2022 INDUSTRIAL AREAS COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN





APRIL 2022

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Introduction

Purpose of Community Improvement Plans (CIPs)

Community Improvement Plans (CIPs) are grants and/or loans provided by a municipality to stimulate economic activity through a variety of means, including new building construction, expansion of existing building stock and building improvements (functional and aesthetic).

Legislation and Policies supporting CIPs

The Ontario Municipal Act, 2001 – Section 106(1) prohibits municipalities from engaging in bonusing – the practice of providing direct or indirect assistance to manufacturing, industrial or commercial businesses through the use of financial incentives. However, a municipality exercising its authority to implement a Community Improvement Plan under Section 28 of the *Planning Act* is exempt from this section (*Municipal Act*, Section 106(3)).

Municipalities with community improvement policies in their Official Plans have the authority under Section 28 of the *Ontario Planning Act* to designate a Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA) and to prepare and adopt a Community Improvement Plan (CIP).

When implementing a CIP, municipalities may also provide "grants or loans, in conformity with the community improvement plan, to registered owners, assessed owners and tenants of lands and buildings within the community improvement project area. (*Planning Act*, Section 28(7))

Eligible costs include those "related to environmental site assessment, environmental remediation, development, redevelopment, construction and reconstruction of lands and buildings for rehabilitation purposes or for the provision of energy efficient uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements or facilities (*Planning Act*, Section 28(7.1)).

Under Section 10.10.1 of the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury Official Plan (2002), the Town may become involved in Community Improvement program.

Offering CIP grants as financial incentives

The Town of BWG established the revitalization of its downtown core as a strategic priority in its Official Plan (2002), to stimulate economic growth and create employment opportunities and new living amenities for a growing population. The plan authorized the creation of a Downtown Revitalization Study (completed in 2011) and a Downtown Community Improvement Plan (completed in 2012) to help achieve these goals. The DCIP provided grant incentives to support the construction of new residential or commercial buildings, expansions or upgrades to building interiors and exteriors.

Following the implementation of the DCIP, the Office of Economic Development consulted the BWG business community to determine if an industrial CIP could assist in attracting new development, building expansions or upgrades in its two established business parks – Reagens and Artesian. The concept was widely supported, leading to the creation of an Industrial Areas Community Improvement Plan (IACIP) in 2013.

The BWG Industrial Areas Community Improvement Plan (IACIP)

Description

This is a Five-Year program designed to meet the following objectives:

- A. Stimulate investment by the private sector in industrially-zoned employment districts including Artesian and Reagens Industrial Parks;
- B. By so doing, provide or direct contribution to achieving fundamental economic development goals of the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury;
- C. More particularly this may include stimulus to new investment in industrial buildings, operations and employment by existing, new or relocating firms;
- D. By contributing to the build-out of these Parks, this plan will help meet the goals of existing businesses located in these Parks to expand, and thereby retain and potentially create new or higher paying jobs which may have beneficial impacts elsewhere in the local economy;
- E. Most specifically, the Plan is a basis for removing/reducing certain business costs which, in and of themselves, may act as a constraint to development.

Eligible properties

The IACIP has a designated geographic area called the Industrial Areas Community Improvement Plan Area (IACIPA).

Properties that fall within Reagens Industrial Park or Artesian Industrial Park CIPA can be considered for Industrial Area CIP grants.

Consideration may be given for properties outside of these established areas, if the properties border the CIPA. In such cases, Council approval will be required before a CIP application can move forward.

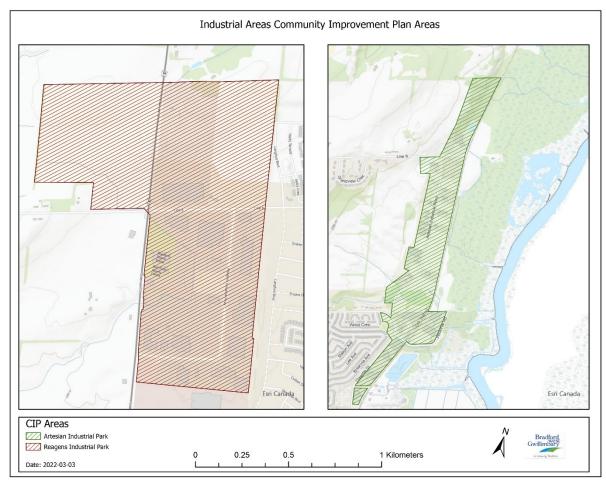


Figure 1: Industrial Areas Community Improvement Plan Area

Eligible applicants

A property owner or tenant can apply, for properties in the CIPA. If the application is from a tenant, the owner must provide written permission from the landlord. In cases of a building with multiple units, consideration may be given for a combined owner/tenant application.

Program Breakdown

The IACIP has six programs:

- Program 1: Development Charge (DC) Deferral Interest Grant Program
- Program 2: Tax-based Redevelopment Grant Program (TIG)
- Program 3: Fees and Permits Grant Program
- Program 4: Building, Restoration, Renovation and Improvement Grant Program
- Program 5: Employment Areas Accessibility Enhancement Program
- Program 6: Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) Grant Program

Program 1: Development Charge (DC) Deferral Interest Grant Program

Description

The objective of this program is to provide assistance for the development and redevelopment of sites by further reducing the cost of development related to development charges. Reduced development charges will help facilitate development and redevelopment efforts, and the municipality will benefit through development which raises assessment and activity in the Industrial Areas and beyond.

This program is provided for under Section 28 of the *Planning Act, 1990,* in respect of Community Improvement Plans. Specifically, the Town removes the requirement of the successful application to pay interest on the deferral of development charges. As such, this is a grant program equivalent to the interest charges arising from the deferral of charges.

Section 27 (1) of the *Development Charges Act, S.O. 1997* provides that a municipality may enter into an agreement to provide for a deferral of all or part of a development charge. Interest calculated on Development Charges subject to deferral will be determined by the Town from time to time based on legislative and regulatory frameworks in place at that time.

This Development Charge Deferral Interest Grant Program is designed to provide assistance for the development, redevelopment and expansion of industrial sites by deferring the cost of development related to Development Charges.

Program Specifics

This program applies employment lands located within the two existing business parks in the Town: Reagens Industrial Park and Artesian Industrial Park. The provisions of this plan are limited to these two areas which together comprise the Industrial Areas Community Improvement Project Area (IACIPA).

This program provides for the deferral of 100% of the Town development charge levied on Employment Lands within the IACIPA for up to a maximum of 18 months after the issuance of building permit.

Interest on the deferred fees as part of the CIP will accrue and is funded through a CIP grant. The amount of the grant is subject to a maximum of \$250,000 or the amount of interest accrued as of the date that Development Charges are due to be paid in full, whichever is less.

Implementation Specifics

The deferral shall be dependent upon the applicant/developer providing an Irrevocable Letter of Credit to the Town (named as the beneficiary) at the time of the Building Permit issuance.

Full payment of the Town Development Charge will be due no later than eighteen (18) months after building permit is issued. The following provisions also apply:

• The accrued interest charges will be forgiven at a rate of 100% where full payment of the Town Development Charge is received no later than nine (9) months after building permit is issued;

- The accrued interest charges will be forgiven at a rate of 50% where full payment of the Town Development Charge is received no later than twelve (12) months after building permit is issued;
- Applicants are able to pay any amount owing at any time during the eighteen (18) month period, with the corresponding reduction in interest charges accruing;
- Should the full payment of the Town Development Charge not be received by the expiration of the eighteen (18) month period, the application for a CIP grant of interest accrued will be deemed non-compliant. The applicant will be required to pay 100% of the interest that has accrued.

This Development Charge Deferral program applies only to Development Charges imposed by the Town. It does not apply to Simcoe County Development Charges nor Education Development Charges collected by the Town on behalf of the County and School Boards.

Any payment agreement entered into by the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury and the applicant is, unless otherwise specified at the time that the agreement is entered into, strictly in respect of the Development Charges levied by the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury. Applicants should note that payment of the County and Education Development Charges will, unless otherwise specified at the time of approval of the application under this CIP, be payable at issuance of building permit.

Program 2: Tax-based Redevelopment Grant Program (TIG)

Description

A Tax Increment Grant (TIG) leverages the increased assessment and property taxation generated by site redevelopment to reduce the financial costs of property rehabilitation and redevelopment by:

- Providing a grant equivalent to the Municipal portion of the property tax for a given property; and
- Limiting such grants to annual payments for a maximum period of 10 years or equivalent to the maximum cost of rehabilitation, renovation and/or redevelopment.

Preference will be given to those properties which, in the opinion of Council, represent economic sectors identified by the Town as a high priority for investment.

Program Specifics

The program is available to Employment Lands within the IACIPA. The maximum amount of the grant is 100% of the annual tax increment over the agreed base assessment and property tax liability. The maximum duration is 10 years.

This rate applies only to properties for which approval in principle for program support is achieved in Years 1 and 2.

Support under this program is limited to 75% of the annual tax increment over the agreed base assessment and property tax liability for applications approved in principle in Year 3 or later.

Policy and program support at the County of Simcoe does not yet exist to enable a County TIG component. Accordingly, applications under this CIP for tax increment grants under Program 2 will be eligible for the County tax increment only if County approval of its contribution to the program is achieved.

The minimum increase in assessment for which the use of this program of tax-based grants is permitted is \$1 million and will remain at this minimum for the duration (5 years) of the CIP.

Implementation Specifics

The grant is based on the "Reimbursing Developer" approach. The property owner/developer pays for the full cost of development as well as the resulting annual increase in property tax. Eligible costs would be determined at the discretion of Council, however, in general, eligible costs include (but are not limited to):

- Site development and infrastructure work including demolition and disposal off-site, improvement or reconstruction of existing on-site public infrastructure (water services, sanitary and storm sewers);
- Major building rehabilitation, significant renovation and rehabilitation;
- Costs associated with the assessment of environmental conditions and the remediation of environmental contamination, and environmental protection;
- New construction;
- Design, engineering, legal, insurance, and other professional fees (at the discretion of the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury) directly related to the design and development and commissioning of the completed building(s);

Eligible costs exclude both construction financing and long-term debt financing interest costs

The Town reimburses the Owner or assigned recipient by way of an annual grant equivalent to the agreed municipal portion of the incremental property tax increase over an established "base" assessment and tax liability. The increase in assessed property value is determined by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) in the normal course of its responsibility for determining such values for all property in the Province of Ontario.

This defined increment is net (that is to say calculated only after the reduction of Tax Liability) as a result of the following:

- Any phase-in agreements to soften tax increases that may exist through existing policy or programs;
- Or the tax rebates granted to charitable organizations as owners or tenants; and
- Any other rebate which lessens to overall initial (pre-Program 5) tax liability of the property.

The municipal tax increment represents the maximum funding that could be applied to the list of eligible costs that is approved by Council. However, the Town reserves the right to specify the amount of annual tax increment grant which may be lower than the program maximum. It is necessary to ensure property owners achieve approval in principle for TIG funding before commencing a project. At the time of final approval of the grant (once the project is completed), the amount and duration of the grant will be specified in an agreement between the Town and the applicant.

The Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury will determine the existing "base" assessment for the property – this will normally be defined as being at the time of approval of the application in principle and is based on the assessment and tax class at that time. However, the Town may, at its discretion, establish an alternate date for purposes of establishing the base assessment and property tax liability. -

Where a project is phased over several years the grant will be based on the property re-assessment and taxable status of the project in each of the interim years before project completion. At project completion, the grant (as applicable) will be based on the assessed property value provided by MPAC.

This grant focuses on net municipal taxation gain which represents unrealized revenue if the development or enhancement of the property had not occurred. At the end of the grant program (a maximum or 10 years or the dollar limit of eligible costs whichever is reached first, or earlier at the discretion of the Town), the Town realizes the full extent of the property taxes.

The potential exists for net fiscal impacts to the Town arising from the effective deferral of tax revenues. The municipality, as part of its approval process, will determine whether there is a likelihood that the Town's interests are not served by the provision of a grant based on the estimate of short term net municipal fiscal impact.

Applicants should note that funding under this program will not extend beyond the date that is ten (10) years following the first anniversary of the adoption of the CIP. Accordingly, an application approved in principle in Year 1 and commenced within 6 months of approval, is eligible for consideration for the full 10 year duration of tax increment grant funding. An application approved in principle in Year 5 of the CIP will only be considered for a maximum of six (6) years of tax increment grant support.

Program 3: Fees and Permits Grant Program

Description

The objective of this program is to provide assistance for the development and redevelopment of sites via a reduction in applicable planning and building permit fees. Reduced planning and building permit fees may, in concert with other program support, help encourage new development efforts by reducing initial regulatory costs.

Program Specifics

Planning Application Fees Grant:

- Grant equivalent of 50% of planning fees levied by the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury
- The grant is further limited to a maximum of \$50,000 or 50% of applicable planning fees, whichever is less.

Building Permit Fees Grant:

- Grant equivalent of 50% of applicable building permit fees levied by the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury
- The grant is further limited to a maximum of \$50,000 or 50% of applicable building permit fees, whichever is less.

The grant covers:

• Planning application fees for: Official Plan amendments; Zoning By-law amendments; Site Plan Control for New Development and Additions; Minor Variance; Plan of Subdivision/ (Industrial) Condominium.

Applicable building permit fees The Grant is only applicable to planning fees levied by the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury. Unless otherwise notified by the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury in response to individual applications for financial support under this program, this program excludes any application to fees and permits levied by, or on behalf of, the County of Simcoe, School Boards or the Conservation Authority.

Implementation Specifics

Planning Fee Grant funds should be disbursed only at building permit approval to ensure incentives lead to the actual implementation of the project. The building permit fees grants should also be similarly back-ended to ensure pay-out of the grant only on completion of the project.

The applicant pays for all planning and development permit costs as required and at the times required. The costs for the following are reimbursed to the applicant, in the form of a grant:

- Official Plan Amendment
- Zoning By-law Amendment
- Site Plan Control
- Minor Variance
- Plan of Subdivision
- Plan of (Industrial) Condominium
- Building Permit

The Fees and Permits Grant will be disbursed as follows:

• 100% on completion to the satisfaction of the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury

Program 4: Renovation Grant Program

Description

This grant has the potential to leverage significant private sector investment in interior building renovations and improvements, and help address the costs involved with a range of matters, such as:

- Building, fire and other code compliance;
- Expansion/additions;
- Retrofitting, modernizing existing floor space for existing or new building occupants (this specifically excludes tenant fit-up);

Program Specifics

The grant is equivalent to a proportion of the work value to a maximum of \$50,000 or 25% of eligible costs, whichever is less. It is administered through the use of a secured interest-free loan forgivable over 5 years at an annual rate of 20%. The minimum grant is \$25,000. Accordingly, at a rate of 25% grant matching, the minimum level of overall project cost (as identified by eligible costs) is \$100,000.

This program is intended to be utilized for projects which are too small to be taken advantage of by either Program 1 or 2.

Under this program, where the property is sold or interest in the property is transferred to another entity within the 5 year loan forgiveness period, the remaining principal of the grant (after annual forgiveness) is repayable to the Town. Upon sale or transfer, all outstanding loan obligations remain payable to the Town based on the approved loan repayment agreement signed by both the Town and the applicant upon receipt of program assistance. Year 1 of the repayment period commences upon final completion of the project.

Implementation Specifics

Eligible Costs include (but are not limited to): costs associated with materials, labour, equipment, financing, insurance, regulatory approvals and professional fees related to internal building works, including major fit-up to meet the future needs of tenants.

Building, Restoration, Renovation and Improvement Grants disbursed as follows:

- 10% on approval
- 90% on Final Completion to the satisfaction of the Town.

Program 5: Employment Areas Accessibility Enhancement Program

Description

The Employment Areas Accessibility Enhancement Program assists property owners with the costs of accessibility improvements to existing industrial premises and/or related external property improvements.

Accessibility improvements are part of a wider effort to ensure the sustainability and economic competitiveness of Bradford's employment areas.

The program includes a grant as follows:

- Matching assistance for accessibility improvements to a maximum of 50% of eligible costs or \$10,000, whichever is less;
- The minimum available grant is \$3,000;

Program eligibility is limited to existing buildings in the IACIPA. Additional gross floor area created through construction is not eligible for assistance under this program.

Program Specifics

In order to be considered for approval, applications for assistance in funding accessibility improvements in private properties must meet the following requirements:

- In the case of all works, compliance with Ontario Regulation 191/11 (Integrated Accessibility Standards) under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005
- The Ontario Building Code (section 3.8.2) addressing building, access to parking and exterior walkways;
- Accessibility standards and policies developed by the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury and in force during the CIP period.

Improvements must also align with all other Building and Fire Code requirements of the Town.

Examples of Eligible Costs (non-exhaustive):

- Power assist door operators;
- Renovation of building entrances;
- Upgrading of doors;
- Installation of ramps;
- Installation of elevating devices;
- Renovations to create accessible washrooms.

• Other changes which meet the requirements for barrier-free access as contained in section 3.8.2 of the Ontario Building Code.

Implementation Specifics

Funding is available to construction works that are at least \$6,000 as determined by two (2) separate quotations by professional contractors.

Accessibility improvements are eligible costs under a number of grant programs available from other levels of government. The Town will only provide funding where eligible costs under this program are not met by other programs available or relate to that increment of eligible costs which exceed the funding available under other programs. For clarity, the Town will only cost share eligible costs under this program to a maximum of 50% of eligible costs or \$10,000, whichever is less.

Program 6: Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) Grant Program

Description

The program provides grant assistance to further specify extent and nature of environmental contamination through the preparation of a Phase II ESA study and the subsequent creation of remediation plans.

Program eligibility includes privately owned sites within the IACIPA which have a competed Phase I ESA from a Qualified Person (QP) as defined under the Environmental Protection Act (EPA) and its regulations.

Program Specifics

The Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury will reimburse the Owner or developer for costs associated with eligible studies. Eligible studies are anticipated to include a Phase II ESA and Remediation Action Plans, Risk Assessments, and other studies that are part of the regulatory submission requirements to enable a Record of Site Condition (RSC) acknowledged by Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP).

Studies which do not contribute to the prescribed regulatory process will not be approved for funding support. The Phase II ESA and other subsequent analysis must conform in methodology, content and reporting with the requirements of Ontario Regulation 153/04. Funding is comprised as follows:

- Maximum individual grant is \$20,000 or 50% of the cost of the ESA, whichever is less.
- Maximum assistance per project, as defined by the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury, of:
 - Maximum of 2 studies per project; and
 - Maximum of \$35,000 per project for the duration of this CIP.

The above limits are at the discretion of the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury. Funding may be increased at the discretion of the Town based on the merits of each individual application as determined by the Town. Applicants may be required to furnish the Town with additional information, authorize the Town, acting in its discretion, to be able to release the findings of the ESA, potentially relinquish ownership of ESA reports if required, and enter into additional agreements as necessary to the satisfaction of the Town.

Conversely the Town, acting in its discretion, may decline funding if it is determined that the project is unlikely to be viable or otherwise does not meet the objectives of the CIP. This may include, for example, a Phase I ESA that is indeterminate as to the necessity for a Phase II ESA in order to achieve the stated land use.

Implementation Specifics

The following implementation guidelines also apply:

- Program duration: 5 years.
 - The program will be monitored for effectiveness on an annual basis with an interim review in year 3 of the program (and further review in year 5) to determine whether the program has met the goals of the CIP to support brownfield redevelopment on priority sites
 - Based on the principle of achieving maximum leverage of non-Municipal funds, applicants who identify other sources of financial assistance for studies will be given preference in the allocation of funds.
 - Municipal funding will be the funding of last resort where other sources of public assistance exist.
 - Eligible costs that remain unfunded may be carried as eligible costs under the Tax-Based Redevelopment Grant (TIG) Program (Program 2);

A project may be defined as a single property, contiguous or other combinations of properties that are the subject lands contained in a Phase II ESA. A property may be eligible for only one (1) project for funding purposes during the plan period (2022-2026).

CIP Application Process

Required Steps:

- Complete the online application, outlining the scope of work, providing any renderings, and submitting two sets of quotes, and submit to the Office of Economic Development. This can all be done electronically via the interactive CIP application form on the Economic Development website: <u>www.gotobwg.ca</u>
- 2) The application will be reviewed by the CIP Administrator who will work with you to build a business case and make a funding recommendation to the Evaluation Committee.
- Once the application and business case is deemed complete, it will be sent to the Evaluation Committee for their consideration and corresponding recommendation to Council. Applicants are not permitted to attend this session.
- 4) The CIP Administrator will then submit the application to Council as a staff report, with both the Administrator and Committee recommendations. Timing for this process will depend on the amount of staff time required to prepare the staff report and scheduled meetings of Council.
- 5) Council makes a funding decision and the applicant will be notified. If acceptable, the CIP Administrator will draft a contract and send to the applicant for review and signature. Once returned to the Town, the contract is executed when signed by both the Town Solicitor and Mayor. Scheduled payments can proceed based on the terms of the agreement.

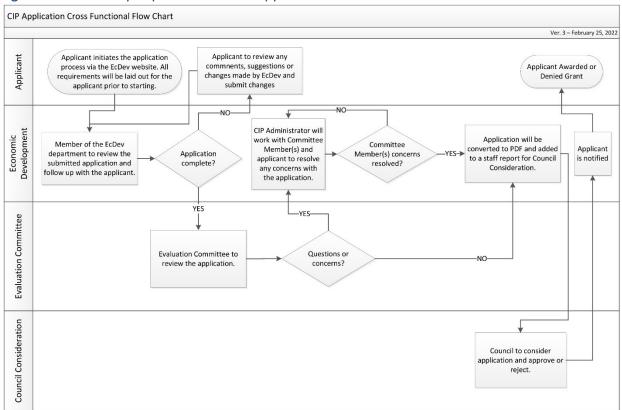


Figure 2: Community Improvement Plan Application Flowchart

Timing of Applications

The application intake process is ongoing. Applications can be submitted at any time during the program's duration.

Funding for the program is limited, and determined on a 'first-come, first-served' basis.

Number of Programs for Which Applicants are Eligible

Eligibility both in terms of the type of land use and eligible project costs is established for each individual program. Eligibility for more than one program is possible and will be confirmed by the Town, as needed, during the pre-application consultation process. In addition, the Town will be guided by the following eligibility for each program:

Progra	m	Eligible Scale of Project
1.	Development Charge (DC) Deferral Interest Grant Program	New Builds and Expansions
2.	Tax-based Redevelopment Grant (TIG) Program	New Builds and Expansions
3.	Fees and Permits Grant Program	New Builds, Expansions and Renovation of
4.	Renovation Grant Program	Existing Property without Expansion of gross floor area

Progra	m	Eligible Scale of Project
5.	Employment Areas Accessibility Enhancement Program	Renovation of existing property only
6.	Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) Grant Program	New Builds and Expansions

Evaluation Committee Members and Meetings

The Industrial Areas CIP Evaluation Committee has staff representatives from the Planning, Engineering, Building, Finance and Economic Development Departments.

The Evaluation Committee meets as required, with no set timetable or number of scheduled meetings. The group can conduct its assessment of CIP applications via email, virtual meeting or in-person meeting.

Grant Funding Dispute Mechanism

Council has full discretion in approving a CIP application. They have the authority to approve some, all or none of the recommended grant amount.

During the application approval process, two recommendations are made: one from the CIP Administrator and one from the Evaluation Committee. If both are in agreement, one amount will appear as the recommendation in the staff report to Council.

If the Evaluation Committee disagrees with the recommendation of the CIP Administrator, the Committee's recommendation will appear in the staff report to Council; however, the report will note the difference and provide a rationale for both.

If an applicant has any concerns with the grant recommendations, these concerns can be addressed via a Delegation Request to Council when the staff report moves forward.

In the event the applicant disagrees with Council's decision, and has not already spoken to the issue via a Delegation Request, the applicant can request to speak at another Council meeting where they can request reconsideration of their application.

Payment Schedule

When a CIP grant has been approved, and a contract signed by all parties, the applicant submits account or banking information to the CIP administrator to arrange direct deposits to the account of the applicant's choice.

Grant money is paid out in two installments, based on actual costs, not estimates:

- 10% of funds are paid once the contract is signed. No additional information is required.
- 90% of funds are paid once the project is complete. A project will be considered complete once the outlined scope of work has been achieved, any permitted work has been inspected and approved by town staff, all funds towards construction have been paid, and all receipts provided to the CIP Administrator.

In the event that the scope of work is in the advanced stages or completed, combined payments may be considered. The CIP Administrator can advise the applicant of the potential for such payments.

Commencement of Construction

Once an application has been submitted with the scope of work outlined, the grant application is considered active. Upon confirmation by the CIP Administrator, you can commence work. It must be noted however, that a successful application is not guaranteed and there is a risk the funding request may not be approved.

Applications after commencement of Construction

Retroactive applications are not permitted.

Transferring CIP grants to another party

In the event that an applicant has an approved CIP application with a contract signed by all parties, but cannot complete the scope of work, consideration may be given to transferring the CIP grant agreement and remaining payments to a third party to complete the work. In this case, all parties will need to sign an Assignment and Assumption agreement.

Acknowledgements

The Town of BWG Office of Economic Development would like to acknowledge the work of Sierra Planning and Management in helping to craft the Town of BWG's CIP programs, and their ongoing work with staff, stakeholders and Council to evaluate and refine the plans over time.

Thank you to the Board of Directors at the Bradford Board of Trade, members of the Town's Economic Development Advisory Committee and members of the Town's Downtown Revitalization Committee for their input into the development of the CIPs.

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