



# **SIGNAGE MODERNIZATION PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

GUIDELINES AS OF MARCH 22, 2017  
GUIDELINES ARE SUBJECT TO MODIFICATION  
BY THE VILLAGE MANAGER OR HIS DESIGNEE

## I. Signage Program Overview

The fundamental goals of the Signage Modernization Program (the “Program” or “Signage Program”) are to promote business retention, enhance the appearance of the Village of Brookfield’s TIF Districts, and address deterioration and obsolescence within the districts. To achieve these goals, the Village of Brookfield (the “Village”) has established the objective to improve the appearance and functionality of **signage** on street-level commercial buildings located in the Village’s 3 TIF Districts. The TIF Districts include the Ogden, Congress Park, and 8 Corners TIF Districts.

The Program is a voluntary program, whereby Program applicants may receive a municipal subsidy in connection with the construction of high-quality signage. Program participants are eligible to receive a 0% interest loan (in the form of a grant that reduces the interest rate to 0%) upon the disbursement of the loan to finance the eligible sign improvement project (the “Project”) or upon the completion of the Project, if the Project is not financed.

Program applicants would follow a 3-step process to obtain Village assistance:

- Step 1 – Submittal of Program application to Community and Economic Development Department (“CEDD”) staff at a meeting with CEDD staff
- Step 2 – Submittal of building permit application to CEDD staff
- Step 3 – Submittal of loan application to participating bank.

Applicants seeking funding for exterior sign improvements to the property are eligible for a Village grant equal to the interest on a sign improvement loan of up to a maximum loan amount of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) amortized over a maximum loan period of four (4) years and a maximum loan subsidy amount of one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00). Smaller projects will receive a smaller loan subsidy in proportion to loan size or principal (e.g., \$500 on a \$5,000 loan). *NOTE: Business applicants may obtain a larger loan over \$10,000 or a term exceeding 4 years if approved by the participating bank, but the Village subsidy is limited to \$1,000.*

If the owner or tenant of an eligible building does not finance the costs of the improvements, the Village may alternatively reimburse the property owner or tenant of an eligible building for ten percent (10%) of the eligible signage improvement costs up to a maximum of one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) payable on the total Project cost, based on the “total eligible signage improvement cost” for their specific Project. The Program is managed and administered by the Community and Economic Development Department.

## II. Eligibility Criteria

Eligible participants of the Signage Program include property owners and tenants of street-level commercial spaces within one of the 3 TIF Districts in Brookfield who have been approved for a signage improvement loan by a participating financial institution. Eligible participants must have an approved Village building permit for the signage improvement project. The Village Manager is authorized to waive building permit fees for the signage improvement project.

A property owner or a business that is leasing space must:

- Be current on all fees and taxes owed to the Village;
- If a property owner - must show proof of ownership of the property to be improved;
- If a business that is leasing space - must have a current executed lease with a minimum of four (4) years remaining from the date of Application; and
- Provide written approval and consent from the property owner to participate in the Program.

Note: Properties will not be considered eligible that are being renovated without a tenant or without a signed lease with at least four (4) years remaining on the lease.

Storefront Sign Improvements: Storefronts are defined as the portion of a building that faces the public right-of-way and is fronted by a sidewalk or similar pedestrian-oriented pathway. Eligible improvements include signage contributing to the visual enhancement of a property as it relates to the public right-of-way.

For the purposes of considering projects, a storefront is considered the entire length of the building that faces the street, regardless of how many individual storefronts comprise the building. For example, a property with three tenants will not be considered three individual projects with the ability to apply for the maximum storefront improvement amounts for each storefront.

Ineligible improvements include any improvements not visible from the public right-of-way, and any improvements deemed to be inconsistent with redevelopment purposes and objectives.

Ineligible Participants of the Program include:

- National franchises/for profit corporations with more than ten locations outside of the Village;
- Occupants or owners of buildings that are not current with property taxes, water bills, or properties possessing any sort of non-mortgage liens (i.e., mechanic's lien, etc.);
- Persons who or businesses that have one or more outstanding Village parking tickets or property maintenance violations;
- Churches or other religious organizations;
- Government offices and agencies (non-governmental tenants are eligible); and
- New construction less than five (5) years old.

### **III. Signage Program Administration**

The Signage Program provides participants the opportunity to receive a grant upon the disbursement of their sign improvement loan or completion of their approved Project, up to an approved amount, based the maximum amounts set forth in the sections below.

Funding Source(s): The Projects will be funded through tax increment financing (TIF) within applicable TIF Districts.

Grant: The grant is in the form of an interest rate subsidy on a loan used to finance the Project. Participants can receive a subsidy for up to a maximum loan amount of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) amortized over a maximum loan period of four (4) years and a maximum loan subsidy amount of one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00). If the owner or tenant of an eligible

building does not wish to obtain a loan, the Village may reimburse the property owner or tenant of an eligible building for the eligible signage improvement costs up to a maximum of one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) payable on the total Project cost, based on the “total eligible signage improvement cost” for their specific Project.

**Timing of Grant:** The grant shall only be made after the loan for the Project has been approved by a participating financial institution; or, if the improvements are not financed with a loan, the grant shall only be made after the Project has been completed and passed building permit inspections.

**Eligible Costs:** Signage improvement costs eligible for incentives include the following: professional and consultant fees, sign cleaning, painting, construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation and restoration of the signage. Business applicants are required to post a temporary public notice (as provided by the participating bank) indicating that financing is being provided jointly by the bank and the Village of Brookfield.

## **IV. Design Guidelines**

Design guidelines are in place to (a) ensure signs meet minimum code requirements and (b) go beyond the minimum to implement harmonious, high-quality signage (e.g., harmonious sign colors). In addition to meeting minimum Village ordinance requirements per the Signage Code and the Zoning Code, the business applicant must meet the following guidelines.

### **General Guidelines**

- A. All signs shall be limited to the business conducted upon the property. Signage shall be limited to business name, logo graphics, address, and directional identification.
- B. One business identification sign shall be allowed per street frontage. The sign’s purpose is to identify the business and/or the products sold or services provided by the business. Therefore, signs will not be allowed to have excessive information. Signs that are easily read and concise make viewing easier for pedestrians and motorists.
- C. Sign materials shall be consistent with other building materials and utilize a set of harmonious colors on the façade. Special consideration should be given to the existing architectural elements on the façade, and the sign should enhance rather than detract from these features.
- D. The size of the sign shall be in direct correlation to the scale of the building and the surrounding buildings. All signs shall be oriented to a pedestrian scale. Signs shall not project more than 12 inches from the façade of the building.
- E. Lighting of signs shall not move, flash or make noise.
- F. Multiple tenant signs are to be located on the façade of the building adjacent to the entrance.
- G. Roof-top signs, commercial advertising signs and portable signs are prohibited.
- H. Refer to the Chapter 42 of the Brookfield Code “Signs” for additional information.

### **Types of Signs**

The types of signs eligible for the Program are limited to the following:

- A. Individual letters mounted to the façade.
- B. Silkscreened lettering on awnings.
- C. Plaques that are mounted to the façade.

D. Permanently applied window signs.

The following additional requirements apply to participating businesses.

- 1. Back-Lit Box Signs.** Back-lit box signs are prohibited, whether projecting, wall, or freestanding signs. Back-lit box signs include any sign with a box configuration and lighting within the box, shining through the front panel, whether the panel is opaque or translucent.
- 2. Plastic.** Plastic is permitted only to be utilized for separate alphanumeric characters or logos on any sign type. Translucent or plastic panels are prohibited for all sign types.
- 3. Freestanding Signs.** Freestanding signs including pole-mounted signs are prohibited with the following exception:
  - a. Monument Sign. Freestanding signs may be constructed as monument signs with a maximum overall height of 6 feet. A monument sign includes a base with a sign panel mounted directly upon the base. The base height shall be less than 30 percent of the overall sign height.
- 4. Projecting Signs.** Projecting signs shall be oriented to the pedestrian on the sidewalk and limited to a maximum of 7 square feet for each sign face. Projecting signs may be mounted no higher than 16 feet from the sidewalk elevation. A maximum of one pedestrian-scaled projecting sign is permitted for every 30 feet of storefront façade.
- 5. Wall Signs.** Wall sign letters are limited to a maximum of 2 feet in height and shall not cover any architectural detail on the building. Separate letters, each pin-mounted, are preferred to panels.
- 6. Total Signage.** The total square feet of signage for each street face shall not exceed 150 square feet.

## V. Signage Program Steps

Signage Program applicants must follow a 3-step process to obtain Village assistance. At any point in the process a business participant can be pre-qualified for the bank loan (i.e., is not required to wait until Step 3).

Step	Action	Purpose
Step 1	Meet with Community and Economic Development Department (“CEDD”) staff and submit Signage Program application	To determine preliminary qualification for Village incentive (loan subsidy)
Step 2	Submit building permit application to CEDD	To determine compliance with Village building safety codes and final qualification for Village incentive
Step 3	Submit loan application to CEDD-approved participating bank	To obtain loan to start project

**Step 1: Meet with CEDD and Submit Signage Program Application.** Applicants must schedule a meeting with the Community and Economic Development Department to discuss the program, ask questions, and obtain application materials (also available online or by email). The purpose of the meeting is to provide an early assessment that the applicant signage project is “on track” and is likely to meet the Design Guidelines as defined herein (including Section IV criteria). Applicants should contact:

Emily Egan, Village Planner  
Brookfield Village Hall  
8820 Brookfield Avenue  
Brookfield, Illinois 60513  
(708) 485-1445  
[Egan@brookfieldil.gov](mailto:Egan@brookfieldil.gov)

Signage Program applications are accepted on a rolling basis throughout the year as long as funding remains available. Applications can be accepted at the time of the meeting, if the application package is complete. Complete submissions must include the following:

- Completed Signage Program application form;
- Two (2) color photographs of the property “as is”;
- Illustration/design of proposed Project to be completed; and
- If the property owner is the applicant, evidence of ownership of the property, e.g., copy of recorded deed, copy title policy. (If tenant is the applicant, please furnish a copy of the lease, and a letter of support from the property owner indicating he/she is supportive of the Project and has reviewed the terms and conditions of the Program

All applications, photos, and supporting documents shall be submitted to the Village Planner.

**Step 2: Submit Building Permit Application for Review.** Like other building projects, a signage project must follow the standard municipal building permit review. The Village Planner or Permit Services Coordinator can provide assistance on completing the normal Building Permit application.

Additionally, when the building permit application is submitted, the Community and Economic Development Department will:

- Verify that the Signage Program Application is complete;
- Confirm eligibility of proposed location in terms of meeting location requirements, Section II qualification criteria and Section IV design guidelines; and
- Prepare a recommendation for approval of grant to the Village Manager.

The Village Planner will submit an electronic copy of a letter indicating approval and that Steps 1 and 2 have been satisfied to the participating bank and business applicant.

**Step 3: Submit a Loan Request.** Signage Program applications that have been approved on a preliminary basis in Step 1 and formally approved in Step 2 as part of the standard building permit review subsequently would meet with the participating financial institution. In connection with the meeting the business would file an application for a 0% interest loan from the participating bank.

Participating Financial Institutions  
Amy Weinert  
First National Bank of Brookfield  
9136 Washington Avenue  
Brookfield, IL 60513  
Phone: (708) 485-2770