



Streetscape Enhancement Measure 2022

Measure Outline

Town and Village Renewal Scheme



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1. Introduction

Our Rural Future is the Government's five year strategy to revitalise rural Ireland and includes a commitment to upgrade and enhance shopfronts and street facades in our rural towns and villages.

This activity will be funded by the Department of Rural & Community Development (DRCD) through the 2022 Streetscape Enhancement Measure. This is an additional Measure which was introduced in 2021 as part of the Town & Village Renewal Scheme. €2.6 million is being made available under this Measure in 2022.

Improving the visual appearance of our urban streetscapes increases pride and confidence in our towns and villages, making them more attractive places to live, work and do business.

Many local authorities already fund such measures locally and this national initiative builds on local experience and affords a degree of local discretion to individual authorities to tailor the Measure to local demand and according to local priorities.

This Measure will support a project proposal for one town or village per eligible local authority which may include activity such as painting (including murals), signage replacement, shopfront improvement, lighting, and canopies.

2. Streetscape Enhancement Measure 2022

2.1 Focus of Measure

The focus of this Measure is to support the upgrade and enhancement of shopfronts and street facades of defined areas within selected rural town/village centres.

Each Local Authority will be provided with a grant allocation which they can use to deliver this Measure in a selected town or village.

The 26 Local Authorities eligible to apply under this Measure are set out in Appendix 1. Given the focus of the Measure, an allocation has not been provided to urban Local Authorities in Dublin, Cork and Galway City Councils, together with South Dublin and Dun Laoghaire – Rathdown Councils.

2.2 Grant Allocations

Each eligible Local Authority will be provided with a grant allocation of up to €100,000 to deliver this Measure.

Each Local Authority will be provided with funding at the rate of 80% for works up to a maximum of €100,000 per LA (€90,000 if 10% taken for admin).

2.3 Administration and Technical Support

Up to 10% of the total allocation per county is allowable for Local Authority administration and technical costs, and/or for engaging external expertise where appropriate. This 10% is contingent on the full delivery and completion of the scheme works within the advised timeframes and in line with this Measure Outline.

2.4 Selection of towns/villages by Local Authority

1 prioritised town or village must be selected by each Local Authority. It is a matter for the Local Authority to determine how this town is selected. Local Authorities are advised to work with local property owners, chambers of commerce, tidy towns groups and other community groups to identify works to be funded.

(Note all works must be completed by 31 December 2022).

Local Authorities must indicate the areas within the selected town/village that will be covered by the Measure. Locations and works should be chosen based on the Measure objective. They should also be of a sufficient scale of which to improve the character and appearance of town/village centres.

Where the an existing streetscape scheme is operational in a selected town/village, the Local Authority must clearly set out how the funding under this year's measure will be additional to what is already in place and how the funding will be advertised locally and noted in any funding documentation. (See 2.11 Existing Schemes Section below)

2.5 Eligible Towns/Villages

The Measure is targeted at towns or villages with populations of up to 15,000 people.

Towns or villages that received approvals under the 2021 Measure may be included again. (The Local Authority must clearly set out how the funding under the 2022 Measure will be additional to what was funded under the 2021 Measure).

2.6 Eligible Premises

Commercial, residential or unoccupied buildings in an area defined by a local authority and within selected town/village centre locations.

2.7 Eligible Works

The works to be completed will be included in one single Streetscape Enhancement project proposal for the town to be submitted to the DRCD.

The project proposal can include:

- Works to individual properties (commercial/residential/derelict) provided that this involves at least 3 adjacent properties. (Note: It is preferable to develop works on as many adjacent properties as possible, but there must be a minimum of 3)
 - This can include works such as: painting, repair of shopfronts, signage, etc (see Appendix 2)
- Works to standalone buildings are permitted in the case of derelict buildings or vacant properties where the local authority demonstrated a clear need to address the visual impact of this building on the existing streetscape.
- Murals
- Other public artworks

Eligible works include painting, signage replacement, shopfront improvement, scaffolding, materials, lighting and planting – see Appendix 2 for list of eligible works.

In selecting works to be completed, local authorities are required to show that the selected works constitute a joined up proposal for the chosen town, developed in collaboration with local businesses / community groups etc.

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2.8 Grant Rates

Grant funding will be provided at 80% of total project costs – matched funding of 20% required.

2.9 Timeline for Delivery

Local Authorities will have a maximum of 6 weeks from **Thursday 19th May** to advance projects to commencement of work stages.

The timeline is as follows:

	Deadline
Launch of Measure	Thursday 19th May
Two weeks to nominate the town/village and the areas within that town/village and to provide these details to the DRCD. This should include details referenced below 2.11 Existing Schemes in respect of towns/villages where an existing scheme is already operational. Details to be provided to townandvillage@drcd.gov.ie	Friday 3rd June
Two weeks for Local Authority to advertise/engage with local stakeholders and receive applications/Expressions of interest.	Friday 17th June
Two weeks to develop and submit the Streetscape Enhancement project proposal to the DRCD for approval. Details to be provided to townandvillage@drcd.gov.ie	Friday 1st July

(If a local authority is in a position to submit the project proposal, prior to 1st July, the authority is encouraged to do so.)

Where funding allocated to any Local Authority is not fully allocated to works in that Local Authority, the DRCD may reallocate to another Local Authority.

Local Authorities may commit up to 5% more than their available budget, on the expectation that not all works will be delivered on time or that some works will be delivered under budget.

Projects must be completed by 31 December 2022.

Local Authorities must provide a return to the DRCD by 28th February 2023 to confirm expenditure, provide photos of completed works and return any unspent funds.

Failure to meet project deadlines, or to draw down funding for a nominated project may affect future funding under this and/or other DRCD schemes.

2.10 Quotations

The following procurement rules apply, as a minimum, to the individual projects funded:

2 x Contractor quotations;

1 x Materials quotation;

(Note: Seek 3 written quotations for contracts above €5,000 as per National Procurement Guidelines)

2.11 Existing Schemes

The funding cannot be used to replace existing schemes or existing financial commitments already approved by the Local Authority.

Where the Local Authority wishes to utilise this funding in towns or villages that are already the subject of an existing scheme funded by the Local Authority or otherwise (e.g. a county wide scheme), it must identify at the outset:

- how this funding will be additional to what is already provided; and
- how the beneficiaries of the funding and the wider public will be fully informed that the funding is being provided through this DRCD Measure.

This information must be submitted with the nomination of the town/village (S1 form).

2.12 Publicity

Local Authorities will acknowledge the support of the Department of Rural and Community Development, and reference '***Our Rural Future***' in all public announcements, scheme documentation and advertising, as appropriate, relating to the Measure.

In addition, the Department may seek to use the details of the works funded in each town or village in the broader promotion of its policies, including through the use of the photographs which are required to be submitted by the Local Authority at claim drawdown stage (see point 5 of Section 4)

3. Checklist for Local Authorities-Minimum Documentation to be retained

- Photograph prior to commencement of project.
- Completed Application Form.
- Photograph of completed project.
- Quotations
- Evidence of payment

4. Funding Conditions

Non-Compliance with the conditions as outlined or non-compliance with any additional stipulations agreed during contract negotiations may result in the requirement to refund part or all of the grant aid awarded.

All expenditure under the Town & Village Streetscape Enhancement Measure 2022 is subject to the terms of the Public Spending Code <http://publicspendingcode.per.gov.ie/> . The following requirements are also applicable;

Requirements

- 1 Works will be expected to commence and be completed in line with the timelines set out in this Measure Outline.
- 2 The Department may de-commit funding allocated to works under the Measure where the works are not completed within the time specified, and where the express agreement of the Department to extend the funding arrangement has not been agreed in advance.
- 3 The grant funding for the approved works will be provided from the Department's capital budget.
- 4 A match funding contribution as set out in this Measure Outline is required.
- 5 Payments: The Department will release 100% payment upfront to the Local Authority once successful applicants been identified by the Friday 1st July as per timeline noted above. Payment will not be released until Local Authorities have completed their 2021 Streetscape Enhancement Measure implementation reports.
- 6 Upon completion a report on each town detailing the works undertaken must be submitted to DRCD by 28th February 2023. This should include vouched expenditure and certification by Director of Service. **This report must also include sample before/after photographs to confirm works have been completed and which may to be used for promotion purposes.** Failure to do so may result in the Local Authority repaying the money to DRCD.
- 7 Up to 10% of the net total allocation per county is allowable for Local Authority administration and technical costs, and for engaging external expertise where appropriate. This 10% is conditional on the full delivery and completion of the scheme works within the advised timeframes. The 10% will not be provided where the scheme is not delivered in line with this Measure Outline and within the permitted timeframe. See Paragraph 2.9 Timeline for Delivery and Appendix 1 which set out Admin/Technical support provision

- 8 Where it is established that works have not been completed or delivered in line with this Measure Outline, the Department may request the Local Authority to repay any funding received or a penalty may apply as determined by the DRCD.
- 9 Where changes have been applied to an approved works that are outside the overall framework of this Measure, without Departmental approval, the grant funding may be reduced to reflect the amended works.
- 10 All appropriate financial, Public Procurement and accounting rules and regulations must be complied with, and each Local Authority will fully account for the funding received in a timely manner.
- 11 Full and accurate documentation to support all expenditure should be maintained in the Measure file by the Local Authority and must be accessible by Department officials for audit purposes at all times, for a period of six years from the date of completion of the project.
- 12 Local Authorities will acknowledge the support of the Department of Rural and Community Development, and reference 'Our Rural Future' in all public announcements, scheme documentation and advertising, as appropriate, relating to the project. In addition, the Department may seek to use the project in the broader promotion of its policies.
- 13 Local Authorities will provide any reports and information relating to the delivery of this Measure as may reasonably be requested by the Department.
- 14 Local Authorities will provide a contact point/points to the Department to facilitate payment and information requests. The Department should be updated on any changes to contact personnel in a timely manner.
- 15 A checklist confirming compliance with funding conditions relating to the grant aid will be required upon project completion.

5. Monitoring of Funding

- a) The Department may carry out on-the-spot pre or post-payment checks on a minimum 5% of project payment claims to verify compliance with funding conditions, project delivery and the reality of expenditure where appropriate. Payment claims will be selected on both a risk and random basis.
- b) The checks will include an examination of the Measure file together with any other relevant documentation identified during the course of the on-the-spot check.
- c) The Local Authority will make books and accounts available to the Comptroller and Auditor General as required.

Appendix 1 Eligible Local Authorities

Local Authority
Cork County Council
Kildare County Council
Donegal County Council
Limerick City and County Council
Mayo County Council
Meath County Council
Galway City and County Council
Clare County Council
Tipperary County Council
Wicklow County Council
Kerry County Council
Louth County Council
Wexford County Council
Fingal County Council
Kilkenny County Council
Offaly County Council
Cavan County Council
Laois County Council
Waterford County Council
Carlow County Council
Leitrim County Council
Sligo County Council
Westmeath County Council
Longford County Council
Monaghan County Council
Roscommon County Council

Appendix 2 Eligible Works

WORKS	
Green enhancement of entrances/ terraces with planting	€500
<p>Painting of building/shop front in carefully selected colours which will complement the host building and streetscape.</p> <p>Mural (agreed in advance with Local Authority)</p> <p>Decluttering and repair of shopfronts. (Decluttering can include such works as removing unnecessary signs, flagpoles, wiring etc.)</p>	€2,500
Appropriate illumination and lighting of architectural features of buildings.	
Replacement of signage with traditional wooden fascia with wooden/hand painted lettering OR contemporary design	€4,000
Canopies/Awnings complementary to the materials of the shopfront and building (including street furniture).	
Maximum per building	€8,000

Appendix 3 – Frequently asked questions

Grant Amount:

Q: Does Appendix 2 refer to max grant amount?

The figures listed under Appendix 2: Eligible Works refer to the **Maximum level of Grant aid** available in each category.

Eligibility:

Q: Are local authority owned properties eligible under the scheme?

The Local Authority cannot submit for funding for its own buildings/property. However, where others who are the resident/occupier or lease holder of Local Authority owned building engage with the project proposal and seeks to be included in the project, then LA owned buildings may be included.

Q. Can a tenant seek to have their premises included in the project if they provide a letter of consent from the building owner?

As above, the resident/occupier or lease holder of the building may seek to be included in the project proposal, with permission of the building owner.

Q. Are community buildings eligible under the Streetscape Enhancement Measure?

Community buildings are eligible.

Q. What if a similar scheme is already in place?

It's not the intention that the Department's Streetscape funding would replace an existing scheme. It should only be used to fund additional measures in those towns that already have a similar funding scheme in place.

As part of the scheme documentation circulated, there is a section in the TVRS S1 form that needs to be completed when submitting the nominated towns, where an existing scheme is already in place (Section 2.11 of the Scheme outline refers).

Timelines:

Q. Do all the works have to be completed by 31 December 2022? Will there be any leeway in this timeline?

All works must be complete by 31 December 2022 in order to avoid repayment of monies to DRCD.

Eligible Works:

Q: Is procuring for all paint together under one tender allowed?

Yes, securing supplies under economies of scale is encouraged.

Match Funding:

Q: Can match funding be sourced from other schemes?

Existing scheme allocations would not be considered reckonable as match funding for projects under the Streetscape Enhancement Measure.

Q. In relation to match funding, is it to be provided by the LA or the property owner? and who provides it in the case of an unoccupied building where ownership/title cannot be reached/ascertained ?

The provision of match funding is a matter for the LA to determine, it may be provided by the property owners, the LA, or a combination of both.

Admin Costs:

Q: Local Authorities may hire consultants to advise on the works, in respect of streetscape design, and/or colour schemes. The Department has allowed for admin costs up to 10% of works delivered, which may be used to fund consultants.

The 10% is calculated based on final total drawdown figure only, i.e. based on the uptake/delivery of the scheme. No further costs may be attributed to the cost of consultants from the funding. Should the LA wish to top up the match funding to meet consultant costs this is allowable.

Q. Is it possible to allocate the full amount of funding to eligible works or is the 10% ring fenced for administration costs?

Yes, the LA can choose to allocate the full amount of the allocation to works and forgo the 10% set aside for admin costs.

Advertising:

Q: Can we directly approach property owners rather than advertising the Streetscape Measure:

Yes, the LA may target particular areas/building owners within the selected town/village through engagement with your Community Development officers and/or local groups. However, there is still a need to advertise the Measure in order to ensure an open and fair process, and that as many eligible properties as possible within the designated area are reached.

This advertising doesn't have to be through print media; it could be through social media or local radio or otherwise. It is up to the Local Authority to choose the most appropriate means of advertising and ultimately the successful applicants.

Q. Will it be necessary in advertising the scheme to the public to provide maps of the urban areas selected?

The area of the town that is covered by the scheme must be clear. The Local Authority should decide how to inform people as to the areas covered, whether that is through maps or otherwise.