

Perpendicular Storefront Sign and Awning Grant

Grant Details

The Spruce the Bruce Program assists communities with improvements that make them more attractive, pedestrian-friendly, and distinctive.

Downtown buildings and establishments define the street and are a major contributor to the character of the community. Clear and effective storefront signs have a large role to play in communicating the services and features offered in your community. The **Storefront Signage & Awning Grant** encourages businesses to revamp their storefront signs and awnings. This grant supports the purchase and installation of perpendicular signs as well as awnings within the downtown cores.

This grant matches local cash contributions up to **\$1,000.00**. Applications from South Bruce Peninsula or Township of Huron Kinloss communities are eligible to receive up to an additional \$1000.00 matched cash contribution provided by South Bruce Peninsula Council or Township of Huron Kinloss.

Usage of Funds

The Storefront Sign & Awning Grant may be used towards the restoration of an old sign or awning or the design and purchase of a new sign or awning. Applicants may additionally apply for more comprehensive storefront improvement funds through the Façade Improvement Program Grant. Preference will be given to buildings with operating commercial businesses.

Review Criteria

The Economic Development Grant Committee will review applications against the following criteria:

- Date/timing of the application
- Balance of funding available and any previous applications made at the time of application
- Project's potential to provide long term economic benefit to the County
- Evidence of the applicant's ability to fulfill responsibilities related to the project's installation and maintenance
- Project's "fit" with the objectives of Spruce the Bruce and enhancement of the Community's Brand Identity

Eligibility Criteria

2017 Eligible Communities

Ripley, Lucknow, Walkerton, Mildmay, Lion's Head, Wiarton, Southampton, Port Elgin, Kincardine.

In order to qualify for a Perpendicular Storefront Sign and Awning Grant:

- Applicants must be a merchant or storefront property owner with an operating business within a CIP designated area with downtown commercial zoning.
- Applicants may be eligible for one perpendicular sign or awning grant per storefront. Applicants may additionally apply for the facade improvement grant
- Projects must not have commenced prior to the awarding of the requested grant.
- **Projects must be completed by October 31st, 2017. Extensions are not granted. If money is not spent it will be deemed an incomplete project and you will need to reapply next year.**
- Applicants will generally provide a minimum 50% cash contribution (except in situations where there are multiple funding sources) towards the total cost of the project for which they are applying for a grant.
- If applicant receives additional funding sources, they are required to provide a minimum 33% cash contribution.
- With the generosity and support of Township of Huron Kinloss and South Bruce Peninsula council, applications from Wiarton, Lucknow and Ripley are eligible to receive up to an additional \$1000 matched cash contribution from South Bruce Peninsula or Township of Huron Kinloss for their project, (total equals \$2000 when combined with STB grant) and are only responsible for 33% of the total cost. No additional application is required.
- Taxes are the full responsibility of the applicants.
- Eligible Project costs must be actual cash outlay to third parties acting at arms length and which can be documented through original invoices or proofs of payment
- Projects must demonstrate a contribution to the overall quality of the streetscape of the community (for help see the attached guidelines and the community design toolkit for your community)
- Grant recipients are encouraged to become members of their local Chamber of Commerce, where one exists

Application Process

Applicants must complete an online application in order to be given grant consideration. You can save your application online and return to it later.

Incomplete applications cannot be accepted. Applications require the following:

- Lead Applicant Name: (Municipality / Group) / Street Address (Location) / Tel / email
- Contact (if different from applicant) / Mailing Address (if different) / Tel / email

- Detailed project description
- Attach any sketches and include a before picture of the project. (upload digital files)
- The extent to which this project reflects the mission of the Spruce the Program
- Who will be doing the work (Please list any contractors involved):
- Description of the business and its location in the downtown area: (e.g. list neighbouring businesses, key features of the building, points of interest, etc.):
- Description / samples of colours / materials that will be used (note that backlit signs typically are not supported for funding). (Attach files to support this description)
- If your project includes sign text, please show the text to be included:
- The proposed timeline for the work (start date, completion date) – must be completed by October 31st, 2017
- Quote(s) of the project cost and a current picture of the project site
- Budget Details (taxes not included):
 - Proposed Total Cost of Project
 - Applicant Contribution
 - Other Contributions (ie. Funding from other organizations)
 - Other Grant Contributions: (ie. Provincial, municipal, or NGO)
 - Grant Request
 - Grant % of Total Cost:%

Guidelines: Perpendicular Signs & Awnings

The following guidelines focus on design, character, suitability and compatibility issues affecting Perpendicular Storefront Sign and Awning Improvement Grant applications in “Spruce the Bruce” designated downtowns. Keep these guidelines in mind when completing an application:

1. Only applications that are submitted prior to purchase, fabrication and/or installation of the sign, awning or façade work will be considered.
2. Only grant applications that comply with municipal by-laws will be considered. Projects are subject to the existing sign by-laws and typically require permits to be issued.
3. Improvements requiring a variance will not be considered unless unique circumstances (not caused or created by the applicant) exist.
4. Signage should add to the character and value of the downtown. You can check your community design toolkit, façade program guidelines, municipal design guidelines and / or streetscape plan for tips on ways that your project can support the community design vision. The following questions will be considered when reviewing the application:
 - Is the work proposed of the same character as the building and its surroundings?
 - Elements, window spacing, materials and features that reflect building character.
 - If the building is historic - Is the work proposed historic in character and does it use historic elements, colours, shapes, etc.

Does this work proposed improve the visual quality and character of the downtown?

5. Signs and awnings should be of an appropriate size, scale and character for the building and site. The following questions will be considered when reviewing the application:

Are the improvements scaled appropriately for the building and/or site?

Does the proposed work fit as an overall element or does it overwhelm or stand out? Are the colours / materials appropriate?

6. **Since it is difficult to produce backlit plastic panel or molded signs which reinforce the desired atmosphere and / or character of downtown, these types of signs are not encouraged and are not likely to be approved for funding.**
7. Applications for signs and awnings that use a variety of styles and materials are encouraged. Creative design and/or what's being sold in the store (as opposed to simply the name of the business) are also strongly encouraged.
8. Proposed signs and awnings must be appropriately place on the building or site. Wall signs on the building should be placed in the transom area of the building. Ground signs should not obstruct sight lines for autos accessing the street from driveways / alleys. Ground signs should in no way impact site circulation, pedestrians or sidewalk maintenance.
9. Applications may include signage lighting that directly illuminates the sign itself.
10. The use of a professional designer and / or contractor is encouraged.
11. Awnings and projecting signs may require an encroachment agreement with the Municipality (if they project over Municipal property) and may require a construction permit.

Applicants are encouraged to contact the County of Bruce and /or their local municipality before making an application for planning / design assistance.