the design been developed by a design professional?..... | N/A | Yes | No |
| 3. Are the materials proposed of a commercial (not residential) quality? | N/A | Yes | No |
| 4. Does the design provide for a degree of transparency at the pedestrian level? | N/A | Yes | No |
| 5. Has the entrance(s) to the building been clearly articulated in the design? | N/A | Yes | No |
| 6. Does the design sustain or improve accessibility for wheelchairs, walkers, etc.? | N/A | Yes | No |
| 7. Are any new mechanical ventilation systems (rooftop or ground) screened from view? | N/A | Yes | No |
| 8. Is the screening from view of existing mechanical ventilation systems (rooftop or ground) sustained (not made worse) or improved? | N/A | Yes | No |
| 9. Is the screening from view of loading areas, storage areas, garbage and other services sustained (not made worse) or improved? | N/A | Yes | No |
| 10. Is the design of any proposed awnings consistent with the design guidelines for awnings?..... | N/A | Yes | No |

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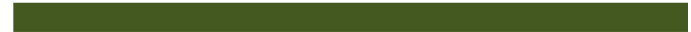


**Community Improvement Plan
Central Commercial Area (Area 1)
Highway #108 Frontage**

Address of Project: _____

Applicant: _____

Application Date: _____



CIP Funding Application

Design Review Questionnaire

If applicable to the facade improvement project proposed, the desired response to all of the following is "yes" :

- | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|----|
| 1. Has the design been adequately described (drawings, text, samples)? | N/A | Yes | No |
| 2. Has the design been developed by a design professional?..... | N/A | Yes | No |
| 3. Are the materials proposed of a commercial (not residential) quality? | N/A | Yes | No |
| 4. Does the design provide for a degree of transparency at the pedestrian level? | N/A | Yes | No |
| 5. Has the entrance(s) to the building been clearly articulated in the design? | N/A | Yes | No |
| 6. Does the design sustain or improve accessibility for wheelchairs, walkers, etc.? | N/A | Yes | No |
| 7. Are any new mechanical ventilation systems (rooftop or ground) screened from view? | N/A | Yes | No |
| 8. Is the screening from view of existing mechanical ventilation systems (rooftop or ground)
sustained (not made worse) or improved? | N/A | Yes | No |
| 9. Is the screening from view of loading areas, garbage and other services sustained
(not made worse) or improved? | N/A | Yes | No |
| 10. Is the design of any proposed awnings consistent with the design guidelines
for awnings?..... | N/A | Yes | No |

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