



FOOTSCRAY SHOPFRONT GRANTS PROGRAM 2026 Guidelines



Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we are on the traditional lands of the Kulin Nation. We offer our respect to the Elders of these traditional lands, and through them to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples past, present and emerging.

About the program

Maribyrnong City Council is dreaming big for Footscray, delivering a major program of work to support a cleaner, safer and more welcoming Footscray CBD.

Council is investing in street cleaning, graffiti removal, new lighting, more plants, public space improvements, trader support, events and better coordination with local services.

The Footscray Shopfront Grants Program builds on this work by supporting traders, businesses and property owners to make practical, visible improvements to their own shops and commercial properties.

The program has two main purposes:

- To help traders improve their shopfronts so they can attract more customers.
- To improve the presentation of shops and commercial properties so the streets of Footscray look and feel better for everyone.

This program is about rapid revitalisation works. Funded projects should be practical, public-facing and able to be delivered quickly.

Visible improvements matter. When shopfronts are refreshed and buildings are better presented, it shows that Footscray is cared for, open for business and moving forward.

Funding available

This program supports small-scale, public-facing improvements that deliver clear visual impact.

- Grants of up to \$3,000, excluding GST, per applicant.
- 100% Council funded, with co-contribution encouraged but not required.
- Applications assessed as received.
- Program opens August 2026.
- Program closes on 31 May 2027, unless funds are exhausted earlier.

Funding is limited. Submitting an application does not guarantee funding.

Priority works for Footscray

Council is prioritising improvements that make shopfronts look better, feel more open and improve safety on the street.

Priority works include:

- Removal of solid roller shutters.
- Replacement of solid roller shutters with transparent or perforated shutters.
- Roller door compliance upgrades.
- Façade repairs or reinstatement after shutter removal.
- Improvements to windows, entrances and shopfront visibility.

Where non-compliant roller shutters exist, funding must prioritise works that address or upgrade the roller door before any other works are undertaken.



Program area

In its first year, the program is open to eligible businesses and commercial properties located in the Footscray CBD.

The program area is shown in the map below.



Applicants must provide evidence that their business or property is located within the program area. Council may review the program area in future years.

Who can apply

Applicants must:

- Be a business operator or property owner within the Footscray program area.
- Hold a valid ABN, if applying as a business.
- Be a small to medium enterprise.
- Provide evidence of Public Liability Insurance.
- Provide a written quote from a qualified supplier.
- Provide photos of the current condition of the property.
- Obtain landlord consent, if applicable.
- Have no outstanding debts to Council.
- Have no overdue Council grant acquittals.

Applicants may apply before permits are issued. However, funding will only be released once all required approvals have been obtained.

What we will fund

Funding may be used for public-facing improvements that can be seen from the street, including:

- Painting or façade refresh.
- Minor façade repairs.
- Shopfront cleaning or restoration.
- New or replacement signage.
- Window treatments or improvements to window transparency.
- Planters, greenery and street-facing planting.
- Removal of redundant fixtures.
- Lighting upgrades, including decorative or safety lighting.
- Outdoor seating improvements (subject to Council approval).
- Minor landscaping works (subject to Council approval).

Council will prioritise works that:

- Help the business present better to customers.
- Improve how the shop or property looks from the street.
- Make the street feel cleaner, safer, greener or more welcoming.
- Can be delivered quickly.

Who cannot apply

The program will not support:

- Applicants with outstanding Council debts or overdue acquittals.
 - Government agencies or large institutions.
 - Political organisations.
 - Applicants with unresolved conflicts of interest.
 - Applicants proposing works outside the defined Footscray program area.
 - Any organisation or activity not aligned with the program purpose.
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What we won't fund

The program will not support:

- Ongoing operating costs, including rent, wages, utilities or insurance.
- Stock, consumables or inventory.
- Temporary installations lasting less than 12 months.
- Internal works with no public-facing benefit.
- Vehicles or non-fixed equipment.
- Routine maintenance with no visible improvement.
- Works outside the defined Footscray program area.
- Works required under statutory compliance.
- Projects inconsistent with Council policies or community standards.
- Expenditure incurred before application approval.
- Works that have already started or been completed.
- Works that do not improve how the property looks from the street.

Council reserves the right to deem any activity ineligible if it does not align with the program purpose.



Permits, approvals and landlord consent

Some works may require permits, approvals or landlord consent before they can begin.

This may include works involving:

- building façades
- signage
- lighting
- works affecting public land
- roller shutters or shopfront changes

Applicants must obtain all required permits, approvals and consents.

Council officers may provide guidance but grant approval does not replace other approval processes.

Applicants must not start works until:

- They have received written grant approval from Council.
- They have entered into a funding agreement.
- They have obtained any required permits, approvals or consents.

Funding will only be released once all required approvals have been obtained.

How applications are assessed

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria.

Eligibility and compliance

- The property is located within the defined program area.
- The applicant has provided the required documentation.
- The applicant meets all eligibility requirements.
- The proposed works are eligible under these guidelines.

Customer and street impact

- The works help the business present better to customers.
- The works provide a clear and visible improvement to the property.
- The project improves presentation and street appeal.
- The works help make the street feel cleaner, safer, greener or more welcoming.
- The project contributes positively to the surrounding area.

Readiness and value for money

- The works are clearly described.
- The applicant has provided a written quote.
- The project can be delivered quickly.
- The project demonstrates value for money.
- Any required landlord approval has been provided or can be obtained.
- The applicant understands that required permits or approvals must be obtained before works begin.



How to apply

Applications must be submitted online via the Council website.

Applicants must:

1. Read the guidelines.
2. Check that the business or property is in the program area.
3. Decide what visible improvement they want to make.
4. Speak with the landlord, if required.
5. Check whether the project may need a permit or approval.
6. Get a written quote from a qualified supplier.
7. Take photos of the current condition.
8. Complete and submit the online application.
9. Wait for Council's decision before starting any works.

Applicants must provide:

- business details and ABN
- proof of location within the program area
- insurance documentation
- written quote or quotes
- landlord approval, if applicable
- description of the proposed works
- photos of the existing condition
- any relevant permits or approval information, if available

Council may request further information during assessment.

Successful applicants

Successful applicants must enter into a funding agreement with Council.

The funding agreement will set out:

- The approved works.
- The approved funding amount.
- The project delivery timeframe.
- Reporting requirements.
- Any special conditions attached to the grant.

Successful applicants

Successful applicants must:

- Complete the approved works within the agreed timeframe.
- Contact Council if the project changes, is delayed or cannot be delivered as approved.
- Get Council approval before changing the project, supplier, scope or budget.
- Provide before-and-after photos of the works.
- Provide evidence that funds were spent on the approved works.
- Complete a project acquittal within two months of project completion.
- Agree to the completed shopfront being included in Council communications about the program.
- Display a 'Dream Big, Footscray' decal on the shopfront once the works are complete.

Council may use before-and-after photos, business names, project descriptions, shopfront locations and grant amounts to promote the program and show the improvements being delivered across Footscray. Council will provide the Dream Big, Footscray decal.

Outcome Notification

All applicants will be notified of their application outcome via email. Applicants will not be reimbursed for the time spent on the application process.

Payment

- Payment/s will be made upon submission of an invoice and all relevant documentation
- Payments will be processed within Council's standard payment terms.
- Funding will only be released once any required permits, approvals and consents have been obtained

Assistance with applications

General enquiries

If you would like to discuss your shopfront or access the Graffiti Support Program, please contact us by calling 03 9688 0200 or via Shopfront@maribyrnong.vic.gov.au

Interpreter services

To contact us in your own language through the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) phone 13 14 50 and ask them to contact Maribyrnong City Council on 03 9688 0200.

Important notes

Council reserves the right to:

- Request further information from applicants.
- Decline applications that do not align with the program purpose.
- Approve part-funding for a project.
- Apply special conditions to a grant.
- Close the program early if funds are exhausted.
- Amend the program guidelines if required.
- Refuse funding where there is a conflict of interest, reputational risk or policy concern.
- Council will collect personal and business information to assess and manage applications for this program. Information may be used for assessment, grant administration, reporting, auditing and program promotion. Information will be handled in accordance with Council's privacy obligations.

