



Staff Report

Council Meeting Date: January 13, 2025

Subject: ECDEV-2025-02 Community Improvement Plan Incentive Grants 2025

Report from: Jennifer Isber-Legge, Economic Development Coordinator

Attachments:

Recommendation

Be It Resolved that Council hereby approves ECDEV-2025-02 Community Improvement Plan Incentive Grants 2025; and

FURTHER approves offering incentive grants in partnership with Bruce County through the Spruce the Bruce program by supporting 1/3 of applicable project costs for eligible applicants in Arran-Elderslie to a maximum of \$20,000 total program support in the following categories:

- Façade Improvement
- Perpendicular signage
- Awning Grant
- Fascia Signage

Background

Arran-Elderslie's Official Plan states that the goal of the Community Improvement Plan (CIP) is "to provide a positive economic climate to attract industry, encourage private investment, create a wide range of employment opportunities, and enhance a balanced municipal assessment base."

Bruce County's community development programs aim to build vibrant communities by supporting local businesses, municipalities, community partners, commercial areas, and public experiences. [Spruce the Bruce](#) brings partners together to create a vision for future growth and development by providing tools and grants to achieve that vision.

Spruce the Bruce Grant Program opens February 1st for applications and approves on a first-come-first-served basis for eligible applications.

Analysis

The purpose of the CIP is to adopt a program of financial incentives that encourage the redevelopment and improvement of private lands throughout the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie. These redevelopments and improvements aim to enhance the character of the Municipality and its traditional commercial areas.

The purpose of financial incentives is to assist businesses and property owners in the redevelopment and improvement of their properties. In turn, projects supported under the CIP will contribute towards Municipal goals defined in CIP policy and others.

The Municipality can provide financial incentives within the defined Community Improvement Project Areas (CIPAs). It enables both the Municipality and Bruce County to participate in or implement future financial incentives to attract industry, encourage investment, create employment opportunities, and enhance a balanced municipal assessment base.

To this end, and to enhance the work of the Chesley Community Working, the Tara Community Working Group, and the ongoing efforts of organizations in the Villages of Paisley and Allenford, it is recommended that the Municipality support the following Spruce the Bruce grants by providing 1/3 of the eligible funds, thereby reducing the amount required by our local businesses to 1/3 of the eligible project costs.

- [Façade Improvement](#)
 - Updated, aesthetically pleasing, and well-maintained building facades creates vibrancy in our downtown cores and encourages the public to stop, shop, and dine. The Façade Building Improvement grant provides funding for business and property owners to update and improve the exterior façade of their downtown commercial building.
- [Perpendicular signage](#)
 - Perpendicular signs increase awareness and visibility of a business and its offerings. The sign is attached to the front of the building and mounted so the face of the sign is perpendicular to the normal flow of street and foot traffic, which creates pedestrian-friendly downtowns.
- [Awning Grant](#)
 - The Awning Grant provides funding for business and property owners to install an awning on the exterior of downtown commercial buildings. Awnings not only provide shelter from environmental elements but can also add extra visual appeal to the building and improve aesthetics.

- [Fascia Signage](#)

- An updated and aesthetically pleasing fascia sign helps to showcase the businesses' brand and encourages customers to enter the shop. The Fascia Signage grant provides funding for business and property owners to install a new and updated façade (flat / fascia sign) on the exterior of the downtown commercial building.

Current Spruce the Bruce Program

Project	Max Project Expenses	Business	Bruce County
Façade Improvement	\$8,000	\$4,000	\$4,000
Perpendicular Signage	\$1,500	\$750	\$750
Awning Grant	\$2,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Fascia Signage	\$2,000	\$1,000	\$1,000

With Proposed Support through Arran-Elderslie CIP

Project	Max Project Expenses	Business	Arran-Elderslie	Bruce County
Façade Improvement	\$8,000	\$2,666	\$2,666	\$2,666
Perpendicular Signage	\$1,500	\$500	\$500	\$500
Awning Grant	\$2,000	\$666	\$666	\$666
Fascia Signage	\$2,000	\$666	\$666	\$666

Applicants will apply through Bruce County’s Spruce the Bruce program. Bruce County will manage the program and applicants will comply with all eligibility requirements set out by the program.

Bruce County’s Spruce the Bruce program begins taking applications February 1, 2025, and grants to eligible applicants on a first-come-first-served basis.

Arran-Elderslie would communicate this opportunity with local businesses through our Business Newsletter, Business Associations, and social media.

The Paisley Common stacked Perpendicular Signage and Awning, Façade Improvement, and a Patio Grant in 2021. Before and After photos below.



Link to Strategic/Master Plan

6.2 Supporting Businesses and the Local Economy

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding/Link to Procurement Policy

Funds allocated in the 2025 Economic Development budget as a Strategic Initiative. (final approval tentative January 13, 2025)

Approved by: Emily Dance, Chief Administrative Officer