



DOWNTOWN CAMBRIDGE

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA

SIGNAGE & DECORATIVE LIGHTING IMPROVEMENT GRANT GUIDELINES

Usage of Funds

A signage improvement grant may be used towards the restoration of an existing sign or the design and installation of a new sign. Projects that include signage may apply for additional funds through the City of Cambridge BRP Program.

Eligibility Criteria

In order to qualify for a Signage & Decorative Lighting Improvement Grant:

- Applicants must be a recognized BIA Member (Associate Members and other businesses do not qualify).
- Applicants may be eligible for one signage grant per storefront.
- Qualifying applicants may be eligible for a one-time grant of up to a maximum of \$1,500 for a maximum of half (50%) of the value of an eligible signage and/or decorative lighting improvement.
- 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 application
- Eligible project costs must be actual cash outlay to third parties acting at arm's 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.
- Signage projects must be permanently attached to the building facade.

Review Criteria

The Downtown Cambridge BIA will review applications against the following criteria:

- Date/timing of the application.
- The balance of current funding available within the BIA budget for the fiscal year and any previous submissions by other applicants at the time of application.
- Project's potential to provide long-term economic benefit to Downtown Cambridge.
- Evidence of the applicant's ability to fulfill responsibilities related to the project's installation and maintenance.
- Project's "fit" with the objectives of Downtown Cambridge BIA and/or the local municipal direction.

Application Process

Applicants must complete a formal application in order to be given grant consideration. All applicants for this program must be emailed to:

Downtown Cambridge BIA
info@downtowncambridgebia.com



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The following guidelines focus on design, character, suitability and compatibility issues affecting the Signage & Decorative Lighting Improvement Grant applications. Keep these guidelines in mind when completing an application:

Eligibility Criteria

In order to qualify for a Signage & Decorative Lighting Improvement Grant:

- I. Only applications that are submitted prior to purchase, fabrication and/or installation of the sign will be considered.
- II. Qualifying applicants may be eligible for a one-time grant of up to a maximum of \$1,500 for a maximum of half (50%) of the value of an eligible signage and/or decorative lighting improvement.
- III. Improvements requiring a variance will not be considered unless unique circumstances (not caused by or created by the applicant) exist.
- IV. Signage and lighting improvements should add to the character and value of the downtown. 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?
- V. Signage improvements 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/stand out?
 - c. Are the colours/material appropriate?
- VI. Applications for improvements 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.
- VII. The use of a professional designer and/or contractor is encouraged.
- VIII. Improvements must not interfere with sidewalk maintenance and pedestrian safety; which include proper height and allowable encroachment onto the sidewalk.
- IX. Projects are subject to the existing sign by-laws that may require permits to be issued.
- X. Awnings and projecting signs may require an encroachment agreement with the Municipality (if they project over Municipal property) and façade/lighting work may require a construction and/or electric permit.

Applicants requiring further clarification are encouraged to contact the Downtown Cambridge BIA
info@downtowncambridgebia.com