

February 1, 2024

Vacant Spaces Grant Q&A

The City of Red Deer's Vacant Spaces Grant is a pilot subsidy program designed to incentivize the development of a unique, well-invested downtown where people and businesses thrive. Up to \$10,000 in rent is available for entrepreneurs to activate vacant street-level, store-front commercial spaces.

1. When can I apply for a Vacant Spaces Grant?

Application intake begins February 15, 2024 and will continue until the end of the year or until the funds are depleted, whichever occurs first.

2. Who can apply?

Business owners who plan to rent space to operate in a vacant downtown Red Deer location that will be open to the public are eligible to apply for funding.

3. How do I apply?

To apply, register at reddeer.smartsimple.ca, then navigate to the "Grant Opportunities" section to access an online application form. Details on all current grant opportunities through The City of Red Deer can be found at reddeer.ca/whats-happening/grants.

4. When will I know if my application has been approved?

Applications will undergo adjudication in April, July, and October. Applicants will be notified within two weeks following the adjudication date.

5. What things do I need to consider to apply and how long will it take?

Ensure your business is registered with the government before applying for the Vacant Spaces Grant. While a business plan is encouraged, it is not mandatory. If approved, you must provide a copy of your lease agreement and [business license](#). When all contract requirements have been met, funds will be released as soon as practicable.

6. Do I need a vacant space secured before I apply?

While applicants are encouraged and will score higher points by having a pre-selected vacant space in mind, it is not a mandatory requirement for application.

7. What can I spend the money on?

Eligible expenses cover up to 50% of the rent cost for a downtown street-level, store-front commercial space for the initial 3-6 months up to \$10,000.

8. If I am a property owner, can I still apply?

No. The grant is a rent subsidy therefore property owners are not eligible.

9. Can I apply next year?

Funding is available in 2024 with no assurance of extension into subsequent years.

10. Are there any resources available to help me open my business?

Business coaching and assistance creating a business plan may be available through the following resources:

- Community Futures: <https://albertacf.com>
- Business Works: <https://se.ethoscmg.com/bwca>

- Downtown Business Association: www.downtownreddeer.com
- City of Red Deer [Land & Economic Development](#)

More information

For more information on this funding program, contact:

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