



Program Description

This program provides a financial incentive in the form of a grant to promote the replacement of signage for a commercial building with a sign that meets the design guidelines contained in the Community Improvement Plan Background Report.

Who can apply?

Only owners of properties (and tenants with written authorization from owners) within the Community Improvement Project Area that meet the program eligibility requirements may apply.

The Township retains the right and absolute discretion to reject an application received from a person or corporation which in the opinion of the Township or its professional advisers, does not possess the experience, financial, technical, personnel or other resources that may be required to carry out the obligations that the applicant proposes to assume under the terms of its application and grant agreement.

How does the program work?

The program is structured as a matching grant where the Township will provide a grant equal to 50% of the cost of replacing an existing sign, up to a maximum grant per business of \$1,000. The sign must comply with the Design Guidelines.

Grants will be paid over two installments with the first installment paid upon completion and installation of the sign and the second installment paid one year following installation of the sign.

What types of work are eligible for a grant?

The following types of improvements to commercial, institutional and mixed use properties are considered eligible for a grant under this program:

- installation/improvement of signage (as permitted by the Sign By-law);
- ground signs (sign permit is required; a building permit and/or minor variance may also be required).

What conditions must be met to be eligible for a grant?

In addition to the General Program Requirements, the following program specific requirements must also be met:

- Eligible works must conform to the Township's Village and Hamlet Core Design Guidelines, and appropriate reference material as determined by Township staff;
- For properties designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, the landscaping and improvement works should be supported by documentation in the form of historic photographs or drawings clearly showing the feature(s) to be restored or reconstructed;
- The applicant will be required to submit at least two (2) cost estimates from bona fide licensed contractors, including a detailed breakdown of costs;
- Construction of all proposed improvements is to be completed within one year of the date of the approval of the grant. If the work is not completed within one (1) year, the grant approval will cease and the grant will not be paid.

Is there a fee to apply?

No.

When will the grant funds be advanced?

The grant will be advanced when:

- a Grant Agreement has been signed and executed;
- construction is complete;
- the building has been inspected by municipal staff; and,
- the applicant provides proof that all contractors have been paid.

(*Note: Grants will be paid over two installments with the first installment paid upon completion and installation of the sign and the second installment paid one year following installation of the sign to ensure design compliance.)

What are the default provisions?

The default provisions are contained in the Grant Agreement. Payment of the grant may be cancelled if:

- property taxes are more than three (3) months in arrears;
- the building is demolished or any of the heritage features are altered in any way that would compromise the reason for designation;
- the applicant declares bankruptcy;
- the applicant uses the grant for works that are not eligible for this program;
- the applicant fails to maintain the improvements as required in the Grant Agreement; and,
- the applicant is in default of any of the provisions of the Grant Agreement.

How do I apply for a grant?

Arrange a pre-application meeting with staff in order to determine program eligibility, proposed scope of work, project timing, etc.

If authorized to apply for a grant, complete and submit an application form. Ensure that all required signatures have been provided and that the application is accompanied by all required documentation as shown in the required documents checklist.



What happens next?

Applications and supporting documentation are reviewed by staff to ensure that they meet all of the eligibility requirements. If your application does not meet the eligibility requirements, you will be notified of this in writing.

- Staff may request clarification or additional supporting documentation.
- Staff will perform an initial site visit(s) and inspection(s) of the property (if necessary).
- If your application is approved, the Grant Agreement is then executed by you and the Township. A copy of the executed agreement(s) is then returned to you for your records.
- Construction of the approved works may now commence, subject to issuance of a sign permit(s) (and building permit, if required).
- Upon completion of the works, staff will conduct a final site visit(s) and inspection(s) (as necessary) to ensure compliance with the Grant Agreement, Village and Hamlet Core Design Guidelines, and any permits pursuant to the *Ontario Heritage Act* and other Acts.
- Submit to the Township, copies of paid invoices and "before" and "after" picture(s) of the completed works.
- The applicant will be asked to complete a grant receipt form and return this to the Township.
- The Township reserves the right to audit the cost of the works prior to advancing the grant payment.

- i. Upon review and approval of all submitted documentation and the completion and installation of the sign, the Township will issue a grant cheque to the applicant for the first installment.
- j. One year following the completion and installation of the sign, the Township will review the sign to ensure its continued compliance with the Design Guidelines. Upon a successful review, the Township will issue a grant cheque to the applicant for the second and final installment.

For further information on this program, please contact Kari Partridge at (705) 292-9507 ext. 239 or via email kpartridge@nexicom.net or refer to our website, www.selwyntownship.ca.

The Application for this incentive grant can be found on our website, <http://www.selwyntownship.ca/CommunityImprovementPlan.asp>