

STOREFRONT SIGN & AWNING GRANT

Grant Details

The Spruce the Bruce Program has been initiated to assist 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 and in encouraging passers-by to stop and discover what that town has to offer.

The Spruce the Bruce Program has launched a grant program to encourage businesses to revamp their storefront signs and awnings. These grants match local cash contributions up to **\$1,000.00** and are available for buildings within the designated downtown areas.

If you are unsure whether your business is located within a designated downtown area, please visit the program website or contact us at sprucethebruce@explorethebruce.com

Usage of Funds

The storefront sign grant may be used towards the restoration of an old sign or awning or the design or purchase of a new sign or awning. For more comprehensive storefront improvement projects, funds are available through the Façade Improvement Program grant.

Review Criteria

The Spruce the Bruce Selection 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 installation and maintenance
- project's "fit" with the objectives of Spruce the Bruce and/or the local municipal direction
- The proposed project's "fit" with the Community Design Toolkit & / or other local municipal direction

Eligibility Criteria

In order to qualify for a Sign and Awning Improvement Grant:

- Applicants must be a merchant or storefront property owner within the boundary of a designated downtown.
- Applicants may be eligible for one storefront sign and awning grant per storefront. Applicants may additionally apply for the façade improvement grant
- Projects must not have commenced prior to the awarding of the requested grant
- Projects must be completed within six (6) months of the date of the signed grant agreement
- Applicants must provide a minimum 50% cash contribution towards the total cost of the project for which they are applying for a grant
- 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 should be members of their local Chamber of Commerce, where one exists (you do not need to be a member to apply however upon award membership should be demonstrated)

Application Process

Applicants must complete a formal application in order to be given grant consideration. Application forms are available at www.explorethebruce.com/sprucethebruce or at our offices.

All applications for this program must be submitted to:

Spruce the Bruce – Selection Committee

c/o Bruce Community Futures
Development Corporation
20 Durham Street, Box 208
Kincardine, ON N2Z 2Y7
Fax: (519) 396-8346
Email: brucefdc@bruce.on.ca

Questions?

Contact: Kara Van Myall
Phone: 1-800-268-3838
sprucethebruce@explorethebruce.com

OR
Contact: Amanda Farrell
Phone: 1-888-832-2232
www.bruce.on.ca
brucefdc@bruce.on.ca

To be eligible, applications must be received prior to the first of each month until funding is exhausted.



‘Spruce the Bruce’ Guidelines: Storefront Signs & Awnings

The following guidelines focus on design, character, suitability and compatibility issues affecting Storefront Sign and Awning Improvement Grant Applications in “Spruce the Bruce” designated downtowns. Keep these guidelines in mind when completing an Improvement Grant 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:
 - a. Is the work proposed of the same character as the building and its surroundings? Elements, window spacing, materials and features that reflect building character.
 - b. If the building is historic - Is the work proposed historic in character and does it use historic elements, colours, shapes, etc.
 - c. 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:
 - a. Are the improvements scaled appropriately for the building and/or site?
 - b. 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 use of graphics or images (as opposed to simply the name of the business) are also strongly encouraged.
8. Proposed signs and awnings must be appropriately placed 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 requiring further clarification are encouraged to contact the County of Bruce and /or their local municipality for planning / design assistance.





Storefront Sign & Awning Improvement Grant

To be eligible, applications must be received prior to the first of each month until funding is exhausted.

Lead Applicant Name: (Municipality / Group)

Contact (if different from applicant)

Street Address (Location):

Mailing Address
(if different from street address)

Telephone: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Email: _____

Please feel free to use additional paper to complete this application.

Please describe the proposed project in detail:

Attach any sketches and / or include a "before" picture of the project.

Who will be doing the work?

Additional Comments

Please describe the extent to which this project reflects the mission of the Spruce the Bruce Program

Budget Details

Proposed Total Cost of Project: \$ _____

Business and other contributions: \$ _____

(list all sources): \$ _____

Grant Request: \$ _____ % of Total Cost: _____ %

Signature and Submission Date

Name of Lead Applicant (Please Print): _____

Signature of Lead Applicant: _____

Date: _____

Incomplete applications will not be accepted. If you have any questions please contact us.

Please drop off, mail, or fax your completed application to:

Spruce the Bruce – Selection Committee
c/o Bruce Community Futures Development Corporation
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Kincardine, ON N2Z 2Y7
Fax: (519) 396-8346
Email: brucefdc@bruce.on.ca

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