

# Township of West Lincoln

## Sustainable Downtown Smithville Community Improvement Plan



October 2009

Copyright © 2009, [Township of West Lincoln]

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, recorded or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photographic, sound, magnetic or other, without advance written permission from the owner.

This Study has been produced with the assistance of the Green Municipal Fund, a Fund financed by the Government of Canada and administered by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. Notwithstanding this support, the views expressed are the personal views of the author(s), and the Government of Canada and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities accept no responsibility for them.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
<b>1.0 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Purpose	1
1.2 Plan Content	1
<b>2.0 LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1 Municipal Act, 2001 – Section 106	3
2.2 Municipal Act, 2001- Section 365.1	3
2.3 Planning Act – Section 28 (Community Improvement)	5
2.4 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) 2005	5
2.5 Places to Grow Growth Plan	5
2.6 Smart Growth in Niagara	6
2.7 Regional Niagara Policy Plan	6
2.8 Regional Municipality of Niagara Model Urban Design Guidelines	7
2.9 Township of West Lincoln Official Plan	7
2.9.1 Vision	7
2.9.2 Goals	8
2.9.3 Land Use Policies	8
2.9.4 Heritage Conservation	10
2.9.5 Community Improvement	10
2.9.6 Development Standards and Urban Design	10
2.10 West Lincoln Comprehensive Zoning By-law No. 79-14	11
2.11 Growth Management Study	12
2.11.1 Infill, Intensification and Redevelopment	12
2.11.2 Traffic and Transportation	13
2.11.3 Servicing	13
<b>3.0 SWOT ANALYSIS</b>	<b>14</b>
3.1 District A	14
3.1.1 Weaknesses/Impediments	15
3.1.2 Strengths/Opportunities	15
3.2 District B	16
3.2.1 Weaknesses/Impediments	19
3.2.2 Strengths/Opportunities	20
3.3 District C	20
3.3.1 Weaknesses/Impediments	23
3.3.2 Strengths/Opportunities	23
3.4 District D	24
3.4.1 Weaknesses/Impediments	25
3.4.2 Strengths/Opportunities	25
3.5 Summary of Critical Needs	25
<b>4.0 COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT AREA</b>	<b>26</b>

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
<b>5.0 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION</b>	<b>28</b>
5.1 Steering Committee	28
5.2 Stakeholder Interviews	28
5.3 Public Meetings	<b>28</b>
 <b>6.0 COMMUNITY VISION</b>	 <b>30</b>
 <b>7.0 SMART GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES</b>	 <b>32</b>
7.1 Regional Smarter Niagara Program	32
7.2 Promoting Private Sector Green Building Practices	32
7.3 Environmental Sustainability of Municipal Projects	33
 <b>8.0 INCENTIVE PROGRAMS</b>	 <b>34</b>
8.1 Critical Community Improvement Needs	34
8.2 Approach	34
8.3 General Program Requirements	38
8.4 Commercial Building Facade Grant Program	40
8.4.1 Purpose	40
8.4.2 Description	40
8.4.3 Eligibility Requirements	40
8.4.4 Administration	41
8.5 Commercial Building Rehabilitation Loan Program	42
8.5.1 Purpose	42
8.5.2 Description	42
8.5.3 Eligibility Requirements	42
8.5.4 Administration	43
8.6 Infill, Intensification and Redevelopment Grant Program	43
8.6.1 Purpose	43
8.6.2 Description	43
8.6.3 Eligibility Requirements	43
8.6.4 Administration	44
8.7 Planning and Building Fees Grant Program	44
8.7.1 Purpose	44
8.7.2 Description	44
8.7.3 Eligibility Requirements	45
8.7.4 Administration	45
8.8 Development Charge Exemption Program	45
8.8.1 Purpose	45
8.8.2 Description	45
8.8.3 Eligibility Requirements	47
8.8.4 Administration	47

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
8.9 Public Art Grant Program	47
8.9.1 Purpose	47
8.9.2 Description	47
8.9.3 Eligibility Requirements	47
8.9.4 Administration	48
8.10 Marketing Program	48
<b>9.0 PUBLIC REALM ACTION PLAN</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>10.0 TARGETS FOR COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>11.0 MONITORING PROGRAM</b>	<b>56</b>
11.1 Purpose	56
11.2 Description	56
11.3 Program Adjustments	58
<b>12.0 CONCLUSION</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>List of Figures</b>	
1 Downtown Smithville Community Improvement Project Area	27
2 Vision for Downtown Smithville	30
3 Summary of Incentive Programs	35
4 Public Realm Action Plan	50
5 Variables to be Monitored	57
<b>List of Appendices</b>	
A Amendment Number 14 to the Official Plan of the Township of West Lincoln	60
B Project Steering Committee Membership	72
C Commercial Building Facade Grant Program Administration	73
D Commercial Building Rehabilitation Loan Program Administration	77
E Infill, Intensification and Redevelopment Grant Program Administration	81
F Planning and Building Fees Grant Program Administration	86
G Development Charge Exemption Program Administration	89
H Public Art Grant Program Administration	94

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Purpose**

A healthy, viable downtown is important to the economic future, civic pride and history of the Township of West Lincoln. A strong, vibrant and sustainable downtown is also a symbol of a community that promotes a high quality of life. The health of the downtown is in some ways a reflection on the community, and can serve to influence business and location decisions within West Lincoln, the Niagara Region and beyond.

The Township of West Lincoln retained RCI Consulting to prepare a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) for Downtown Smithville. Working closely with a project steering committee and Township staff, the preparation of this plan was informed and guided by an extensive program of stakeholder and community consultation, as well as input from Township Council.

While not yet exhibiting evidence of deterioration, Downtown Smithville does exhibit signs of stagnation and early signs of deterioration. A number of critical community improvement needs were identified in Downtown Smithville through a detailed analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT Analysis).

The purpose of this CIP is to:

- a) Articulate a Vision for Downtown Smithville;
- b) Define an appropriate community improvement project area;
- c) Specify a Public Realm Action Plan that contains a number of public improvement projects that are designed to provide the infrastructure and physical framework that will lead to private sector investment in the revitalization and redevelopment of Downtown Smithville;
- d) Develop a toolbox of incentive programs that can be offered by the Township to directly stimulate private sector investment in the revitalization and redevelopment of Downtown Smithville; and,
- e) Accomplish a)-e) above in a manner that is economically, environmentally and socially sustainable and helps to achieve the principles of Smart Growth.

### **1.2 Plan Content**

This CIP is divided into several sections.

Section 2.0 provides a review of the legislative authority to prepare a CIP for Downtown Smithville along with a summary of the general planning policies that apply in the Community Improvement Project Area.

Section 3.0 contains a summary of the results of the SWOT Analysis.

Section 4.0 defines the Downtown Smithville Community Improvement Project Area.

Section 5.0 provides detail on the community consultation program conducted to provide input to the preparation of the CIP.

Section 6.0 contains the Vision developed for Downtown Smithville on which the CIP is based.

Section 7.0 presents a number of recommendations to guide both private sector and public sector projects in Downtown Smithville so as to help ensure that these projects are built in a sustainable manner respecting Smart Growth principles.

Section 8.0 contains a comprehensive tool kit of municipal incentive programs specifically designed to address the critical community improvement needs in Downtown Smithville, and over time, help achieve the vision for Downtown Smithville. This section also contains a basic Marketing Program for the CIP.

Section 9.0 outlines a Public Realm Action Plan that contains some two dozen municipal actions designed to complement the municipal incentive programs and provide a public framework for private sector investment.

Section 10.0 sets out a number of quantitative community improvement targets that can be used by the Township to help measure progress on achievement of the Downtown Vision.

Section 11.0 contains a Monitoring Program designed to assist the Township in monitoring progress on implementation of the CIP and the economic and other impacts of the programs contained in the CIP.

Finally, Section 12.0 provides a brief conclusion to the CIP.

The Appendices contain a number of supporting documents, including administrative guidelines for the incentive programs contained in Section 8.0 of the CIP.

## **2.0 LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK**

The legislative authority for a municipality to prepare and adopt a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) is found in Section 28 of the *Planning Act*. Before preparing a CIP, it is important to understand what actions a municipality can and cannot undertake under Section 28 of the *Planning Act*. Therefore, the first part of Section 2.0 describes the legislative authority to prepare a CIP and the powers available to a municipality with an approved CIP under Section 28 of the *Planning Act*.

The planning principles outlined in policy documents produced by the Province, the Regional Municipality of Niagara (the Region) and the Township of West Lincoln (the Township) guided preparation of the Sustainable CIP for Downtown Smithville. The second part of Section 2.0 provides a review of these policies.

### **2.1 *Municipal Act, 2001* – Section 106**

Section 106(1) and (2) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* prohibits municipalities from directly or indirectly assisting any manufacturing business or other industrial or commercial enterprise through the granting of bonuses. Prohibited actions include:

- Giving or lending any property of the municipality, including money;
- Guaranteeing borrowing;
- Leasing or selling any municipal property at below fair market value; and
- Giving a total or partial exemption from any levy, charge or fee.

This prohibition is generally known as the “bonusing rule”. Section 106(3) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* provides an exception to this bonusing rule for municipalities exercising powers under subsection 28 (6), (7) or (7.2) of the *Planning Act* or under section 365.1 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*.

### **2.2 *Municipal Act, 2001*- Section 365.1**

Sections 365.1(2) and (3) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* allows municipalities to pass a by-law providing tax assistance to an eligible property in the form of a deferral or cancellation of part or all of the taxes levied on that property for municipal and education purposes during the rehabilitation period and the development period of the property, both as defined in Section 365.1 (1) of the *Municipal Act, 2001*. Section 365.1 of the *Municipal Act, 2001* operates within the framework of Section 28 of the *Planning Act*. A municipality with an approved community improvement plan in place that contains provisions specifying tax assistance will be permitted to provide said tax assistance for municipal purposes.

### **2.3 *Planning Act* – Section 28 (Community Improvement)**

Section 28 of the *Planning Act* allows municipalities with provisions in their official plans relating to community improvement to designate by by-law a “community improvement project area” and prepare and adopt a community improvement plan for the community improvement project area. Once the community improvement plan has been adopted by the municipality and comes into effect, the municipality may exercise authority under Section 28(6), (7) or (7.2) of the

*Planning Act* or Section 365.1 of the *Municipal Act, 2001* in order that the exception provided for in Section 106(3) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* will apply.

According to Section 28(1) of the *Planning Act*, a “community improvement project area” is defined as “a municipality or an area within a municipality, the community improvement of which in the opinion of the council is desirable because of:

- age;
- dilapidation;
- overcrowding;
- faulty arrangement;
- unsuitability of buildings; or,
- any other environmental, social or community economic development reason.

Section 28(1) of the *Planning Act* defines “community improvement” as “the planning or replanning, design or redesign, resubdivision, clearance, development or redevelopment, construction, reconstruction and rehabilitation, improvement of energy efficiency, or any of them, of a community improvement project area, and the provision of such residential, commercial, industrial, public, recreational, institutional, religious, charitable, or other uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements or facilities, or spaces therefore, as may be appropriate or necessary”.

Once a CIP has come into effect, the municipality may:

- i) acquire, hold, clear, grade or otherwise prepare land for community improvement (Section 28(3) of the *Planning Act*);
- ii) construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on land acquired or held by it in conformity with the community improvement plan (Section 28(6));
- iii) sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of any land and buildings acquired or held by it in conformity with the community improvement plan (Section 28(6)); and
- iv) make grants or loans, in conformity with the community improvement plan, to registered owners, assessed owners and tenants of land and buildings within the community improvement project area, and to any person to whom such an owner or tenant has assigned the right to receive a grant or loan, to pay for the whole or any part of the eligible costs of the community improvement plan (Section 28(7)).

Section 28(7.1) of the *Planning Act* specifies that the eligible costs of a community improvement plan for the purposes of Subsection 28(7) may include costs 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.

Section 28(7.3) of the *Planning Act* specifies that the total of all grants and loans made in respect of particular lands and buildings under Section 28(7) and (7.2) of the *Planning Act* and tax assistance provided under Section 365.1 of the *Municipal Act, 2001* in respect of the land and buildings shall not exceed the eligible cost of the community improvement plan with respect to those lands and buildings.

## 2.4 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) 2005

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) is issued under Section 3 of the *Planning Act* and is intended to provide policy direction on key Provincial interests to municipalities as they make planning decisions. The *Planning Act* requires that municipal decisions in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter “shall be consistent with” the PPS.

The Province of Ontario adopted a new PPS in 2005. This PPS is premised on sustainability principles and the stated vision of this PPS is the wise management of growth. For example, section 1.1.3.3 of the PPS 2005 states “planning authorities shall identify and promote opportunities for intensification and redevelopment where this can be accommodated taking into account existing building stock or areas, including brownfield sites, and the availability of suitable existing or planned infrastructure and public service facilities required to accommodate projected needs”. Other policies in PPS 2005 (Sections 1.1.1 a), 1.1.1 g) and 1.6.2) support the management of growth to achieve efficient development and land use patterns which sustain the financial well-being of the Province and municipalities over the long term.

PPS 2005 is organized into three principal policy sections including Building Strong Communities, Wise Use and Management of Resources, and Protecting Public Health and Safety. Within these sections, the Province outlines the guiding policy framework for land use decisions made by upper- and lower-tier municipalities. Municipal official plans are required to be consistent with all applicable Provincial policies by adopting appropriate land use designations and policies. As well, community improvement plans must be consistent with the PPS.

## 2.5 Places to Grow Growth Plan

Places to Grow, the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH), is a Provincial initiative to manage growth across the GGH, including Niagara Region, to ensure that planning decisions are coordinated with strategic investments in community infrastructure. This plan provides a framework to build stronger and more prosperous communities through the better management of growth to 2031. The Growth Plan provides policy directions that:

- Direct growth to built-up areas where the capacity exists to best accommodate the expected population, household and employment growth while providing strict criteria for settlement area boundary expansion;
- By the year 2015 and every year thereafter, require at least 40% of all residential development occurring annually within a municipality to be in the built up area;
- Require municipalities to establish intensification targets;
- Promote transit-supportive densities and a healthy mix of residential and employment land uses;
- Preserve employment lands for future economic opportunities;
- Identify and support a transportation network that links urban growth centers through an extensive multi-modal system anchored by efficient public transit and highway systems for moving people and goods;
- Plan for community infrastructure to support growth;
- Ensure suitable water and wastewater services are available to support future growth; and,

- Identify natural systems and prime agricultural areas, and enhance the conservation of these valuable resources.

## **2.6 Smart Growth in Niagara**

The Region has undertaken to define a vision for urban growth and community redevelopment and revitalization through its Smart Growth initiative, Smarter Niagara. This report was fully endorsed by the Niagara Region and its member municipalities in 2002, including the Township of West Lincoln. The Region's Smart Growth initiative is defined through 10 principles and an associated list of supporting criteria. The ten principles are:

- 1) Create a mix of land uses;
- 2) Promote a compact built form;
- 3) Offer a range of housing opportunities and choices;
- 4) Produce walkable neighbourhoods and communities;
- 5) Foster attractive communities and a sense of place;
- 6) Preserve farmland and natural resources;
- 7) Direct development to existing communities;
- 8) Provide a variety of transportation choices;
- 9) Make development predictable and cost effective; and
- 10) Encourage community stakeholder collaboration.

All of these principles apply directly to the Sustainable Downtown Smithville CIP.

## **2.7 Regional Niagara Policy Plan**

The Regional Niagara Policy Plan provides the strategic direction for all land use decisions in Niagara. The Policies of Section 3, Regional Strategy for Development and Conservation, and Section 5, Urban Areas, are of particular relevance to this CIP. The following describes these sections.

Section 3, Regional Strategy for Development and Conservation, identifies seven strategic objectives. These objectives and their supporting principles are designed to preserve and enhance Niagara's unique characteristics and quality of life, while achieving a balance between accommodating growth and development and conserving resources and protecting the environment. Of these objectives, four are of particular relevance to this CIP. These objectives include:

- To recognize the diversified opportunities and needs in Niagara by balancing both urban development and conservation of natural resources. The relevant principles are the development and efficient use of lands within urban boundaries first, and minimization of conflicts between incompatible land uses;
- To facilitate and maintain a pattern of distinctive and identifiable urban communities. The relevant principles are maintaining and developing integrated urban communities and the recognition of historical features;
- To improve regional self-reliance through long-range economic development planning and economic diversification. The relevant principles are relating employment and residential areas to discourage commuting; and,

- To undertake and support those activities which improve the quality of life for the Niagara community. The relevant principle is to recognize the importance of quality of life in community development through housing, employment, services, agriculture, environmental quality, and natural features.

Section 5, Urban Areas, outlines the Region's overall interest in quality of life as influenced by the availability of housing, employment opportunities and services within urban areas. The Region identifies its interest in balancing urban development with resource conservation through such principles as making effective use of urban land through a mix of uses and density of development along with energy conservation. To this end, Section 5 describes thirteen objectives and thirty-eight policies for urban areas. Section 5 of the Regional Niagara Policy Plan provides support for the efficient use of land within existing urban boundaries through infilling, redevelopment, and increased densities.

## **2.8 Regional Municipality of Niagara Model Urban Design Guidelines**

The Model Urban Design Guidelines for the Regional Municipality of Niagara were prepared by Brook McIlroy Planning & Urban Design and finalized in April 2005. The document, in part, implements the Region's "smart growth" agenda. These Design Guidelines provide a series of smart growth principles and a number of design guidelines to be implemented during the planning and development review and approval process.

The Design Guidelines are principally oriented to new developments or neighbourhoods in greenfield areas. However, Section 4b provides design guidance for main street environments, including guidelines for renovations and preservation and for infill developments. Section 3c provides design guidance for sidewalks and streetscaping in the public realm, including commentary on commercial area sidewalks. This guidance should be incorporated into the design of public realm improvements recommended in this CIP. As well, in January of 2008, Township Council adopted a recommendation that excerpts of the Regional Model Urban Design Guidelines be used to identify recommended design standards for new commercial and industrial developments within the Township of West Lincoln.

## **2.9 Township of West Lincoln Official Plan**

The Niagara Region approved the Township of West Lincoln Official Plan on June 16, 1998. Thirteen amendments to the Plan have been approved since 1998. The Consolidated Version of the West Lincoln Official Plan (November 2006) was reviewed. The Township recently initiated a comprehensive Official Plan review.

### **2.9.1 Vision**

The Vision Statement in Section 2.3 of the West Lincoln Official Plan notes that the key attributes of the community include prime farmland, scenic natural areas, principal residential and business areas in Smithville and scattered hamlet development. The Official Plan notes that these attributes provide an enjoyable rural and small town environment that the residents wish to maintain and that makes West Lincoln a vibrant community with a sense of place. The Official

Plan clearly notes that future growth must be managed to preserve, protect and enhance these attributes.

The Vision recognizes Smithville as the centre of residential, commercial and industrial growth in the Township with primary economic growth and employment opportunities focused on business and commercial enterprises in Smithville, and secondly, in the balance of the Township.

### **2.9.2 Goals**

One of the goals of the Official Plan is to provide a policy framework that promotes the Smithville core area as the primary commercial and business area in the municipality. The Plan also seeks to:

- promote the protection, preservation, enhancement and maintenance of heritage resources;
- provide a safe, convenient, economical and efficient transportation system; and,
- encourage more diversified employment opportunities for residents of the Township through the promotion of the industrial and commercial sector serving the needs of the residents of the Township and the traveling public.

The Vision and Goals of the Official Plan were used to guide preparation of this CIP.

### **2.9.3 Land Use Policies**

The Land Use Plan (Schedule A) of the Official Plan sets out the generalized distribution of the land use categories. Map 2, Schedule A shows the Land Use Plan for Smithville. The core of the Downtown (the CBD) is designated General Commercial. Areas surrounding the CBD are designated Urban Residential. The Township's industrial park to the northeast and east of the downtown is designated Industrial and Prestige Industrial.

#### ***2.9.3.1 Urban Residential***

The Urban Residential land use policies in Section 4.5 of the Official Plan encourage a broad range of housing forms including single and semi-detached dwellings, townhouses and walk-up apartments. The policies acknowledge that single detached and semi-detached dwellings are the preferred housing forms and will continue to dominate the character and identity of residential neighbourhoods. Other uses necessary to serve the residential area, including schools, churches, parks, neighbourhood commercial uses, home occupations, bed and breakfast establishments, day care centres, and public utility uses are also permitted within this designation.

Section 7 of the Official Plan provides Housing policies including objectives that:

- Encourage affordable and alternative forms within the Smithville urban service area;
- Encourage a range of housing types to meet the needs of all household types and income ranges within the Township; and,
- Facilitate rehabilitation, infill and redevelopment within Smithville.

The Official Plan contains a height restriction for walk-up apartments. In December of 2007, Township Council approved a recommendation supporting an increase in the maximum building height from 2.5 stories to 5 stories by Zoning By-law amendment in appropriate areas as identified in the Smithville Growth Management Plan.

### ***2.9.3.2 Commercial***

As per Section 4.8 of the Official Plan, the Commercial Land Use is divided into two designations: General Commercial and Highway Commercial, the former being applicable to Downtown Smithville and to the Village Square Mall to the east of the Downtown. The General Commercial designation permits a full range of commercial uses including retail, office and service commercial uses. This includes retail shopping centres and entertainment facilities. The General Commercial Designation also permits residential uses as secondary uses, primarily in the form of apartment dwelling units on upper storeys, provided the residential uses do not threaten the primary commercial focus.

There are several criteria identified in Section 4.8 of the Official Plan to guide redevelopment and new development in the Commercial core area of Smithville. Similar to the Urban Residential designation, maximum building height is restricted to 2.5 storeys, but Township Council has authorized an increase in the maximum building height to 5 stories. Where a major development or redevelopment project is proposed, a detailed traffic and parking study may be required.

Section 4.8 of the Official Plan also recognizes the need for additional parking in the commercial core. The Township supports the development of common parking areas in the commercial core and will work with local businesses to establish a program for the acquisition and development of additional off-street parking facilities.

Finally, Section 4.8 of the Official Plan notes that the Township recognizes the benefits of providing an aesthetically pleasing commercial core business environment. Therefore, the Township will work with local businesses to strengthen the commercial core through the restoration, maintenance and improvement of existing public and private facilities. This policy provides support for the preparation of the Sustainable Downtown Smithville CIP.

### ***2.9.3.3 Industrial***

The Industrial designation in Section 4.9 of the Official Plan permits a range of light and general industrial uses including warehousing and recycling uses, offices, service commercial, lumber and building supply yards and factory retail uses. The Industrial designation also provides separate policies for Prestige Industrial use. The Prestige Industrial designation is located at the eastern gateway to Smithville on the north side Regional Road 20. Prestige Industrial uses include light industrial uses, offices, research and development, hotel, motel and banquet facilities, commercial recreational uses and service commercial uses. Outdoor storage is generally prohibited in the Prestige Industrial area and higher standards of professional design, landscaping and amenity areas apply in the Prestige Industrial area.

### ***2.9.3.4 Special Policy Areas***

Section 4.12 of the Official Plan contains policies for Special Policy Areas. Special Policy Area 3 is the milling operation of Niagara Grain and Feed Limited located in Downtown Smithville. The policy in Special Policy Area 3 allows the milling operation to continue and the use is specifically zoned in the Zoning By-law (C2 By-law No. 91-50, Amendment Number 4). However, the Special Policy notes that when the site is redeveloped, the policies of Section 4.8 (Commercial) shall apply.

#### **2.9.4 Heritage Conservation**

Section 8 of the Official Plan stresses the importance of heritage conservation in West Lincoln. The objective of Council is to preserve and enhance structures, buildings and properties of historical, cultural and architectural significance. In addition to the standard Council ability to designate buildings, properties and districts under the *Ontario Heritage Act, 1990* and establish a Local Architectural Advisory Committee (LACAC), this section of the Official Plan contains other policies to promote heritage preservation and enhancement. This includes:

- The restriction of major development or redevelopment in close proximity to residential areas having historical or architectural merit where such development will detract from the heritage character or stability of the residential areas; and,
- Encouraging proposed commercial development to utilize buildings with historic character and underutilized and vacant buildings.

#### **2.9.5 Community Improvement**

As a result of the review of Community Improvement policies in the Official Plan conducted as part of the Background Policy Report (December 2007), new Official Plan policies for Community Improvement were adopted via Amendment by Township Council in early 2008. This Official Plan Amendment was approved by the Region in June of 2008. The new Community Improvement policies are contained in Appendix A. The new policies:

- a) Specify clear goals and objectives for community improvement;
- b) Include criteria to be considered when designating a community improvement project area;
- c) Include provision for the offering of grants and loans to promote community improvement; and,
- d) Outline a range of actions that can be taken by the municipality to promote community improvement.

#### **2.9.6 Development Standards and Urban Design**

The Township of West Lincoln does not have approved urban design guidelines for development in the municipality. A desire has been expressed by the Township to develop and adopt basic urban design guidelines for Downtown Smithville to complement the Sustainable Downtown Smithville CIP and help guide implementation.

The preparation of urban design guidelines will assist the Township in articulating its development principles and communicating them to the Downtown community and the development industry. These guidelines will also assist in the design of public works in Downtown Smithville, the preservation of the architectural heritage of the area, and facade improvements.

These urban design guidelines should incorporate policies for rehabilitation and restoration of existing buildings, requirements for enhanced articulation and fenestration along the main street, and increased requirements for landscaping. In particular, the urban design guidelines should consider:

- building massing, profile, height and transition;
- architectural character, building materials, entrances and sight lines;

- pedestrian streetscape, street edging, landscaping, and integration with public spaces;
- microclimatic conditions (sun, shadow, wind);
- signage;
- parking areas and edging; and,
- compatibility with adjacent areas and sensitivity to heritage buildings and neighbourhoods.

In light of recent changes to the *Planning Act* made through Bill 51, municipalities now have the ability through the site plan approval process to request sustainable design elements adjoining any highway under a municipality's jurisdiction, including without limitation trees, shrubs, hedges, plantings or other ground cover, permeable paving materials, street furniture, curb ramps, waste and recycling containers and bicycle parking facilities. This could allow the Township to request street furniture and other features along Station Street/ Griffin Street and possibly other streets within Downtown Smithville.

In January of 2008, Township Council adopted a recommendation that the Niagara Region Model Urban Design Guidelines be used to identify recommended design standards for new commercial and industrial development. This use of the Region's Model Urban Design Guidelines as a resource by the Township to guide development and redevelopment in Downtown Smithville until such time as the Township has prepared and adopted its own Urban Design Guidelines for Downtown Smithville is advisable.

## **2.10 West Lincoln Comprehensive Zoning By-law No. 79-14**

The Township of West Lincoln Comprehensive Zoning By-law No. 79-14 was passed by Council on March 5, 1979 and approved by the Ontario Municipal Board on September 24, 1980. The Consolidated Version (November 2006) was reviewed.

The majority of the lands within Downtown Smithville are zoned General Commercial (C2) Central Business District Zone (CBD) as shown in Map 2 to Schedule A of Zoning By-law No. 79-14. The C2 zone permits a broad range of uses including but not limited to: retail and service shops, restaurants, business and professional offices, banks, hotels, places of entertainment, and public and private parking. Residential uses are permitted as secondary uses in the C2 zone, but these residential uses cannot be located in the basement or on the ground floor of a commercial building.

The CBD zone contains significantly reduced lot frontage, area, coverage, front yard and side yard setbacks as compared to the C2 zone. In fact, in the CBD zone, no minimum is required for lot frontage and lot area, no maximum is set for lot coverage, and no minimum front or side yard setback is required for buildings abutting Regional Roads 14 and 20. Maximum building height in the CBD zone and C2 zone is 10 metres. While the permissive lot frontage, area, coverage and setback requirements provide a favourable planning environment for infill, intensification and redevelopment projects, the 10 metre height restriction is a limiting factor. However as already noted, in December of 2007, Township Council approved a recommendation supporting an increase in the maximum building height by Zoning By-law amendment in appropriate areas as identified in the Smithville Growth Management Plan.

Lands to the north of the CBD along Station Street are zoned Residential (R2) and Institutional (I). The R2 zone permits single detached residential dwellings. A newer residential subdivision is located to the northwest of the CBD in the R2 zone.

Lands to the west of the CBD out to Wade Road are zoned R2 and Residential Multiple (RM2) which permits semi-detached, group/street townhouses and up to fourplex dwellings.

South of the CBD along Canborough Road, lands are zoned Hazard Lands (H) adjacent to the Twenty Mile Creek, Residential (R1), Residential (R2) and Institutional (I).

East of the CBD along St. Catharines Street, lands on the north side of the street are zoned R2 changing to Highway Commercial (C3) and General Commercial (C2) at the Village Square Mall. On the south side of St. Catharine Street, the lands are zoned R2 and R1.

## **2.11 Growth Management Study**

### **2.11.1 Infill, Intensification and Redevelopment**

The Niagara Region is undertaking a Growth Management Strategy in response to the Places to Grow Plan and the requirement to meet density targets. The Township of West Lincoln is also completing a Strategic Growth Management Plan (SGMP) to determine the need and location for expansion of the Smithville Urban Area Boundary. To date several areas have been identified as possible areas for expansion and further review is currently being undertaken to narrow down the options.

In light of new Provincial planning policy and legislation, including the PPS and the Places to Grow Plan, the scope of the SGMP includes the need to:

- Identify infill/intensification areas and establish targets for intensification;
- Preserve employment lands for future economic opportunities;
- Identify and support a transportation network that links urban growth areas by an efficient road system for moving goods and people;
- Ensure sustainable water and wastewater services are available to support growth;
- Identify natural systems and prime agricultural areas, and enhance conservation opportunities in the consideration of settlement area boundary expansion;
- Provide for increased density targets for the expansion lands; and,
- Assess opportunities for capturing growth from other communities affected by the Greenbelt Plan.

The SGMP Status Report No. 5 (November 2007) prepared by BLS Planning Associates identifies 15 potential sites for infill/ intensification within the existing urban boundary. Two of these sites are in the CBD, while another four sites are in the Downtown area. The two sites in the CBD are identified as having potential for high density (26 to 45 units per ha.) while the other four sites are identified as having potential for medium density (16 to 25 units per ha.). According to Status Report No. 5, the six sites present a theoretical potential of 102 units through infill and intensification. However, as noted in Status Report No. 5, these theoretical infill/intensification numbers are based on the Township's consideration of higher density development exceeding existing building heights. Therefore, the practical capacity is less than

102 units. Utilizing the 75% of theoretical units applied in Status Report No. 5, the practical capacity for infill and intensification units on the six sites would be 77 units.

As part of the Sustainable Downtown Smithville CIP development process, opportunities for intensification, infill and redevelopment and smart growth were identified at the block level within the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area. The sites identified in the SGMP Status Report No. 5 were taken into consideration. As well, other sites were identified as part of the CIP study as having potential for infill, intensification and redevelopment. If all of these identified sites in Downtown Smithville were redeveloped, the net impact in the Downtown Smithville Community Improvement Project Area would be the:

- addition of approximately 46 net residential dwelling units and 67,107 sq.ft. of net residential dwelling space;
- addition of approximately 77,222 net sq.ft. of commercial space;
- addition of approximately 22,320 sq.ft. of institutional space; and,
- removal of approximately 15,640 sq.ft. of industrial space.

### **2.11.2 Traffic and Transportation**

According to the November 2006 report prepared by BLS Planning Associates, a draft transportation analysis was prepared in 2001 based on 2000 data. As part of the SGMP, a full review of traffic and transportation networks will be done as part of the Transportation Analysis. More specifically, the Transportation Analysis will determine the effects that alternative road networks would have on core area operations. This Transportation Analysis is an important part of the SGMP as it relates to Downtown Smithville in terms of identifying issues, opportunities, and future solutions to the traffic problems currently being faced downtown.

A problem in Downtown Smithville is traffic congestion. There are bottlenecks at the traffic light in the centre of Town especially during peaks hours. In addition to traffic congestion, pedestrians often have difficulty crossing the main street (Griffin Street), e.g., it is very difficult to cross from the Foodland Plaza to the Royal Bank. Parking in the core is also limited. However, the parking issue has improved considerably with the construction of the Convenience Street Parking Lot at the intersection of Griffin, Brock and St. Catharine Streets.

### **2.11.3 Servicing**

As part of the SGMP, in September of 2006, Philips Engineering Ltd. prepared a study of Water and Wastewater Servicing in Smithville. The purpose of the study was to investigate the capacity of existing infrastructure and identify any upgrades required to service potential development areas outside of the existing urban boundary.

The Philips Engineering Study does not appear to have made a sewer or water capacity allocation for infill, intensification and redevelopment in the Downtown core. However, based on the net impact of infill, intensification and redevelopment opportunities in Downtown Smithville, the demand for additional servicing capacity in Downtown Smithville is expected to be only a very small component of the additional demand for sewer and water capacity in Smithville, and will therefore have a nominal impact on overall servicing requirements.

### 3.0 SWOT ANALYSIS

In addition to the review of the legislative and policy framework, a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis of current conditions in Downtown Smithville was conducted to guide preparation of the CIP. This SWOT Analysis included input on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in Downtown Smithville provided by:

- a) A review of the built form, physical characteristics and conditions, land uses and economic activity in the Downtown based on several walking tours of the Downtown;
- b) Township staff;
- c) The project steering committee; and,
- d) The public during the first public meeting.

The detailed SWOT Analysis of current conditions in Downtown Smithville is contained in the Current Conditions and Best Practices Report (January 2008). A summary of the SWOT Analysis is presented below. Based on a review of building types and condition, land use, urban design, and economic characteristics, Downtown Smithville was divided into four districts for purposes of the SWOT Analysis. These districts are shown in Figure 1.

#### 3.1 District A

District A is the northern gateway into and out of Downtown Smithville. The TH&B Rail line at the northern boundary of the district is not entirely level and would benefit from improvement. A lumber yard dominates the view north just outside the north end of the district. The primary land use in District A is residential, with some commercial and institutional uses.

The Smithville Historic Train Station and Merritt Funeral Home are well preserved historical buildings located at the north end of the district with the one storey Train Station being a designated heritage building. Just to the south of the Historic Train Station is a large two storey industrial building with 1 storey commercial office frontage. This building appears to be in fair to poor condition. Large cement blocks have been placed around the parking area adjacent to this industrial building and these cement blocks detract from the image and views of the Historic Train Station.



Heading south on Station Street, the west side of the street contains approximately a dozen single detached two storey residential dwellings. These dwellings are older building stock and located fairly close to the sidewalk. The condition of these dwellings ranges from good to poor with a

few of the dwellings exhibiting exterior deterioration. Some of the properties also exhibit outside storage.

The south end of the district forms part of the western gateway to the Downtown. A vacant two storey commercial building (former Starlite Restaurant) sits on the north side of West Street at the western gateway entrance to Downtown. The lands behind (north) of this vacant two storey commercial building are vacant and the Township has received proposals for residential development of these lands. The residential property on the northwest corner of Station Street and West Street beside the former Starlite Restaurant contains vacant underutilized lands. The combination of these underutilized lands and the vacant Starlite Restaurant creates a hole or dead space in the street fabric at this important gateway intersection and provides a poor image at this key entrance/exit to Downtown.



### 3.1.1 Weaknesses/ Impediments

- District lacks a commercial identity, i.e., there are few commercial buildings in the district.
- Poor image of the Downtown resulting from some uses at the northern gateway.
- Incompatibility of the Historic Train Station and adjacent industrial/commercial use – parking issues.
- Condition of industrial buildings/outside storage.
- Condition of some single detached residential dwellings.
- Vacant building and underutilized lands at the southern end of the district forming the gateway to the Downtown from the west.
- Lack of landscaping at key entrances and around parking areas, e.g., Historic Train Station, Station Street – West Street gateway.

### 3.1.2 Strengths/ Opportunities

- Historic Train Station anchors the district and provides architectural character and history.
- The churches and funeral home provide points of heritage and architectural interest.
- Most of the residential building stock is in fair to good condition and provides opportunities for conversion to commercial/office uses or mixed use (commercial at grade, residential above).

- The vacant commercial building at the southern gateway and adjacent underutilized lands presents an opportunity for infill development and significant improvement of this gateway and therefore the image of the Downtown.

### 3.2 District B

District B is the commercial core of Downtown Smithville containing a traditional pedestrian-oriented main street (Griffin Street) with “main street” style retail at grade and residential or office uses above. Griffin Street is a compact downtown street with the majority of the commercial activity in the Downtown in a 200 metre section from West Street to St. Catharine Street.



The buildings on the west side of Griffin Street are predominantly large two and two and a half storey buildings with a variety of commercial uses ranging from personal services such as a tanning salon and a barber shop, to a hardware store and a patio furniture and pool shop, to an accounting office and a real estate office. These buildings are generally in good condition, including the facades and several of these buildings are of historical and architectural interest. However, the facades of some of the buildings have been covered with siding or other materials and these facades would

benefit from restoration. Some of the store entrances and signage are also dated and could be improved.

At the south end of the district on the west side of Griffin Street, there are two 2-storey brick buildings. These buildings including the facades are in fair to poor condition with missing brickwork, fascia, deteriorated windows, doors and entryways. One building houses a lodge and co-op nursery school while the other houses a financial services office. These two buildings demonstrate reuse potential, or in combination with the vacant lot to the north, these properties could provide a large site for a high visibility commercial/mixed use infill project. There is a vacant lot near the south end of the district on the west side of Griffin Street. This vacant lot presents an opportunity for new commercial or mixed use (commercial/ residential infill) at this central location.



Benches and seating for pedestrians has been provided in front of some of the buildings on the west side of Griffin Street. Steps down from the sidewalk with railings have been installed to accommodate the elevation change at the pedestrian crossing on the west side of Griffin Street at the intersection with St. Catharines Street. However, these steps and the grade change can be difficult to navigate, especially in winter.



There is a public lane (McMurchie Lane) between Kalinka Sports and Hodgkins Hardware. This lane leads to the rear of these buildings. The Employment Health Centre and a beauty spa are located at the end of this lane. The Township owns a property approximately 3 acres in size at the rear of McMurchie Lane. This property may provide the opportunity to provide additional parking and to connect McMurchie Lane to Smits Cove Street to the south.

Access to residential apartments on the second floor of the buildings facing Griffin Street and parking for these apartments is from McMurchie Lane. The condition of the rear facades of some of the buildings on Griffin Street and the garages and accessory buildings visible from McMurchie Lane is poor. There was also evidence of graffiti. The poor condition of rear facades and accessory buildings is also an issue in District C.



As one enters the Downtown from West Street, the predominant view on the east side of Griffin Street is a vacant lot. This vacant lot at a key entrance to Downtown Smithville reflects a poor image as it is virtually the first thing one sees on entering the Downtown from West Street. As a result of the configuration of the T-intersection at West Street and Griffin Street, access to this lot would be difficult. The pedestrian islands at this key intersection also contain no landscaping or visual features to announce and enhance this western gateway to Downtown.



The Smithville Centre Shopping Plaza lies just to the south of this vacant lot. This L-shaped plaza is the largest in the Downtown with the other two being small strip malls. This plaza contains a grocery store, a chiropractor, dental office and pharmacy. The mall parking lot has two entrances off of Griffin Street and one off of Brock Street. The parking lot is not edged or screened and does not provide an attractive view from Griffin Street or Brock Street. The mall itself including its main signage is dated and lacks architectural appeal.

Parking in the core is limited. However, the parking issue has improved considerably with the construction of the Convenience Street Parking Lot off Griffin Street in the core of the Downtown at the south end of the district, just before Griffin Street intersects with St. Catharines Street. Access to this parking lot is from Griffin Street and egress is onto Brock Street.

A problem in Downtown Smithville is traffic congestion. There are bottlenecks at the traffic light in the centre of town at Griffin Street and St. Catharine Street, especially during peaks hours. While Griffin Street itself is pedestrian scaled and oriented, there are no crosswalks on Griffin Street north of its intersection with St. Catharine Street. Combined with elevation changes and the inability for pedestrians to see vehicle traffic heading west on St. Catharine Street and turning north on Griffin Street, it is difficult and potentially dangerous for pedestrians to cross Griffin main street, e.g., it is very difficult to cross from the Smithville Centre Plaza to the Royal Bank.

Immediately to the south of the parking lot is a two storey building housing a nail salon, a branch of the CIBC and Vance Auctions. The second storey of the building houses residential apartments with balconies facing out onto St. Catharine Street. This block and metal clad building at this high visibility/high traffic intersection is not particularly attractive, especially the view looking directly north to the building from St. Catharine Street.

This high visibility location could benefit from facade improvements. The aesthetic improvement of this building or even its replacement with a building that is more architecturally compatible with the buildings on the west side of Griffin Street would help to improve the image of Downtown. As well, there is a sterile parking area to the south of this building with no landscaping and weak street edging. This provides for stark views when transitioning from Griffin Street left onto St. Catharine Street.



To the east of Griffin Street, there is a mix of commercial and residential uses along Brock Street and College Street. The interface between these commercial and residential uses sometimes presents aesthetic challenges. For example, the grocery store loading dock area on the west side of Brock Street is not screened from the two storey residential uses on the east side of Brock Street. These residential dwellings are in fair to good condition.



The small one storey retail plaza at the intersection of Brock Street, St. Catharine Street and College Street houses a pizzeria/restaurant and a variety store. The building is of block construction and there was graffiti on the west side of the building. Again, this high visibility building at the western gateway to the Downtown on St. Catharine Street provides no architectural interest. The parking lot is not landscaped or edged.

The vista looking west as one enters the Downtown from the east along St. Catharine Street is of the attractive period commercial buildings on the west side of Griffin Street. However, the small strip plaza and the mixed use building at the corner of Griffin, St. Catharine and Brock Streets significantly detract from this western gateway vista to the Downtown.

In total there are over 25 businesses in District B. Few if any of these businesses appear to be vacant. The location of two banks and retail stores such as a hardware store and sports store in this district is very positive. There is an interesting mix of stores, services and offices in District B. However, a high concentration of the businesses in this district are personal services. There are few restaurants, cafes, antique shops or specialty stores one might expect to find in the core of a small Downtown. The addition of these types of uses through some of the available infill and conversion opportunities would help to diversify the mix of commercial uses in Downtown Smithville and attract more residents and visitors to shop and dine in Downtown Smithville.

### 3.2.1 Weaknesses/ Impediments

- Vacant and underutilized lands, especially at gateway locations such as West Street and the main downtown intersection.
- Lack of building maintenance/restoration/rehabilitation on some commercial buildings.
- Dated and tired facades and entrance ways on some commercial buildings.
- Condition of rear facades and accessory buildings of some mixed use (commercial/residential) buildings.
- Lack of street furniture and public amenity/gathering areas.
- Lack of signage and landscaping at major gateways to the downtown.
- Lack of streetscaping and landscaping, screening and edging of parking areas.
- Traffic congestion during peak travel hours.
- Lack of parking during peak times.
- Lack of crosswalks on Griffin Street.
- Lack of cafes, restaurants, and specialty retail stores.

### 3.2.2 Strengths/ Opportunities

- Easily accessible from all directions and nearby newer residential subdivisions.
- Compact, traditional 2-3 storey “main street” provides a pedestrian scale shopping environment and opportunities for live-work relationships.
- Architecturally and historically significant buildings give the area an identity and character.
- Building stock along Griffin Street is generally in good condition with the exception of a few buildings.
- The access from West Street and the intersection of three main roads in the downtown core creates opportunities for visually interesting gateways.
- Two banks, a grocery store, hardware store and a mix of commercial uses including goods, services and professional offices provide a strong business foundation.
- Very low business vacancy rate.
- Improved availability of parking with construction of the public parking lot.

### 3.3 District C

District C is the southern gateway into and out of Downtown Smithville. Griffin Street turns into Canborough Street at the southern boundary of the district where it crosses Twenty Mile Creek. This mixed use district contains a number of businesses, including the Niagara Grain and Feed Company, a large industrial operation on the west side of Griffin Street. This district also contains single detached and apartment residential uses. At the northern boundary of District C on the west side of Griffin Street, there is a large two storey residential property on the northwest corner of Griffin Street and Smits Cove Street that presents an opportunity for infill development.

Smits Cove Street leads to a cul de sac and vacant Township owned land that is connected to McMurchie Lane behind the commercial properties on Griffin Street. The LA residential Apartment Complex lies at the southwest corner of Griffin Street and Smits Cove Street. Just to the south and attached to the apartment complex is a small building housing a mechanical systems business.

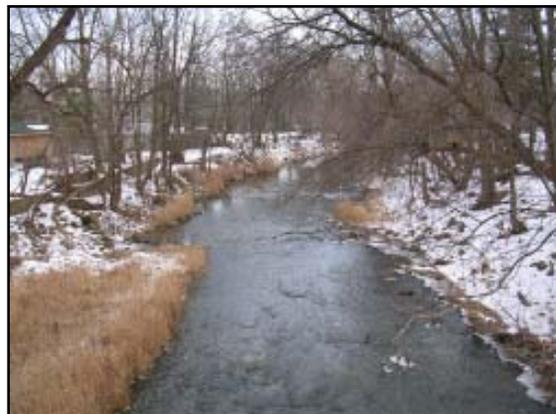
The Niagara Grain and Feed operation sits on a large property on the west side of Griffin Street just north of Twenty Mile Creek. The tall mill building is built to the street line and dominates the view both north and south along Griffin Street. The sidewalk on the west side of Griffin Street ends at the Niagara Grain and Feed property, forcing pedestrians to cross over to the east side of the street. Due to the bend in road and the rate of traffic on Griffin Street/ Canborough Road, crossing the road at this point can be potentially dangerous for pedestrians.

Noise emanating from the Niagara Grain and Feed operation can be heard in the residential neighbourhood to the east. As well, a perceptible odour can also sometimes be detected coming from the mill operation. However, both the noise and odour impacts fell off quickly as one headed north or south along Griffin Street or east along Mill Street further into the residential neighbourhood. Nevertheless, this industrial operation would be more appropriately located in the Township’s industrial area.



The property on which the Niagara Grain and Feed Company is located is the largest single redevelopment opportunity in Downtown Smithville. While the Niagara Grain and Feed operation is a local landmark, this property, with its strategic southern gateway location, provides an excellent opportunity for mixed use (residential/commercial) and to create a high visibility southern gateway redevelopment project for the Downtown.

The southern boundary of District C is Twenty Mile Creek. This creek provides a unique and picturesque entry into the Downtown from the south, particularly for pedestrians. Yet, as with the other gateways to Downtown, there is no signage or landscaping. While any signage and/or landscaping in this location should be modest and sensitive so as not to overwhelm the natural setting, this area presents another opportunity for the Township to signify entrance to Downtown Smithville.



On the east side of Griffin Street, heading north from Mill Street, there are several residential properties with two storey residential dwellings. With the exception of one new house among these residential properties, these residential dwellings are in fair to poor condition. Again, this may present an opportunity to utilize these underutilized properties for intensified residential uses or mixed commercial/residential use.



Between the residential uses and St. Catharine Street, there are seven commercial buildings. Four buildings grouped together range from one to two storeys in height and from block and brick construction to siding. This group of commercial buildings is characterized by an irregular, low density and generally unattractive building fabric. The buildings are in fair to poor condition with missing brickwork and fascia, deteriorated windows and doors, dated and tired facades and several vacant storefronts.

In stark contrast to the four deteriorated commercial buildings, the remaining grouping of three buildings on the east side of Griffin Street anchors the southeast corner of Griffin Street and St. Catharine Street. These one and two storey brick buildings are in good condition with continuity of building scale and details and uniformity of architectural styles.



Just to the north of these buildings is the Murgatroyd Parkette constructed by the Township on the site of a former derelict building that was demolished by the Township. While this parkette provides some public amenity space in the core of the Downtown, it is a small space that is in shade for much of the day and is too small to be effectively utilized for public gatherings. In between the commercial buildings on Griffin Street is a narrow public laneway (Frank Street) that is in poor condition and is uninviting. Frank Street leads from Griffin Street to St. Catharine Street.

Heading east along St. Catharine Street, there is a small commercial building. This building is one and a half storeys and clad in siding. The building is in poor condition with graffiti on the side of the building. The building houses a restaurant. The rear of this building leads to the aforementioned Frank Street. Some of the residential properties, buildings and accessory buildings to the south of Frank Street are also in poor condition. This includes rusted metal roofs, mismatching and discoloured siding and outside storage.



Finally, farther to the east on St. Catharine Street, there is a new two storey commercial building that was constructed in 2007. The architectural style of the building complements the historical buildings in the Downtown. Also, the building has a continuous street wall and reduced setback. This enhances its pedestrian scale. This appears to be the only newer commercial building to be constructed in the Downtown in recent years.

There is a lack of parking in District C. This includes dedicated parking areas and on street parking spaces.

### 3.3.1 Weaknesses/ Impediments

- Underutilized residential and commercial lands
- A number of residential and commercial buildings in very poor condition.
- High business vacancy rates – highest in the Downtown.
- Visual impact of the Niagara Grain and Feed Operation. Some noise and odour impact.
- No sidewalk on west side of Griffin Street past Niagara Grain and Feed.
- Lack of a southern gateway to the Downtown.
- Lack of parking.

### 3.3.2 Strengths/ Opportunities

- Good potential for infill and intensification of underutilized residential and commercial lands.
- Heritage buildings in good condition provide a southern anchor for the core Street Downtown commercial area.
- Picturesque natural setting with Twenty Mile Creek.

- Close proximity of existing and proposed new residential uses to the west.
- Construction of a new commercial building.

### 3.4 District D

This district is the southernmost district in the study area and comprises the west side of Canborough Street from Twenty Mile Creek south to Colver Street. This district contains two institutional uses, the South Lincoln High School and Smithville Family Health Centre, as well as a few residential properties. Properties on the east side of Canborough Street between Mill Street and Colver Street were not included in this district and the Community Improvement Project Area because these properties are all residential and are all in fair to very good condition and do not generally require improvement. In fact, two of these residential properties are restored heritage properties.

A derelict industrial building in District D that was in very poor condition with a rusting metal roof, boarded up and broken windows, and peeling paint, was demolished in May of 2009. Replacement of this demolished building with a new commercial or mixed use building would help to improve the overall image of the Downtown, especially from the southern gateway.



The South Lincoln High School and Smithville Family Health Centre properties have been included in the Community Improvement Project Area with an eye to the future. These institutional buildings appear to be in good condition and both are currently operational and functional. The Smithville Family Health Centre was renovated in the summer of 2008. But, as the years pass and these institutional buildings reach the end of their functional life cycle, their adaptive reuse or demolition and replacement by other uses in the future may be aided by inclusion within the Community Improvement Project Area.



### **3.4.1 Weaknesses/ Impediments**

- Underutilized residential lands
- Derelict industrial building
- Derelict building on high school property

### **3.4.2 Strengths/ Opportunities**

- Proximity to Township Hall
- Future large scale redevelopment potential

## **3.5 Summary of Key Critical Needs**

Based on the SWOT Analysis, certain key critical weaknesses that represent impediments to the revitalization of downtown emerged. These impediments can be grouped into two categories. The first deals with land use, building and economic conditions on privately owned lands. These impediments include:

- a) Dated and tired building facades and the poor condition of rear facades;
- b) Lack of building maintenance;
- c) Vacant, derelict and underutilized buildings and lands, especially at major gateways and intersections;
- d) Lack of investment in building rehabilitation, redevelopment and new building construction;
- e) Business vacancies in part of the Downtown and a lack of certain types of businesses; and,
- f) A lack of sustainable forms of development.

These impediments will be primarily addressed by the comprehensive set of incentive programs outlined in Section 8.0 of this CIP.

The second category of impediments deals with public space including the streetscape, public amenities and traffic. These impediments include:

- f) No gateways at the major entrances to the Downtown;
- g) Amount and speed of traffic through the Downtown, especially truck traffic;
- h) Inadequate streetscaping and landscaping along Griffin Street;
- i) Lack of a pedestrian crossing(s) on Griffin Street;
- j) Condition of the sidewalk along Griffin Street, elevation changes, and lack of a sidewalk on the west side of Griffin Street past Niagara Grain and Feed;
- k) Lack of edging and screening of parking areas;
- l) No public gathering space in the Downtown;
- m) Overhead utilities along Griffin Street; and,
- n) Unattractive mobile signs

These impediments will be primarily addressed by the Public Realm Action Plan outlined in Section 9.0 of this CIP.

#### **4.0 COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT AREA**

The recommended community improvement project area (project area) for the Sustainable Downtown Smithville CIP is shown in Figure 1. This area was recommended based on the existence and prevalence of physical, land use and economic impediments, and opportunities for infill, intensification, redevelopment and public realm improvement projects as identified in the SWOT Analysis. Only properties and areas requiring community improvement and properties that presented unique opportunities for public realm improvement projects were included within the community improvement project area boundary. Conversely, areas and properties that do not require community improvement were not included in the community improvement project area.

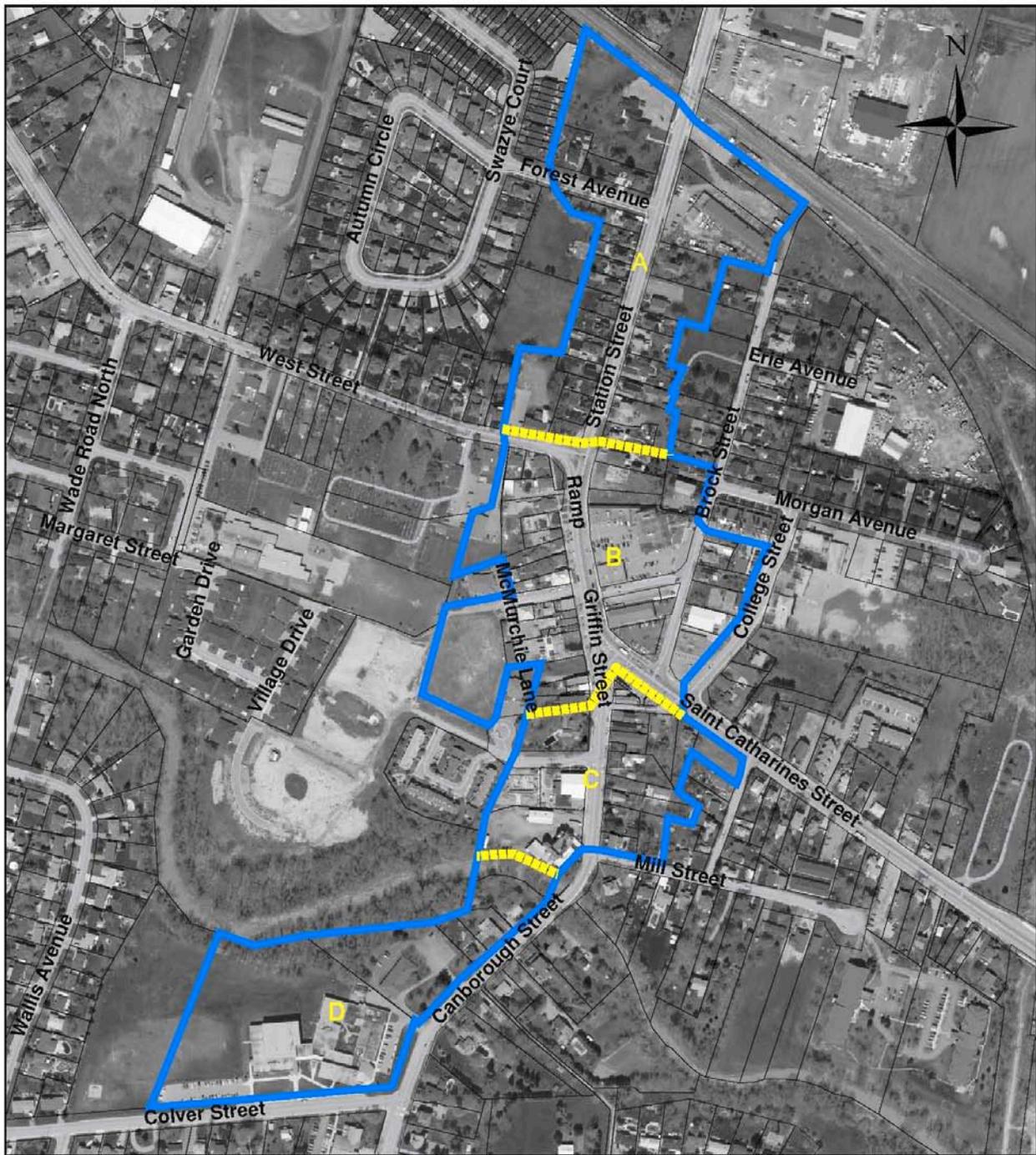
The northern boundary of the community improvement project area is the TH&B Rail line. The rail line not only presents a physical delineation of the Downtown area, but also the type and density of land use changes north of the rail line. Between the rail line and West Street, the area to the west of the community improvement project area consists of vacant land and a newer residential subdivision. The residential properties along West Street are generally in good condition and therefore were not included in the community improvement project area. To the east, residential properties on Brock Street, Erie Avenue and Morgan Avenue were also generally found to be in good condition and therefore were not included in the community improvement project area.

Moving south into the commercial core (District B), the lands to the west of the community improvement project area are vacant lands or residential subdivisions. The vacant Township owned lands behind McMurchie Lane were included in the project area because these lands represent an opportunity to provide a central public gathering/amenity space in the Downtown. The lands to the east of the community improvement project area include a new residential subdivision currently under construction off of College Street, and heading east along Saint Catharines Street, the condition of buildings improves outside the community improvement project area.

In Districts C, the lands to the east of the community improvement project area between St. Catharines Street and Mill Street were evaluated for inclusion in the community improvement project area, but all of these lands were residential and the condition of the dwellings in this area was found to be fair to good. Therefore, this area was not included in the community improvement project area.

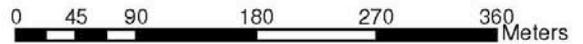
Similarly, in District D, properties on the east side of Canborough Street between Mill Street and Colver Street were not included in the Community Improvement Project Area because these properties are all residential, in fair to very good condition, and do not generally require improvement. While in good condition, the South Lincoln High School and Smithville Family Health Centre properties were included in the recommended Community Improvement Project Area as a result of their strategic location, large size, and an eye to the future use of these institutional buildings.

Figure 1 Downtown Smithville Community Improvement Project Area



**Legend**

-  Recommended Community Improvement Project Area
-  District Boundaries



Source: Township of West Lincoln Planning Department

## **5.0 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION**

### **5.1 Steering Committee**

A project steering committee was formed to help guide preparation of the Downtown Smithville CIP. The committee was comprised of several key stakeholders. The members of the steering committee are listed in Appendix B. Several meetings of the steering committee were held throughout the preparation of the CIP. These meetings allowed the consultant and Township staff to:

- provide the Steering Committee with progress updates;
- discuss key issues with the Steering Committee;
- obtain comments and input from the Steering Committee on draft reports prior to presentation of these reports to Council and the public; and,
- coordinate public meetings and other steps required to complete the CIP.

### **5.2 Stakeholder Interviews**

A series of face-to-face and telephone interviews were conducted with seven key stakeholders in Downtown Smithville during July 11 and August of 2008. All of these stakeholders own property in the Downtown and five of the seven currently operate businesses in the Downtown.

The key stakeholders were asked to consider the following questions prior to meeting with a member of the consulting team to discuss their answers to these questions and any other comments about Downtown Smithville and the CIP initiative that the key stakeholders wished to make.

- What types of improvements to both private and publicly owned lands would you like to see in Downtown Smithville?
- What types of municipal actions and other actions are required to advance and promote the revitalization of Downtown Smithville?
- What types of incentive programs (if any) would you like to see implemented to help revitalize Downtown Smithville?

The answers to these questions provided by the stakeholders and ensuing discussion helped to guide preparation of the proposed incentive programs and public realm improvements that were presented at the second public meeting.

### **5.3 Public Meetings**

The first Open House/Public Meeting and Workshop was held with downtown stakeholders on February 7, 2008. The purpose of the meeting was to present the results of the SWOT Analysis, discuss the key impediments to and opportunities for downtown improvement and revitalization, and to develop a Vision for Downtown Smithville. Invitations were sent to all the steering committee members and others who had indicated a desire to participate. The Public Meeting/Workshop was also advertised in the local newspaper.

Approximately 18 members of the public attended the first public meeting and most stayed for the workshop sessions that followed the formal presentation of the SWOT Analysis by the consultant. The attendees assembled into two workshop groups to discuss whether any strengths or weaknesses had been overlooked, and to discuss the relative importance of the impediments to revitalization of Downtown Smithville. The workshop groups were also asked to develop a Vision for the Downtown, and again provide an indication as to which changes highlighted in the Vision were most important. Finally, comment sheets were made available to all those in attendance at the public meeting. Nine (9) comment sheets containing written vision descriptions were received, and along with the comments made at the public meeting and the results of the Visioning workshop, these were used to help develop the Vision for Downtown Smithville.

The second public meeting was held on February 2, 2009. The primary purpose of this meeting was to present and obtain feedback on the proposed public realm improvements, incentive programs, and community improvement targets for Downtown Smithville. Comment sheets were again made available at this public meeting. Eight (8) comment sheets were received, and along with the comments made at the public meeting, these were used to help revise and finalize the public realm improvements, incentive programs, and community improvement targets for Downtown Smithville.

## 6.0 COMMUNITY VISION

The Vision for Downtown Smithville was developed based on a number of inputs including the results of the SWOT Analysis, input from the first public meeting (visioning workshop and comment sheets) and input from the project steering committee. The Vision for Downtown Smithville is presented in Figure 2 below and focuses on the key elements of:

- Land Use and Building Condition;
- Streetscape
- Public Amenities
- Traffic and Parking

**Figure 2 Vision for Downtown Smithville**

<p><b>Land Use and Building Condition</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are more commercial and mixed use buildings in the Downtown housing a greater variety of businesses that act as attractors for people to come Downtown.</li> <li>• There are no vacant lots and no derelict buildings. Vacant lots and derelict and underutilized buildings have been redeveloped and now house new and vibrant, commercial, residential and institutional uses.</li> <li>• There are more cafes and restaurants Downtown, including outdoor cafes in the summer.</li> <li>• Storefronts, building facades and signage has been improved and restored.</li> <li>• Unsightly siding and other façade materials have been replaced with the original restored facades.</li> <li>• The buildings housing the CIBC and Foodland have been revitalized with architecturally interesting and stylish facades.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Streetscape</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Downtown is a pedestrian friendly village atmosphere with a uniform and vibrant streetscaping theme along Griffin Street including greenery, landscaping, benches, trees and flower planters.</li> <li>• Sidewalks have been repaired and the asphalted areas between parking lots and sidewalks have been replaced with landscaping.</li> <li>• Gateways including landscaping and signage have been created at the entrances to the Downtown.</li> <li>• Landscaping around the Historic Train Station has been improved to provide a more attractive northern gateway to Downtown Smithville.</li> <li>• Public alleyways have been cleaned up.</li> <li>• The parking areas around the CIBC and Foodland have been landscaped to provide interesting sight lines.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overhead utilities have been buried to remove visual clutter that detracts from the buildings and streetscape.</li> <li>• There are no mobile signs Downtown.</li> </ul>
<b>Public Amenities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a central public gathering space Downtown that is green and provides a place for cultural activities, festivals, civic functions and celebrations of the area’s heritage. This central public gathering space could include an outdoor winter skating rink and a summer water feature.</li> <li>• There is public art Downtown that depicts the rich history of the area, e.g., a mural on the wall of the Murgatroyd Parkette.</li> <li>• There is more cultural diversity and more cultural and recreational activities Downtown.</li> <li>• There are activities and amenities for youth so that they will spend more time in the Downtown.</li> </ul>
<b>Traffic and Parking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is reduced traffic through Downtown Smithville, especially truck traffic.</li> <li>• There is additional public parking available in the Downtown, in particular in District C.</li> </ul>

This Vision for Downtown Smithville was utilized to help guide the preparation of the Sustainable Downtown Smithville CIP, including the Incentive Programs and Public Realm Action Plan.

## **7.0 SMART GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES**

### **7.1 Regional Smarter Niagara Program**

One of the primary goals of the Region's Smarter Niagara Program is to promote the redevelopment and revitalization of the downtown areas found throughout the Region. As such, the Sustainable Downtown Smithville CIP will help to achieve one of the key goals of the Region's Smart Growth program. Furthermore, this CIP will help to implement numerous Smart Growth principles outlined in the Region's Smart Growth Plan, Programs and Model Urban Design Guidelines. These Smart Growth principles include:

- Creating a mix of land uses;
- Promoting compact built form;
- Creating walkable neighbourhoods and communities;
- Fostering attractive communities that have a sense of place;
- Creating attractive and functional interfaces between built areas and open space;
- Encouraging infill and intensification in built-up areas;
- Ensuring that new development respects the existing built environment;
- Promoting community and stakeholder participation; and,
- Preserving farmland and natural resources.

A number of opportunities for infill, intensification and redevelopment exist in the Downtown. If fulfilled over time, these opportunities will help to attract new businesses and improve the mix of land uses in Downtown Smithville. This will not only serve to promote the revitalization of the Smithville Downtown, but will also help to protect farmland, open space and other natural areas. Furthermore, the preliminary public realm improvements contained in this report will help to enhance the walkability of Downtown Smithville and improve the interface between the built environment, public amenity space and natural open space areas.

### **7.2 Promoting Private Sector Green Building Practices**

One of the key Regional Smart Growth principles is to ensure that new development respects the existing built environment. The private sector can be encouraged to undertake environmentally sustainable development practices in Downtown Smithville. To this end, the incentive programs in this CIP have been designed to encourage the incorporation of green building designs and construction practices within infill, intensification and redevelopment projects that will take place in Downtown Smithville. Rather than attempting to accomplish this through strict regulation of building practices, which may deter redevelopment projects in Downtown Smithville, this CIP provides additional financial assistance in a number of incentive programs to projects that incorporate sustainable building designs and energy efficient/green building and construction technologies.

To support these types of individual green building measures and practices, the CIP requires projects seeking increased financial support to achieve the Canadian Green Building Council's (CAGBC) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification to ensure the measures are properly and effectively implemented. The LEED rating system assigns credits for

each green building measure successfully implemented in a registered project. In Canada, there are currently 70 available credits and four different levels of LEED certification:

- Certified 26-32 credits;
- Silver 33-38 credits;
- Gold 39-51 credits; and,
- Platinum 52-70 credits.

### **7.3 Environmental Sustainability of Municipal Projects**

There are numerous measures the municipality can implement to ensure public projects are developed in an environmentally sustainable manner. These measures range in applicability and feasibility, depending upon the size, scope and nature of the project. Specifically, the following measures are recommended to enhance the environmental sustainability of the public realm improvement projects recommended in the Public Realm Action Plan:

- Focus on the use of regionally sourced, renewable, salvaged, reused or recycled materials – if wood or wood products are required as a construction or finishing material, ensure it is sourced from an FSC Certified source;
- Divert demolition and/or construction debris from the landfill and redirect recyclable and reusable materials appropriately;
- Ensure paved areas are shaded and use light and reflective paving materials to reduce the heat island effect of the Downtown Smithville area;
- Manage stormwater with the use of rain gardens, infiltration planters, vegetated median strips, trees and tree boxes, supplemented by the use of permeable pavement;
- Use native plants to create landscaped areas with reduced or even no irrigation requirements, known as xeriscape landscaping and use recovered rainwater if irrigation is necessary.

## **8.0 INCENTIVE PROGRAMS**

### **8.1 Critical Community Improvement Needs**

To encourage and support the realization of the Vision for Downtown Smithville, the weaknesses in Downtown Smithville and the key impediments to revitalization need to be addressed and overcome. These weaknesses and the challenges they represent are considered critical community improvement needs. Based on the input received from key stakeholders and members of the public at the two public meetings, the CIP Steering Committee, Township staff, and best practices in other municipalities, the following are the critical community improvement needs in Downtown Smithville that can be addressed through the development and implementation of financial incentive programs:

- a) Dated and tired building facades and the condition of the rear facades;
- b) The general lack of building maintenance;
- c) Vacant, derelict and underutilized buildings and lands;
- d) Lack of investment in building rehabilitation, redevelopment and new construction;
- e) High business vacancy rates in some areas and lack of certain types of businesses; and,
- f) The need for sustainable forms of revitalization and redevelopment.

### **8.2 Approach**

The rationale for the financial incentive programs recommended in this CIP is that each of the incentive programs has been designed to address a number of critical needs as shown in Figure 3. The CIP contains the following financial incentive programs:

- 1) Commercial Building Facade Grant Program;
- 2) Commercial Building Rehabilitation Loan Program;
- 3) Infill, Intensification and Redevelopment Grant Program;
- 4) Planning and Building Fees Grant Program;
- 5) Development Charge Exemption and Grant Program<sup>1</sup>; and,
- 6) Public Art Grant Program.

Based on input from the second public meeting, key stakeholder interviews, and the project steering committee, the incentive programs have been ranked in terms of order of priority to the successful revitalization of Downtown Smithville as shown in Figure 3. The highest priority program is the Commercial Building Facade Grant Program, the second highest priority program is the Commercial Building Rehabilitation Loan Program, and so on.

The CIP takes a “tool kit” approach because once the CIP is adopted and approved, the incentive programs in the CIP can be activated by Council, one or more at a time, based in order on the importance of each program, and subject to the availability of funding. The programs contained in this CIP are also referred to as a “toolkit” because once activated, these programs can be used individually or together by an applicant. The balance of Section 8.0 provides details of the financial programs, including the program purpose, description, and eligibility requirements.

---

<sup>1</sup> The Development Charge Exemption component of this program does not form part of this CIP.

**Figure 3 Summary of Incentive Programs**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Summary Description</b>	<b>Program Priority</b> <b>1 = highest</b>	<b>Critical Community Improvement Needs Addressed (see Section 8.1 a)-f))</b>	<b>Recommended Program Duration</b>
Commercial Building Facade Grant Program	<p>Grant equal to 50% of the cost of eligible facade and storefront improvement and restoration works to commercial, institutional and mixed use buildings up to a maximum grant per property/project of \$12,500.</p> <p>At discretion of Council, the grant can be increased by up to \$7,500 per property/project for properties/projects that also require side and/or rear facade improvement and restoration works where said rear and/or side facades are highly visible, and for properties designated under the <i>Ontario Heritage Act</i>.</p>	1	a, b, f	Approximately ten (10) years, subject to availability of funding as approved by Council.
Commercial Building Rehabilitation Loan Program	<p>No interest loan equivalent to 70% of the cost of eligible interior and exterior building and maintenance improvement works to commercial, institutional and mixed use buildings up to a maximum loan per property/project of \$25,000.</p> <p>Minimum loan of \$5,000 per property/project.</p> <p>30% of loan is forgivable if project completes the Federal ecoEnergy Retrofit Incentive Program and/or the LEED Program, or if project is a targeted use project as specified by the Township.</p>	2	b, c, d, e, f	Approximately ten (10) years, subject to availability of funding as approved by Council

**Figure 3 Summary of Incentive Programs (Cont'd)**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Summary Description</b>	<b>Program Priority</b> <b>1 = highest</b>	<b>Critical Community Improvement Needs Addressed (see Section 8.1 a-f))</b>	<b>Recommended Program Duration</b>
Infill, Intensification and Redevelopment Grant Program	<p>Tax increment based grant equivalent to up to 100% of the municipal (Township and Region) property tax increase for up to 10 years following completion of an eligible project.</p> <p>The percentage of the annual tax increment grant depends on the level of LEED certification achieved by the project as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No certification, Grant = 50% of municipal tax increment</li> <li>• Certified, Grant = 70% of municipal tax increment</li> <li>• Silver, Grant = 80% of municipal tax increment</li> <li>• Gold, Grant = 90% of municipal tax increment</li> <li>• Platinum, Grant = 100% of municipal tax increment</li> </ul>	3	c, d, f	Approximately ten (10) years, subject to availability of funding as approved by Council
Planning and Building Fees Grant Program	Grant equal to 100% of the fee paid on planning and development applications, building permits and sign permits.	4	a, b, c, d, e, f	Approximately five (5) years, subject to availability of funding as approved by Council
Development Charge Grant Program	<p>Exemption from 75% of Township development charge on commercial, residential or mixed use projects that creates additional commercial space and/or residential units.</p> <p>Additional grant equal to 25% of Township Development Charge paid after project completion if project obtains LEED certification or incorporates at least 3 of the 5 Regional Smart Growth principles.</p>	5	c, d, f	Approximately five (5) years, subject to availability of funding as approved by Council

**Figure 3 Summary of Incentive Programs (Cont'd)**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Summary Description</b>	<b>Program Priority</b> <b>1 = highest</b>	<b>Critical Community Improvement Needs Addressed (see Section 8.1 a)-f))</b>	<b>Recommended Program Duration</b>
Public Art Grant Program	Grant equal to 50% of the cost of eligible art pieces and displays on public property or private property where the art is clearly visible to the public.  Minimum grant per property is \$2,000. Maximum grant per property is \$7,500.	6	a, c, d	Approximately five (5) years, subject to availability of funding as approved by Council

### **8.3 General Program Requirements**

All of the financial incentive programs contained in this CIP are subject to the following general requirements as well as the individual requirements specified under each program. The general and program specific requirements contained in this CIP are not necessarily exhaustive and the Township reserves the right to include other requirements and conditions as deemed necessary on a property specific basis:

- a) Application for any of the incentive programs contained in this CIP can be made only for properties within the Downtown Smithville Community Improvement Project Area as shown in Figure 1 of this Plan;
- b) With the exception of the Planning and Building Fees Grant Program, an application for any financial incentive program contained in this CIP must be submitted to the Township prior to the commencement of any works to which the financial incentive program will apply and prior to application for building permit;
- c) If the applicant is not the owner of the property, the applicant must provide written consent from the owner of the property to make the application;
- d) An application for any financial incentive program contained in this CIP must include plans, estimates, contracts, reports and other details as required by the Township to satisfy the Township with respect to costs of the project and conformity of the project with the CIP;
- e) Review and evaluation of an application and supporting materials against program eligibility requirements will be done by Township staff, who will then make a recommendation to Township Council or Council's designate. The application is subject to approval by Township Council or Council's designate;
- f) Each program in this CIP is considered active if Council has approved implementation of the program, and Council has approved a budget allocation for the program (as applicable);
- g) As a condition of application approval, the applicant may be required to enter into a loan or grant agreement with the Township. This Agreement will specify the terms, duration and default provisions of the incentive to be provided. This Agreement may also subject to approval by Township Council or Council's designate;
- h) Where other sources of government and/or non-profit organization funding (Federal, Provincial, Municipal, CMHC, Federation of Canadian Municipalities, etc...) that can be applied against the eligible costs are anticipated or have been secured, these must be declared as part of the application. Accordingly, the loan/grant may be reduced on a pro-rated basis;
- i) The Township reserves the right to audit the cost of any and all works that have been approved under any of the financial incentive programs, at the expense of the applicant;

- j) The Township is not responsible for any costs incurred by an applicant in relation to any of the programs, including without limitation, costs incurred in anticipation of a grant and/or loan;
- k) If the applicant is in default of any of the general or program specific requirements, or any other requirements of the Township, the Township may delay, reduce or cancel the approved grant and/or loan, and require repayment of the approved grant and/or loan;
- l) The Township may discontinue any of the programs contained in this CIP at any time, but applicants with approved grants and/or loans will still receive said grant and/or loan, subject to meeting the general and program specific requirements, and applicants with approved loans will still be required to repay their loans in full;
- m) All proposed works approved under the financial incentive programs and associated improvements to buildings and/or land must conform to Urban Design Guidelines developed/adopted by the Township, and all other Township guidelines, by-laws, policies, procedures, and standards;
- n) All works completed must comply with the description of the works as provided in the application form and contained in the program agreement, with any amendments as approved by the Township;
- o) Existing and proposed land uses must be in conformity with applicable Official Plan(s), Zoning By-law and other planning requirements and approval at both the local and regional level.
- p) All improvements made to buildings and/or land shall be made pursuant to a Building Permit, and/or other required permits, and constructed in accordance with the Ontario Building Code and all applicable zoning requirements and planning approvals;
- q) Approval of an application for any of the financial incentive programs contained in this Plan will be based on compatibility of the proposed use with the Vision, Township Urban Design Guidelines, and any other guidelines applicable to the Downtown Smithville Community Improvement Project Area;
- r) When required by the Township, outstanding work orders, and/or orders or requests to comply, and/or other charges from the Township must be satisfactorily addressed prior to grant and/or loan approval/payment;
- s) Property taxes must be in good standing at the time of program application and throughout the entire length of the grant/loan commitment;
- t) Township staff, officials, and/or agents of the Township may inspect any property that is the subject of an application for any of the financial incentive programs offered by the Township;

- u) Eligible applicants can apply for one, more or all of the incentive programs contained in this CIP, but no two programs may be used to pay for the same eligible cost. Also, the total of all grants and loans provided in respect of the particular property for which an applicant is making application under the programs contained in this CIP and any other CIPs, shall not exceed the eligible cost of the improvements to that property under all applicable CIPs.

## **8.4 Commercial Building Facade Grant Program**

### **8.4.1 Purpose**

To promote the rehabilitation, restoration and improvement of the front, rear and side facades of commercial, institutional and mixed use buildings, including retail storefront display areas and signage.

### **8.4.2 Description**

This program will provide a grant equal to 50% of the cost of eligible facade and storefront improvement and restoration works to commercial, institutional and mixed use buildings up to a maximum grant per property/project of \$12,500. The Region will match the Township grant, to a maximum of the lesser of 50% of the Township grant or \$5,000. At the discretion of Council, the grant can be increased by up to \$7,500 per property/project for properties/projects:

- a) that also require side and/or rear facade improvement and restoration works where said rear and/or side facades are highly visible; and,
- b) designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

### **8.4.3 Eligibility Requirements**

Applicants are eligible to apply for funding under this program, subject to meeting the general program requirements, the following program requirements, and subject to the availability of funding as approved by Township Council:

- a) The following types of facade restoration and improvement works on commercial, institutional and mixed use buildings are considered eligible for a matching grant under this program:
  - i) repair or replacement of storefront, including repair or replacement of storefront doors and windows;
  - ii) repair or repointing of facade masonry and brickwork;
  - iii) repair or replacement of cornices, parapets, eaves and other architectural details;
  - iv) repair or replacement of awnings or canopies;
  - v) facade painting and cleaning/treatments;
  - vi) addition of new lighting/upgrading of existing fixtures on exterior facade and in entrance and storefront display areas;
  - vii) installation/improvement of signage (as permitted by the sign by-law);
  - viii) landscaping, including plant materials (to a maximum 25% of the grant amount);
  - ix) architectural/design fees required for eligible works (to a maximum of 10% of the grant amount); and
  - x) other similar repairs/improvements as may be approved.

- b) In addition to the eligible costs specified in a) above, the following types of building maintenance and improvement works on commercial, institutional and mixed use buildings designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act* are also considered eligible for a grant under this program:
- i) works that conserve or enhance elements specified in the Reasons for Designation accompanying the designating by-law under the *Ontario Heritage Act*;
  - ii) fences and outbuildings if specifically referred to in the Reasons for Designation;
  - iii) original siding and roofing materials including repair and replacement where necessary of wood clapboard or board-and-batten, repair and repointing of masonry buildings, stucco repair, repair or replacement of original roofing materials (slate, wood shingles, tile, etc.);
  - iv) removal of modern material (e.g., asphalt shingles,) and replacement with documented original materials;
  - v) reconstruction or construction of former and significant architectural features for which the appearance can be clearly determined from documentary sources (photographs, drawings, etc.);
  - vi) cleaning of masonry buildings if it is necessary for the building's preservation;
  - vii) all final finishes, such as paint and masonry are eligible for funding subject to approval;
  - viii) interior works specifically referred to in the Reasons for Designation, including, but not limited to: woodwork, plasterwork, wall or ceiling murals, or metal work, and other decorative features; and,
  - ix) works required to maintain or preserve significant architectural features.
- c) For commercial, institutional and mixed use buildings designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, the facade restoration and improvement works should be supported by documentation in the form of historic photographs or drawings clearly showing the feature(s) to be restored or reconstructed. Eligible works will be guided by the Urban Design Guidelines, as amended from time to time, and appropriate reference material as determined by staff.
- d) As a condition of grant application, the municipality may require the applicant to submit for approval professional design/ architectural drawing(s) which shall be in conformity with the Urban Design Guidelines.

#### **8.4.4 Administration**

Guidelines for the administration of this program are attached as Appendix C. Appendix C does not form part of this Plan. The Guidelines for administration of this program may be changed from time to time, as required, without amendment to this Plan.

## **8.5 Commercial Building Rehabilitation Loan Program**

### **8.5.1 Purpose**

To promote the maintenance and physical improvement of existing commercial, institutional and mixed use buildings and properties, in order to improve the attractiveness of Downtown Smithville and provide safe and usable commercial and mixed use space.

### **8.5.2 Description**

This program will provide a no interest loan equivalent to 70% of the cost of eligible interior and exterior building and maintenance improvement works to commercial, institutional and mixed use buildings up to a maximum loan per property/project of \$25,000. The minimum loan will be \$5,000. The Region will match the Township loan up to \$10,000.

Applicants are encouraged to participate in the Federal ecoEnergy Retrofit Incentive Program and/or the LEED Program. Successful completion of one of these programs will result in 30% of the loan being partially forgivable. The loan is also 30% partially forgivable for targeted use projects as specified by the Township. Targeted use projects can include cafes, restaurants, and specialty retail stores. The Township reserves the right to add to or subtract from the eligible list of targeted use projects via Council resolution as this CIP is implemented over time. The loan will be repayable over a 5 year period and the Township will require that security for the loan be registered against title of the property.

### **8.5.3 Eligibility Requirements**

Applicants are eligible to apply for funding under this program, subject to meeting the general program requirements, the following program requirements, and subject to the availability of funding as approved by Township Council:

- a) The following types of building maintenance and improvement works on commercial, institutional and mixed use buildings are considered eligible for a loan under this program:
  - i) entrance modifications to provide barrier-free accessibility
  - ii) installation/upgrading of fire protection systems;
  - iii) repair/replacement of roof;
  - iv) structural repairs to walls, ceilings, floors and foundations;
  - v) water/flood/weatherproofing;
  - vi) repair/replacement of windows and doors;
  - vii) extension/upgrading of plumbing and electrical services for the creation of retail, office or residential space;
  - viii) installation/alteration of required window openings to residential spaces;
  - ix) required improvements to heating and ventilation systems;
  - x) improvement costs associated with targeted uses; and
  - xi) other similar repairs/improvements related to health and safety issues, as may be approved.

#### **8.5.4 Administration**

Guidelines for the administration of this program are attached as Appendix D. Appendix D does not form part of this Plan. The Guidelines for administration of this program may be changed from time to time, as required, without amendment to this Plan.

### **8.6 Infill, Intensification and Redevelopment Grant Program**

#### **8.6.1 Purpose**

To encourage and support infill development on vacant land, intensification of underutilized land, and redevelopment projects within the Smithville Downtown. This will lead to a more compact, pedestrian-friendly urban form that accommodates a range of uses, which will in turn, further promote revitalization of Downtown Smithville.

#### **8.6.2 Description**

This program will provide a tax increment based grant equivalent to up to 100% of the municipal (Township and Region) property tax increase for up to 10 years following completion of an eligible project. The percentage of the annual tax increment grant will depend upon the level of LEED certification achieved by the project as follows:

- No certification, Grant = 50% of municipal tax increment
- Certified, Grant = 70% of municipal tax increment
- Silver, Grant = 80% of municipal tax increment
- Gold, Grant = 90% of municipal tax increment
- Platinum, Grant = 100% of municipal tax increment

The grant will be paid annually once the eligible project is complete, building inspection has taken place, the property has been reassessed, and the new property taxes have been paid in full for the year. Pre-project Municipal taxes will be determined before commencement of the project at the time the application is approved. For purposes of the grant calculation, the increase in Municipal taxes will be calculated as the difference between pre-project Municipal taxes and post-project Municipal taxes that are levied as a result of re-valuation of the property by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) following project completion. The grant will be recalculated every year based on post-project Municipal taxes in that year. Grant payments will cease when the total grant along with all other grants and loans provided equals the cost of rehabilitating the lands and buildings, or after 10 years, whichever comes first.

#### **8.6.3 Eligibility Requirements**

Applicants are eligible to apply for funding under this program, subject to meeting the general program requirements, the following program requirements, and subject to the availability of funding as approved by Township Council:

- a) The following types of projects are considered eligible for this program:

- i) existing commercial, residential and mixed use buildings, vacant properties and parking lots where the redevelopment or rehabilitation project results in an increase in the assessed value and taxes on the property<sup>2</sup>;
- b) As a condition of grant application, the Township may require the applicant to submit a Business Plan, with said plan to the municipality's satisfaction;
- c) As a condition of grant application, the Township may require the applicant to submit for approval professional design/architectural drawing(s) which shall be in conformity with Urban Design Guidelines, as well as impact studies such as traffic studies and studies of microclimatic conditions (sun, shadow, wind);
- d) If during the grant period, a building receiving a revitalization grant is demolished, all grant payments shall cease and the Township reserves the right to require repayment of the grant payments; and,
- e) If during the grant period, a building/property designated under the Ontario Heritage Act receiving a revitalization grant is demolished or any of the heritage features are altered in any way that would compromise the reasons for designation, all grant payments shall cease and the Township reserves the right to require repayment of the grant payments.

#### **8.6.4 Administration**

Guidelines for the administration of this program are attached as Appendix E. Appendix E does not form part of this Plan. The Guidelines for administration of this program may be changed from time to time, as required, without amendment to this Plan.

### **8.7 Planning and Building Fees Grant Program**

#### **8.7.1 Purpose**

To facilitate and spur adaptive re-use, infill, intensification, and redevelopment through the provision of an additional financial incentive that will complement and augment the other incentive programs within the CIP.

#### **8.7.2 Description**

This program will provide a grant equal to 100% of the fee paid on planning and development applications, building and sign permits. The Planning and Building Fees Grant will be paid once, after all construction is complete and the Township has conducted all final inspections pertinent to all permits eligible for grants.

---

<sup>2</sup> This program does not apply to any project that creates less than two net residential units and it does not apply to the rehabilitation or upgrading of single detached residential dwellings, unless at least two net residential units are created.

### **8.7.3 Eligibility Requirements**

Applicants are eligible to apply for funding under this program, subject to meeting the general program requirements, the following program requirements, and subject to the availability of funding as approved by Township Council:

- a) The following types of planning and development applications and building permits are considered eligible for this program:
  - i) Official Plan amendment;
  - ii) Zoning By-law amendment;
  - iii) Minor Variance;
  - iv) Consent to Sever;
  - v) Site Plan Control and Development Agreements;
  - vi) Plan of Subdivision/Condominium;
  - vii) Parkland Dedication Fee;
  - viii) Rental Housing Protection Act;
  - ix) Sign Permit;
  - x) Sidewalk Café Permit;
  - xi) Encroachment Agreement;
  - xii) Demolition Permit; and,
  - xiii) Building Permit.

Other permits issued by the Township that are not listed above, but which advance the purpose of this program, may be considered. This program does not apply to security deposits or cash-in-lieu payments required as a result of the application.

### **8.7.4 Administration**

Guidelines for the administration of this program are attached as Appendix F. Appendix F does not form part of this Plan. The Guidelines for administration of this program may be changed from time to time, as required, without amendment to this Plan.

## **8.8 Development Charge Exemption Program**

### **8.8.1 Purpose**

To promote development of vacant and underutilized sites and redevelopment on commercial and mixed use properties throughout the Community Improvement Project Area by providing a major economic catalyst in the form of a reduction of the often significant development charges that must be paid when a property is developed or redeveloped and additional commercial space and/or residential units are created.

### **8.8.2 Description**

Downtown Smithville is already serviced with adequate water and sanitary sewer services and the road network capacity is adequate. Redevelopment in the Community Improvement Project Area may result in incremental increases in demand for both hard and soft services. However, it is recognized that the costs to provide these incremental services will be substantially lower than to provide new infrastructure to greenfield areas. Therefore, there is a financial rationale for a significantly lower development charge for redevelopment projects in Downtown Smithville.

In an effort to promote new residential and commercial development in downtowns, built-up urban areas, and brownfield areas, the Region passed a development charge waiver/exemption program in 2002 (Regional Report CSD 151-2002/DPD 131-2002). This was followed in 2003 with a report that outlined the administrative procedures for implementation of the development charge waiver/exemption program (Regional Report CSD 39-2003/DPD 48-2003).

The Region's most recent Development Charges By-law (No. 62-2009) came into effect on September 1, 2009. This By-law reduces the Regional development charge payable by 50% for development located within the boundaries of designated central urban areas as set out in Schedule D of Regional By-law No. 62-2009, or on a brownfield site. The Region provides a further 50% reduction of Regional development charges payable for development located within the boundaries of designated central urban areas or on a brownfield site where said development includes at least three of the five Regional Smart Growth principles.

Review of Schedule D of By-law No. 62-2009 shows that all of the Downtown Smithville Community Improvement Project Area is not currently included in the Region's designated central urban area for the 50%-100% reduction of Regional Development Charges. However, the Region does make provision for local municipalities to add additional areas within the urban boundary for reduction of Regional Development Charges, where the addition of such areas is supported by an approved CIP. Therefore, it is recommended that the Township of West Lincoln request that the Region add the entire Downtown Smithville Community Improvement Project Area to the designated central urban areas eligible for reduction of Regional Development Charges as per Regional Development Charge By-law No. 62-2009.

As the required amendments to the Township's Development Charges By-law and the Region's Development Charge Reduction Program are outside the scope of the *Planning Act*, the Township's Development Charge Exemption Program (as described below) has only been referenced in this Plan, and does not form part of this Plan. Therefore, it is recommended that the Development Charge Exemption Program be forwarded to Council as a separate recommendation and implementing amendment to the Township's Development Charges By-law.

The Township's Development Charge Exemption Program will automatically exempt residential, commercial, and mixed use development and redevelopment projects that create additional commercial space and/or residential units in the Community Improvement Project Area from 75%<sup>3</sup> of the Township development charge. This 75% exemption will be applied at the time Township development charges are normally paid.

Furthermore, an applicant may apply to the Township for a grant equivalent to the remaining 25%<sup>4</sup> of Township development charges for any eligible project that:

- a) obtains Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification; or,
- b) incorporates at least 3 of the 5 Regional Smart Growth principles.

If approved, this grant will be paid after project completion.

---

<sup>3</sup> This 75% exemption from Township development charges does not form part of this CIP.

<sup>4</sup> The grant equivalent to the remaining 25% of Township development charges payable does form part of this CIP.

### **8.8.3 Eligibility Requirements**

Applicants are eligible to apply for funding under this program, subject to meeting the general program requirements, the following program requirements, and subject to the availability of funding as approved by Township Council:

- a) The following types of projects are considered eligible for the program:
  - i) new commercial, residential or mixed use development on vacant lots, including parking lots;
  - ii) expansions to existing commercial and mixed use buildings;
  - iii) conversion of non-commercial space to commercial space; and,
  - iv) redevelopment of mixed use buildings that creates additional commercial space and/or residential units.

### **8.8.4 Administration**

Guidelines for the administration of this program are attached as Appendix G. Appendix G does not form part of this Plan. The Guidelines for administration of this program may be changed from time to time, as required, without amendment to this Plan.

## **8.9 Public Art Grant Program**

### **8.9.1 Purpose**

To promote the heritage, uniqueness, sense of place, community spirit and vibrancy of the Downtown Smithville through the provision of art forms on both public and private properties, where such art can be enjoyed by the public.

### **8.9.2 Description**

This program will provide a grant equal to 50% of the cost of eligible art pieces and displays on public property or on private property (including the exterior of buildings) that are clearly visible to the public. The minimum grant per property will be \$2,000, up to a maximum grant per property of \$7,500 with a maximum of one application per property. All art pieces and displays must be pre-approved by the Township.

### **8.9.3 Eligibility Requirements**

Applicants are eligible to apply for funding under this program, subject to meeting the general program requirements, the following program requirements, and subject to the availability of funding as approved by Township Council:

- a) The following types of art are considered eligible for a grant under this program:
  - i) murals;
  - ii) sculptures;
  - iii) paintings;
  - iv) local heritage based art pieces and displays;
  - v) interactive art pieces and displays; and,
  - vi) any other art piece or display as approved by Township Council.

- b) The following types of costs are considered eligible for a grant under this program:
  - i) materials;
  - ii) installation; and,
  - iii) lighting and landscaping that highlights the public art.
- c) All art pieces and displays must be of a durable nature and able to withstand the elements over a lengthy period of time.
- d) All property owners must agree to enter into a contract with the Township regarding the ongoing maintenance and use of space for the public art.

#### **8.9.4 Administration**

Guidelines for the administration of this program are attached as Appendix H. Appendix H does not form part of this Plan. The Guidelines for administration of this program may be changed from time to time, as required, without amendment to this Plan.

#### **8.10 Marketing Program**

It is important for the successful implementation of the CIP that the Township proactively and effectively communicate and market its incentive programs and development opportunities in the Downtown. This marketing program should be implemented in cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce and should be targeted to existing business and property owners in Downtown Smithville, as well as investors, developers, business owners, and real estate professionals throughout the Niagara Region.

The Marketing Program should be a comprehensive multi-media program that includes:

- a) A brochure describing the available financial incentive programs and general program requirements;
- b) Application forms and Program Guides that provide a description of “how to apply” for the programs;
- c) Web page enhancements via the addition of a direct link to the Downtown CIP and information on available incentive programs such as the brochure, program guides and application forms described in a) and b) above;
- d) Periodic presentations of the CIP by Township staff to industry groups such as the development community, real estate, planning consulting, and finance professionals; and,
- e) Press releases of program enhancements and successful downtown redevelopment projects and initiatives sent to local and outside media.

## 9.0 PUBLIC REALM ACTION PLAN

While, the financial incentive programs contained in this Plan are designed to encourage private sector investment in Downtown Smithville, it is imperative that the series of public realm improvements described in this section of the Plan be implemented. Implementation of this Public Realm Action Plan will not only demonstrate leadership, initiative and resolve on the part of the Township of West Lincoln, but it is critical to generating interest from the private sector in utilizing the incentive programs to undertake private sector building rehabilitation and construction.

This Public Realm Action Plan, including type and priority of actions included, was developed based on the Vision for Downtown Smithville, results of the SWOT Analysis, and input received from the key stakeholders, public meetings and the project steering committee. The Action Plan as shown in Figure 4 describes the public realm improvements and outlines the lead organization, partner organizations, priority and timing for each action. The public realm improvements in Figure 4 are organized into the same key elements as the Community Vision, namely:

- Land Use and Building Condition;
- Streetscape
- Public Amenities
- Traffic and Parking

In addition, as per Sections 28(3) and 28(6) of the *Planning Act*, once a Community Improvement Project Area has been designated and a CIP is approved, a municipality may:

- a) Acquire, hold, clear, grade or otherwise prepare land for community improvement;
- b) Construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on land acquired or held by it in conformity with the community improvement plan; and,
- c) Sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of any land and buildings acquired or held by it in conformity with the community improvement plan.

Therefore, the Township may engage in any of these activities and use its powers under the *Municipal Act, 2001* to promote the undertaking of the Public Realm Action Plan contained in this CIP, recommended actions in other approved plans and reports, and recommendations that are identified and approved by the Township in the future.

The Niagara Region also offers a Public Domain Incentives Program. This program offers grants to local municipalities for the undertaking of infrastructure projects and public realm improvements. Local municipalities must apply to the Region for said grants. Applications must meet certain eligibility requirements and applications are evaluated by way of a competitive process supported by business case justification. Funds will be granted based on a matching basis with the Region's share not to exceed 50% of the overall project cost. The maximum Regional grant for any individual project will be \$100,000. The project applied for must be a public realm improvement identified in, or in compliance with, municipal planning documents including CIPs, Secondary Plans, and Official Plans. Therefore, application to the Region's Public Domain Incentives Program can be made for any of the Public Realm Actions included in this CIP.

Figure 4 Public Realm Action Plan

9.1 Land Use and Building Conditions						
Action	Lead Organization(s)	Partner	Timing			Priority
			Short Term (0-2 years)	Medium Term (2-5 years)	Long Term 5+ years	
1. Better enforce the property standards by-law	Township	Business and Property Owners	X	X	X	Very High
2. Improve/better maintain landscaping around public monuments and heritage buildings	Township	Adjacent Property Owners	X			Very High
3. Permit and encourage courtyard cafes behind commercial buildings on west side of Griffin Street	Township	Property and Business Owners	X			Very High
4. Improve landscaping around the Historic Train Station	Township	Adjacent Property Owner	X			High
5. Improve the municipally owned parking lot south of the CIBC building <sup>5</sup>	Township	Adjacent Property Owner	X			High
6. Investigate appropriate development of Township owned lands west of Griffin Street in the area of McMurchie Lane	Township			X		High

<sup>5</sup> This action has been approved by Township Council and a budget for this action has been established.

9.2 Streetscape						
	Lead Organization(s)	Partner	Timing			Priority
Action			Short Term (0-2 years)	Medium Term (2-5 years)	Long Term 5+ years	
7. Prepare a Master Plan for Public Improvements in the Downtown	Township	Region	X			Very High
8. Investigate and undertake sidewalk reconstruction, landscaping and streetscaping (street furniture, street lighting, planters, etc...) and replace asphalted areas between parking lots and sidewalks/curbs with landscaping on Griffin Street from West Street to Colver Street	Township	Region	X From West Street to just south of Saint Catharines Street	X Balance of West Street to Colver Street		Very High
9. Prepare and adopt Urban Design Guidelines for Downtown Smithville. <sup>6</sup>	Township	Region Business and Property Owners	X			High
10. Modify Frank Street from Griffin Street to Saint Catharines Street to incorporate a pedestrian walkway/trail.	Township	Adjacent Property Owners		X		High

<sup>6</sup> In the interim, while these Urban Design Guidelines are being developed by the Township, Township Council has approved use of the relevant parts of the Niagara Region Model Urban Design Guidelines to assist in establishing design and landscaping standards for new commercial and industrial developments within the Township.

9.2 Streetscape (Continued)						
Action	Lead Organization(s)	Partner	Timing			Priority
			Short Term (0-2 years)	Medium Term (2-5 years)	Long Term 5+ years	
11. Design and install gateway features (including landscaping and signage) at entrances to the Downtown in the general vicinity of the following locations in the following general order of priority: i. Intersection of West Street and Griffin Street ii. Intersection of Saint Catharines Street and College Street (or Brock Street) iii. On Canborough Street just south of Twenty Mile Creek iv. On Station Street just south or north of the TH&B rail tracks	Township	Region	X	X		Very High
12. Investigate feasibility of and install a pedestrian crosswalk on Griffin Street in the area near the Foodland store	Region	Township	X			Very High
13. Investigate burying or relocation of overhead utility wires in the Downtown, especially along Griffin Street	Township	Utility Companies Region		X	X	High
14. Restrict or ban mobile signs in the Downtown	Township	Business Owners	X			High

<b>9.3 Public Amenities</b>						
	Lead Organization(s)	Partner	Timing			Priority
Action			Short Term (0-2 years)	Medium Term (2-5 years)	Long Term 5+ years	
15. Extend the Murgatroyd Parkette (including all actions required for planning and implementation)	Township	Adjacent Property Owners  Region		X		High
16. Pursue and make application for available funding from the Region's Public Realm Incentive Program for murals, public art projects and/or any of the other public realm actions in this Plan	Township	Region	X	X		High
17. Investigate the feasibility of building a small parkette at the northwest corner of Station and West Streets	Township	Region		X		High
18. Identify a suitable location within the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area, acquire land (as required) for, and construct a green public outdoor activity/gathering space such as, but not limited to an outdoor ice rink for the winter which may potentially also be designed as a water feature in the summer.	Township		X	X		High

9.4 Traffic and Parking						
Action	Lead Organization(s)	Partner	Timing			Priority
			Short Term (0-2 years)	Medium Term (2-5 years)	Long Term 5+ years	
19. Township request that the Region evaluate reducing the speed limit on Griffin Street and St. Catharines Street within the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area from 50 km/h to 40 km/h	Region	Township	X			Very High
20. Designate the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area a Community Safety Zone	Township		X			High
21. Township request that the Region investigate the realignment of the intersection of Griffin Street and West Street with a design that provides access to all properties, proper pedestrian crossings and landscaped pedestrian islands	Region	Township	X	X	X	High
22. Township request that the Region investigate a truck by-pass/alternate route that would divert truck traffic around Downtown Smithville	Region	Township	X	X	X	High
23. Investigate feasibility of extending McMurchie Lane south to connect to Smits Cove	Township			X		High
24. Investigate feasibility of building additional parking south of St. Catharines Street for future commercial uses	Township	Property Owners Region		X		Medium

## **10.0 TARGETS FOR COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT**

Based on a review of infill, intensification and redevelopment opportunities, a number of targets have been established for the type and amount of infill, intensification and redevelopment expected to take place in Downtown Smithville over the next eight to ten years. These targets include:

- i) 80,000 sq. ft. net increase in commercial space, with an average annual increase of 8,000 to 10,000 sq.ft. ;
- ii) 20,000 sq.ft. net increase in institutional space, with an average annual increase of 2,000 to 2,500 sq.ft.;
- iii) A net increase of 50 residential units.

Additional targets over the eight to ten year period by type of business use include:

- iv) 1-2 new cafes;
- v) 2-3 new restaurants;
- vi) 5-10 new specialty retail stores;
- vii) Several new service and office uses; and,
- viii) An increase in the number of health and wellness facilities.

It is expected that the additions to commercial and institutional space and residential units will be lower than the averages cited above for the first several years of the life of the CIP as the Township implements the Public Realm Action Plan and the incentive programs, and the private sector begins to respond to these initiatives. Conversely, it is anticipated that additions to commercial and institutional space and residential units will be higher than the averages cited above in the later years of the CIP. The number, type and net amount of commercial, institutional and residential space generated as a result of projects utilizing the CIP incentive programs will be monitored over time to determine if these targets are being achieved.

## **11.0 MONITORING PROGRAM**

### **11.1 Purpose**

The Monitoring Program set out in this section of the CIP has several purposes. It is designed to monitor:

- a) Funds dispersed through the CIP incentive programs by program type so as to determine which programs are being most utilized;
- b) The economic impact associated with projects taking advantage of the CIP incentive programs in order to determine if the CIP is achieving the performance targets contained in Section 10.0 of the CIP; and,
- c) Feedback from users of the incentive programs so that adjustments can be made to the incentive programs over time as necessary.

The Sustainable Downtown Smithville CIP is not intended to be a static planning document. It is intended to be a proactive plan for economic and community renewal and revitalization. Monitoring information on program uptake, results and feedback from participants in the programs should be used by the Township to periodically adjust the incentive programs to make them more relevant, effective and user friendly. Information obtained through the Monitoring Program will be utilized to provide regular reports to Council on the amount of private sector investment being leveraged by the municipal incentive programs and the economic benefits associated with these private sector projects. Ultimately, the purpose of the monitoring program is to provide Township staff and Council with the information required to make knowledgeable and well informed decisions about how to adjust the incentive programs and public realm actions contained in the Plan in order to help ensure that the goals of this CIP are met, and that the Vision for Downtown Smithville is realized over time.

### **11.2 Description**

Monitoring of the uptake and performance of the incentive programs should be done on a regular basis and these monitoring results reported to Council annually or semi-annually. As well, feedback from users of the incentive programs should be considered and utilized to adjust the incentive programs in order to improve their effectiveness. Similarly, monitoring of progress on implementation of the Public Realm Action Plan should be done regularly and reported to Council on an annual basis.

Figure 5 presents a detailed list of the variables that should be monitored on an individual project and aggregate basis for each of the Incentive Programs. In addition to these quantitative economic measures, the Township should also attempt to monitor the results of the CIP in terms of its social and community benefits. This could include qualitative measures of the impact of public realm improvement projects on existing businesses, the impact of public art projects on community pride, and the number and size of public/community events held in the Downtown.

**Figure 5 – Variables to be Monitored**

Program	Variable
1) Commercial Building Facade Grant Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of applications by type (facade (front/side/rear), designated heritage building)</li> <li>- \$ amount of grant</li> <li>- Type and cost (\$) of total facade improvements ;</li> <li>- Cost (\$) of other building improvements ;</li> <li>- Increase in assessed value of participating properties; and</li> <li>- Increase in municipal (Township and Region) and education property taxes of participating properties.</li> <li>- Number of program defaults</li> </ul>
2) Commercial Building Rehabilitation Loan Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of applications by type of interior and exterior building improvement, designated heritage building;</li> <li>- Type and cost (\$) of total interior and exterior building improvements;</li> <li>- Total \$ amount loaned out;</li> <li>- Number of projects incorporating LEED certification or ecoEnergy Retrofit program and \$ value of said improvements;</li> <li>- Number of projects resulting in targeted end uses</li> <li>- Percentage of loans achieving partial forgiveness;</li> <li>- \$ amount of loan forgiveness;</li> <li>- Square footage of commercial and institutional space rehabilitated and/or created;</li> <li>- Number of new businesses successfully occupying the space (1 year post project completion)</li> <li>- Increase in number of residential units/size of units (sq.ft.)</li> <li>- Total \$ value of construction;</li> <li>- Increase in assessed value of participating properties;</li> <li>- Increase in municipal and education property taxes of participating properties; and</li> <li>- Number of loan defaults.</li> </ul>
3) Infill, Intensification and Redevelopment Grant Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Number of applications;</li> <li>- Total \$ cost of grants;</li> <li>- Number of residential units by type and square footage of residential space converted, rehabilitated or constructed;</li> <li>- Square footage of commercial and institutional space rehabilitated or constructed;</li> <li>- Total \$ value of construction;</li> <li>- Increase in assessed value of participating properties;</li> <li>- Increase in municipal (Township and Region) and education property taxes of participating properties;</li> <li>- Number of projects resulting in targeted end uses;</li> <li>- Number of new businesses successfully occupying the space (1 year post project completion);</li> <li>- Number of projects incorporating LEED certification or Smart Growth Principles; and</li> <li>- Jobs created/maintained</li> <li>- Number of program defaults.</li> </ul>

**Figure 5 – Variables to be Monitored (Cont'd)**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Variable</b>
4) Planning and Building Fees Grant Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number, type and \$ amount of planning application fees grant</li> <li>- Number and \$ value of parkland dedication fee grant</li> <li>- Number and \$ value of demolition and building permit fees grant</li> <li>- Square footage of habitable floor space created;</li> <li>- Square footage of commercial space rehabilitated or constructed;</li> <li>- Total \$ value of construction;</li> <li>- \$ value of building permit fees paid ; and</li> <li>- \$ value of building permits issued.</li> </ul>
5) Development Charge Exemption Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Total \$ development charges exempted;</li> <li>- Number of residential units by type and square footage of residential space converted, rehabilitated or constructed;</li> <li>- Square footage of habitable floor space created;</li> <li>- Square footage of commercial space rehabilitated or constructed;</li> <li>- Total \$ value of construction;</li> <li>- Increase in assessed value of participating properties; and</li> <li>- Increase in municipal and education property taxes of participating properties.</li> </ul>
6) Public Art Grant Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of applications received, and number approved;</li> <li>- Number of projects on private and on public property;</li> <li>- Total \$ amount of grants issued;</li> <li>- Total \$ value of construction, installation, etc.; and</li> <li>- Type and subject of art installation supported, i.e.: mural, sculpture, local heritage, community spirit etc.</li> </ul>

### 11.3 Program Adjustments

The individual incentive programs contained in this CIP can be activated, deactivated or discontinued by Council without amendment to this Plan. Over time, feedback from monitoring of the CIP may lead to minor revisions to the programs contained in this CIP. Therefore, the Township may periodically review and adjust the terms and requirements of any of the programs contained in this Plan, without amendment to the Plan. Such minor changes will be provided to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing for information purposes only. Increases in funding provided by the financial incentives contained in this CIP, the addition of any new incentive programs to this CIP, or an expansion of the Community Improvement Project Area will require a formal amendment to this Plan in accordance with Section 28 of the *Planning Act*.

## **12.0 CONCLUSION**

This CIP is based on a community developed Vision for Downtown Smithville. The programs and actions contained in this CIP have been developed specifically to address the key impediments to revitalization identified during the detailed SWOT Analysis of Downtown Smithville. The preparation of this CIP has also benefitted greatly from extensive community consultation through input provided by the project steering committee, interviews with key stakeholders, and input provided as the result of two public meetings

The adoption and approval of this CIP will provide a comprehensive framework and guide for the public realm improvements and incentive programs needed to achieve the Vision for Downtown Smithville. Ongoing monitoring of the performance of the incentive programs, implementation of the Public Realm Action Plan and overall progress towards the Vision, is essential to ensure the effectiveness of this CIP. Indeed, successful implementation of this CIP will require a commitment by Council to significant capital funding for implementation of the Public Realm Action Plan. The incentive programs can be implemented as a group shortly after approval of the CIP (preferred), or in a phased manner over a number of years based on the priority of each incentive program as specified in this Plan.

This local investment will be augmented and supported by the Region's Smarter Niagara programs which are designed to support local community improvement plan initiatives. In summary, the sustainable revitalization of Downtown Smithville will benefit not only business and property owners in Downtown Smithville, but also residents, business and property owners in West Lincoln and the wider regional community as a whole.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Amendment Number 14 to the Official Plan of the Township of West Lincoln**

AMENDMENT NUMBER 14  
TO THE  
OFFICIAL PLAN  
OF THE  
TOWNSHIP OF WEST LINCOLN

**PART 1 – THE PREAMBLE**

**1.1 TITLE**

This Amendment when adopted by Council shall be known as Amendment Number 14 to the Official Plan of the Township of West Lincoln.

**1.2 COMPONENTS**

This Amendment consists of the explanatory text and the attached Schedule 'A'. The preamble does not constitute part of the actual amendment, but is included as background information.

**1.3 PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Amendment is to amend the Community Improvement Policies and the Site Contamination policies in the Official Plan.

**1.4 BASIS OF THE AMENDMENT**

The Township of West Lincoln is proposing to amend the Community Improvement Policies and the Site Contamination Policies. These amendments are required so that Council can consider the appropriateness of implementing recommendations from the Community Improvement Steering Committee when they are presented to Council in future. In order to implement the policies, Council will first have to establish a community improvement project area.

**PART 2 – THE AMENDMENT**

## 2.1 **PREAMBLE**

All of this part of the document entitled PART 2 – THE AMENDMENT, consisting of the following text changes constitute Amendment No. 14 to the Official Plan of the Township of West Lincoln.

## 2.2 **DETAILS OF THE AMENDMENT**

- a) The text of the Township of West Lincoln Official Plan is hereby amended by deleting Section 10.19, and replacing it with the following:

### **Potentially Contaminated Sites**

*Potentially contaminated sites are sites where the environmental condition of the property or properties may have potential for adverse effects on human health, ecological health or the natural environment. In order to prevent these adverse effects, prior to permitting development on these properties, it is important to identify these properties and ensure that they are suitable or have been made suitable for the proposed land use(s) in accordance with provincial legislation, regulations and standards.*

*While the identification of potentially contaminated sites is important in the planning application review process, the policies in this section should not be interpreted as a commitment on the part of the Township to identify all contaminated sites. Rather, these policies should be regarded as an effort by the municipality to responsibly utilize available information in the planning application review process to help ensure that development takes place only on sites where the environmental conditions are suitable for the proposed use of the site.*

### **Policies**

- a) *The following list of general uses represents current or past activities on a property that may be causing or may have caused environmental contamination:*
- i) *activities involved with the elimination or disposal of waste and other residues, including, but not limited to landfill sites and waste disposal areas;*
  - ii) *any activities involving the storage and/or use of hazardous substances, including but not limited to fuels, oils, chemicals, paints or solvents;*
  - iii) *railway lands.*

- b) *The Township will utilize available information in the planning application review process to help ensure that development takes place only on sites where the environmental conditions are suitable for the proposed use of the site.*
- c) *The Township will require development proponents to document previous uses of a property or properties that are subject of a planning application and/or properties that may be adversely impacting a property or properties that are subject of a planning application in order to assist in the determination of the potential for site contamination.*
- d) *Where the Township determines that there is a proposed change in land use to a more sensitive use on a property or properties that have been identified through the Township's planning application review process as "potentially contaminated", the Township will:*
  - i) *require as a condition of planning approval, written verification to the satisfaction of the Township from a Qualified Person as defined by provincial legislation and regulations, that the property or properties in question are suitable or have been made suitable for the proposed use in accordance with provincial legislation, regulations and standards, including where required by the Township or provincial legislation and/or regulations, filing by the property owner of a Record of Site Condition (RSC) signed by a Qualified Person in the Environmental Site Registry, and submission to the Township of written acknowledgement from the Ministry of Environment specifying the date that the RSC was filed in the Environmental Site Registry;*
  - ii) *establish conditions of approval for planning applications to ensure that satisfactory verification of suitable environmental site condition is received as per d) i);*
  - iii) *where applicable, utilize the holding provisions of the Planning Act to ensure that satisfactory verification of suitable environmental site condition is received as per d) i).*
- e) *Where the Township is deeded land for public highways, road widenings, parks, stormwater management, easements, or for any other purpose, the Township may require, as a condition of transfer, satisfactory verification of environmental site condition as per d) i).*

- b) The text of the Township of West Lincoln Official Plan is hereby amended by creating a new Section 10 and renumbering the current Section 10 to Section 11, and so forth for the remainder of the Zoning By-law.
  
- c) The text of the Township of West Lincoln Official Plan is hereby amended by adding the following text for the new Section 10:

## **COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT**

### **10.1 Introduction**

*The Community Improvement provisions of the Planning Act allow municipalities to prepare community improvement plans for designated community improvement project areas that require community improvement as the result of age, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement, unsuitability of buildings or for any other environmental, social or community economic development reason. Once a community improvement plan has been adopted by a municipality and has come into effect, the municipality may offer grants and 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, and to any person to whom such an owner or tenant has assigned the right to receive a grant or loan, to pay for the whole or any part of the eligible costs of the community improvement plan. The municipality may also undertake a wide range of actions for the purpose of carrying out the community improvement plan.*

#### **(a) Goals**

- i) To preserve, rehabilitate and redevelop the existing built environment.*
  
- ii) To maximize the use of existing public infrastructure, facilities and amenities.*
  
- iii) To coordinate private and public community improvement activities.*
  
- iv) To guide the Township in setting priorities for municipal expenditure respecting community improvement projects.*

- v) *To participate, wherever possible, in Federal, Provincial and/or Regional programs to facilitate community improvement.*
- vi) *To reconcile existing land use conflicts and minimize future land use conflicts.*

**(b) Objectives**

*Community Improvement Plans may be prepared and adopted by the Township to:*

- i) *Encourage the renovation, repair, rehabilitation, redevelopment or other improvement of lands and/or buildings, including 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;*
- ii) *Encourage the preservation, restoration, adaptive reuse and improvement of historical or architecturally significant buildings;*
- iii) *Encourage the restoration, maintenance, improvement and protection of natural habitat, parks, open space, recreational and heritage facilities and amenities, and to establish new facilities where deficiencies exist to meet the needs of the citizens of the community;*
- iv) *Encourage residential and other types of infill and intensification on lands which are already serviced with municipal services;*
- v) *Improve and maintain the transportation network to ensure an adequate traffic flow and bicycle and pedestrian circulation, and to improve the quality of and accessibility to parking facilities, particularly in the downtown core of Smithville.*
- vi) *Maintain and improve municipal services including the water distribution system, the sanitary and storm sewer systems, roads, sidewalks, street lighting, and to provide a safe health standard for the citizens of the community.*
- vii) *Improve and maintain the physical and aesthetic amenities of the streetscape.*

- viii) *Encourage the eventual elimination and/or relocation of incompatible land uses, and where this is not feasible, to encourage physical improvements to minimize the incompatibility.*
- ix) *Encourage, support and co-ordinate both public and private investment opportunities in the rehabilitation and improvement of property and facilities which will result in stability in the community.*
- x) *Stabilize and/or improve the property and business tax base in commercial and industrial areas through the stimulation of private investment.*
- xi) *Establish an atmosphere through revitalization and improvements within Downtown Smithville that will encourage existing business and property owners to make improvements to their facilities and new business to locate in the area.*
- xii) *Encourage improvement activities which contribute to a strong economic base including commercial, industrial, recreational and tourism activity and job creation.*
- xiii) *Improve environmental conditions;*
- xiv) *Improve social conditions;*
- xv) *Promote cultural development;*
- xvi) *Facilitate and promote community economic development; and,*
- xvii) *Improve community quality, safety and stability.*

**(c) Criteria for Selection of Community Improvement Project Areas**

*The Township may designate by by-law one or more Community Improvement Project Area(s), the boundary of which may be part or all of the entire Urban Area of Smithville, and/or part or all of one or more of the Hamlet Communities, with the Urban Area of Smithville and the Hamlet Communities as defined in this Plan, and as amended from time to time.*

*For an area to be identified as a Community Improvement Project Area, one or more of the following conditions must be present:*

- i) *Buildings, building facades, and/or property, including buildings, structures and lands of heritage and/or architectural significance, are in need of preservation, restoration, maintenance, repair, rehabilitation, energy efficiency or renewable energy improvements, or redevelopment;*
- ii) *Deficiencies in physical infrastructure including but not limited to the sanitary sewer system, storm sewer system, and/or watermain system, roadways, sidewalks, curbs, streetscapes and/or street lighting, and municipal parking facilities;*
- iii) *Vacant lots and/or underutilized properties and buildings which have potential for infill, redevelopment or expansion to better utilize the land base;*
- iv) *Commercial areas with high vacancy rates and/or poor overall visual quality of the built environment, including but not limited to, building facades, streetscapes, public amenity areas and urban design;*
- v) *Presence of buildings and/or lands of architectural or heritage significance;*
- vi) *Known or suspected environmental contamination;*
- vii) *Deterioration or deficiencies in the level of community and social services such as public open space, municipal parks, neighbourhood parks, indoor/outdoor recreational facilities, and public social facilities;*
- viii) *Non-conforming, conflicting, encroaching or incompatible land uses or activities threaten to disrupt the predominant land use and lifestyle of the citizens of the area;*
- ix) *Demonstrated deficiency in the condition or provision of accessible parking;*
- x) *Demonstrated problem or deficiency associated with the circulation and/or access of traffic;*
- xi) *A shortage of land to accommodate widening of existing rights-of-way, building expansion, parking and/or loading facilities;*

- xii) *Other significant barriers to the repair, rehabilitation or redevelopment of underutilized land and/or buildings; and,*
- xiii) *Other significant environmental, social or community economic development reasons for community improvement.*

*Priority for the designation of Community Improvement Project Areas and the preparation and adoption of Community Improvement Plans shall be given to:*

- i) *Downtown Smithville;*
- ii) *Those areas where the greatest number of criteria for selection of Community Improvement Project Areas are present; and/or,*
- iii) *Those areas where one or more of the criteria for selection of Community Improvement Project Areas is particularly acute; and/or,*
- iv) *Those areas where one or more of the criteria for selection of Community Improvement Project Areas exists across the Urban Area of Smithville and/or across one or more of the Hamlet Communities.*

**(d) Phasing**

*The phasing of community improvements shall be prioritized according to:*

- i) *The financial capability of the Municipality to fund community improvement projects;*
- ii) *Availability and timing of senior government programs that offer financial assistance for community improvement efforts; and,*
- iii) *The timing of related capital expenditures from various municipal departments to ensure community improvements are coordinated as much as possible with departmental priorities.*

**(e) Implementation**

*In order to implement a Community Improvement Plan in effect within a designated Community Improvement Project Area, the Township may undertake a range of actions, including:*

- i) The municipal acquisition of land and/or buildings within Community Improvement Project Areas, and the subsequent;
  - a) Clearance, grading, or environmental remediation of these properties;*
  - b) Repair, rehabilitation, construction or improvement of these properties;*
  - c) Sale, lease, or other disposition of these properties to any person or governmental authority;*
  - d) Other preparation of land or buildings for community improvement.**
- ii) Provision of public funds such as grants and loans to owners of land and their assignees;*
- iii) Application for financial assistance from and participation in senior level government programs that provide assistance to municipalities and/or private landowners for the purposes of community improvement;*
- iv) Provision of information on municipal initiatives, financial assistance programs, and other government assistance programs;*
- v) Support of heritage conservation through the Ontario Heritage Act, 1990 and the Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (LACAC);*
- vi) Establishment of a Business Improvement Area;*
- vii) Refinement of zoning controls and application of flexible land use policies within designated Community Improvement Project Areas to the extent that they complement community improvement goals and objectives; and,*

viii) *Enforcement of the Township's property standards by-law.*

*All developments participating in programs and activities contained within Community Improvement Plans shall conform with the policies contained in this Plan, the Zoning-By-law, Maintenance and Occupancy By-laws, and all other related municipal policies and by-laws.*

*Council shall adopt such special measures as may be necessary to implement the goals and objectives for Community Improvement.*

- d) The text of the Township of West Lincoln Official Plan is hereby amended by deleting Section 11.9 and renumbering the following subsections of Section 11 to reflect this change.

### **2.3 LOCATION MAP**

Amendment No. 14 is a policy plan amendment which affects all lands within the Township of West Lincoln as shown on the attached map entitled "Schedule A – Location Map".

### **2.4 IMPLEMENTATION**

This amendment will be required to be adopted by Township Council and forwarded to Regional Council for approval. This amendment will be implemented through notification of the Regional Clerk's department of decision to approve. If no appeals are received within the appeal period, the amendment will be in full force and effect.

**AMENDMENT NUMBER 14**

**TO THE**

**OFFICIAL PLAN**

**OF THE**

**TOWNSHIP OF WEST LINCOLN**

Official Plan Amendment Number 14 was adopted by the Council of the Corporation of the Township of West Lincoln by By-law No. 2008-21 in accordance with the provisions of Section 17(22) of The Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, and amendments made thereto on the 25<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2008.

---

Carolyn Langley, Clerk

---

Mayor Katie Trombetta

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Project Steering Committee Membership**

1. Debora Coon-Petersen – Township Heritage Committee Representative
2. Chris Carmichael – Downtown Business Operator Representative
3. Janet Joyner – Downtown Business Operator/Property Owner Representative
4. Peter Budd – Downtown Property Owner Representative
5. Jeff Schilstra – Downtown Industrial Operator/Property Owner Representative
6. Alderman Mike Rehner, Council Representative
7. Alderman Douglas Joyner, Council Representative
8. Cathy Sterling, West Lincoln Resident
9. Mike Firmin, Board Member of the Chamber of Commerce
10. Alan Gummo/ Pat Busnello, Regional Planning Staff Representative
11. Luciano Piccioni, RCI Consulting Representative
12. Brian Treble, Director of Planning, Staff Representative
13. Derrick Thomson, CAO
14. Stephanie Nagel, Treasurer

## **APPENDIX C**

### **Commercial Building Facade Grant Program Administration**

(This appendix does not form an operative part of the Community Improvement Plan and may be changed from time to time, as required, without amendment to the CIP)

## **Step 1 Application Submission**

Applicants will be required to have a pre-application consultation meeting with Township staff in order to determine program eligibility, proposed scope of work, project timing, etc...

Township staff will perform an initial site visit(s) and inspection(s) of the building/property (as necessary).

Before accepting an application, Township staff will screen the proposal and application. If the application is not within the Community Improvement Project Area, or the application clearly does not meet the program eligibility criteria, the application will not be accepted. If Township staff determine that the application is not acceptable for one or more of the above noted reasons, the application will be returned to the applicant with a letter explaining the reason for not accepting the application. Acceptance of the application by the Township in no way implies program approval.

The Township may accept applications all year round for this program or the Township may issue a Request for Applications (RFA) for this program once or twice per year depending on availability of funding and program interest.

The Township may request that applications for this program be accompanied by supporting documentation, including but not necessarily limited to:

- a) photographs of the existing building facade;
- b) historical photographs and/or drawings;
- c) a site plan and/or professional design study/architectural drawings;
- d) specification of the proposed works, including a work plan for the improvements to be completed and construction drawings;
- e) two (2) cost estimates for eligible work provided by a licensed contractor.

If the application is approved, and the applicant elects to engage the contractor who provided the highest cost estimate, the Township's grant contribution will be based on the lowest cost estimate.

An application fee may be collected at the time of application.

## **Step 2 Application Review and Evaluation**

Applications, supporting materials and documentation will be reviewed by Township staff against program requirements. Township staff will determine the eligible works and costs.

The determination of eligible works and costs and the recommendation on the application will be guided by Township approved Urban Design Guidelines and any other Township approved guidelines, as amended from time to time, and other appropriate reference material as determined by staff.

For buildings designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, the facade restoration and improvement works should be supported by documentation in the form of historic photographs or drawings clearly showing the feature(s) to be restored or reconstructed.

An application for a Commercial Building Facade Grant will be approved by Council or Council's designate. A recommendation report will be prepared by Township staff. If this report recommends approval of the application, a grant agreement satisfactory to the Township Solicitor will also be prepared. This agreement will contain conditions to ensure that the project is commenced and completed in a timely fashion. This agreement will be forwarded to the applicant to be dated and signed. Once the signed agreement has been returned to the Township, the Council application approval process can commence.

### **Step 3 Application Approval**

The recommendation report along with the grant agreement (if recommendation report recommends approval) will be forwarded to Township Council or Council's designate for consideration. If Council or Council's designate approves the application and grant agreement, the agreement will be executed (signed and dated) by Township officials and a copy is provided to the applicant.

It is recommended that the decision on all applications for a Commercial Building Facade Grant be made by Council for an initial period of at least two years. After this period, Council may elect to designate Township staff. However, applicants may still appeal to Council any decision by Township staff to not approve an application that has been accepted by Township staff.

### **Step 4 Payment**

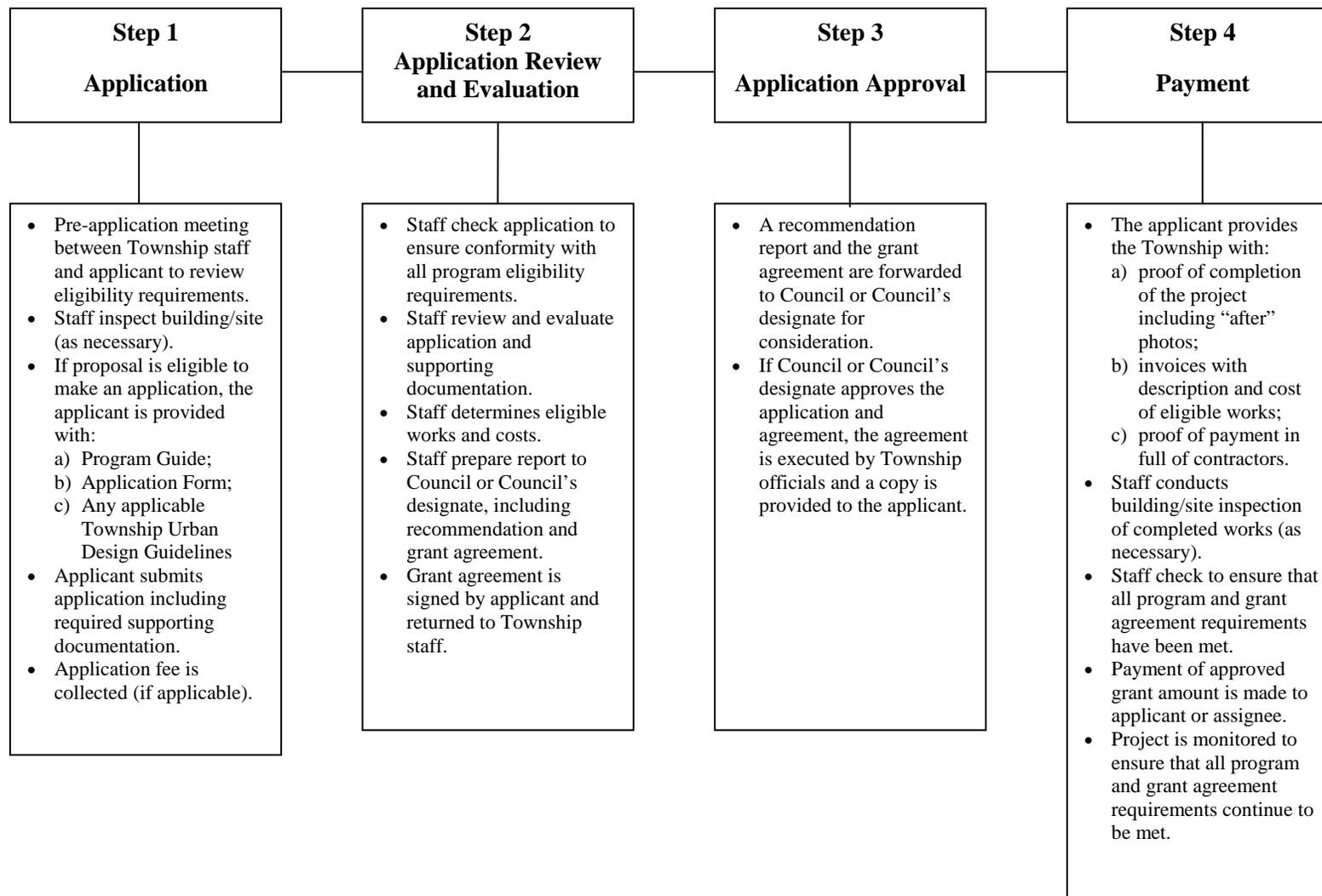
Payment of the grant shall not take place until:

- a) the grant agreement has been executed by the applicant and the Township;
- b) construction of the eligible works is completed;
- c) photographic evidence of the completed works (satisfactory to the Township) has been submitted;
- d) staff have inspected the completed works (as necessary) to ensure that the project has been completed in accordance with the program application and grant agreement;
- e) invoices clearly showing the amount paid for all eligible works have been submitted;
- f) written verification that all contractors have been paid in full has been provided; and,
- g) staff are satisfied with all reports and documentation submitted.

Prior to issuance of the grant payment, Township staff will check to ensure that all program requirements (general and program specific) and grant agreement requirements have been met. If all program requirements and grant agreement requirements have been met to the Township's satisfaction, then the Township will issue payment of the approved grant in conformity with the grant agreement.

Township staff will monitor the project, periodically checking that the project is in compliance with the grant agreement requirements. Township staff will take appropriate remedies as specified in the grant agreement if the applicant defaults on the agreement.

**Figure C-1 Commercial Building Facade Grant Program Administration**



## **APPENDIX D**

### **Commercial Building Rehabilitation Loan Program Administration**

(This appendix does not form an operative part of the Community Improvement Plan and may be changed from time to time, as required, without amendment to the CIP)

## **Step 1 Application Submission**

Applicants will be required to have a pre-application consultation meeting with Township staff in order to determine program eligibility, proposed scope of work, project timing, etc...

Township staff will perform an initial site visit(s) and inspection(s) of the building/property (as necessary).

Before accepting an application, Township staff will screen the proposal and application. If the application is not within the Community Improvement Project Area, or the application clearly does not meet the program eligibility criteria, the application will not be accepted. If Township staff determine that the application is not acceptable for one or more of the above noted reasons, the application will be returned to the applicant with a letter explaining the reason for not accepting the application. Acceptance of the application by the Township in no way implies program approval.

The Township may accept applications all year round for this program or the Township may issue a Request for Applications (RFA) for this program once or twice per year depending on availability of funding and program interest.

The Township may request that applications for this program be accompanied by supporting documentation, including but not necessarily limited to:

- a) photographs of the existing building facade;
- b) historical photographs and/or drawings;
- c) a site plan and/or professional design study/architectural drawings;
- d) specification of the proposed works, including a work plan for the improvements to be completed and construction drawings;
- e) two (2) cost estimates for eligible work provided by a licensed contractor.

An application fee may be collected at the time of application.

## **Step 2 Application Review and Evaluation**

Applications and supporting materials and documentation will be reviewed by Township staff against program requirements. Township staff will determine the eligible works and costs.

The determination of eligible works and costs and the recommendation on the application will be guided by Township approved Urban Design Guidelines and any other Township approved guidelines, as amended from time to time, and other appropriate reference material as determined by staff.

For buildings designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, the interior/exterior building improvement works should be supported by documentation in the form of historic photographs or drawings clearly showing the feature(s) to be restored or reconstructed.

A recommendation report will be prepared by Township staff. If this report recommends approval of the application, a loan agreement satisfactory to the Township Solicitor will also be prepared. This agreement will contain conditions to ensure that the project is commenced and

completed in a timely fashion. This agreement will be forwarded to the applicant to be dated and signed. Once the signed agreement has been returned to the Township, the Council application approval process can commence.

### **Step 3 Application Approval**

The recommendation report along with the loan agreement (if recommendation report recommends approval) will be forwarded to Township Council or Council's designate for consideration. If Council or Council's designate approves the application and loan agreement, the agreement will be executed (signed and dated) by Township officials and a copy is provided to the applicant. The loan agreement and security for the full loan amount is registered on title.

It is recommended that the decision on all applications for a Commercial Building Rehabilitation Loan be made by Council for an initial period of at least two years. After this period, Council may elect to designate Township staff. However, applicants may still appeal to Council any decision by Township staff to not approve an application that has been accepted by Township staff.

### **Step 4 Payment**

Release of the loan shall not take place until:

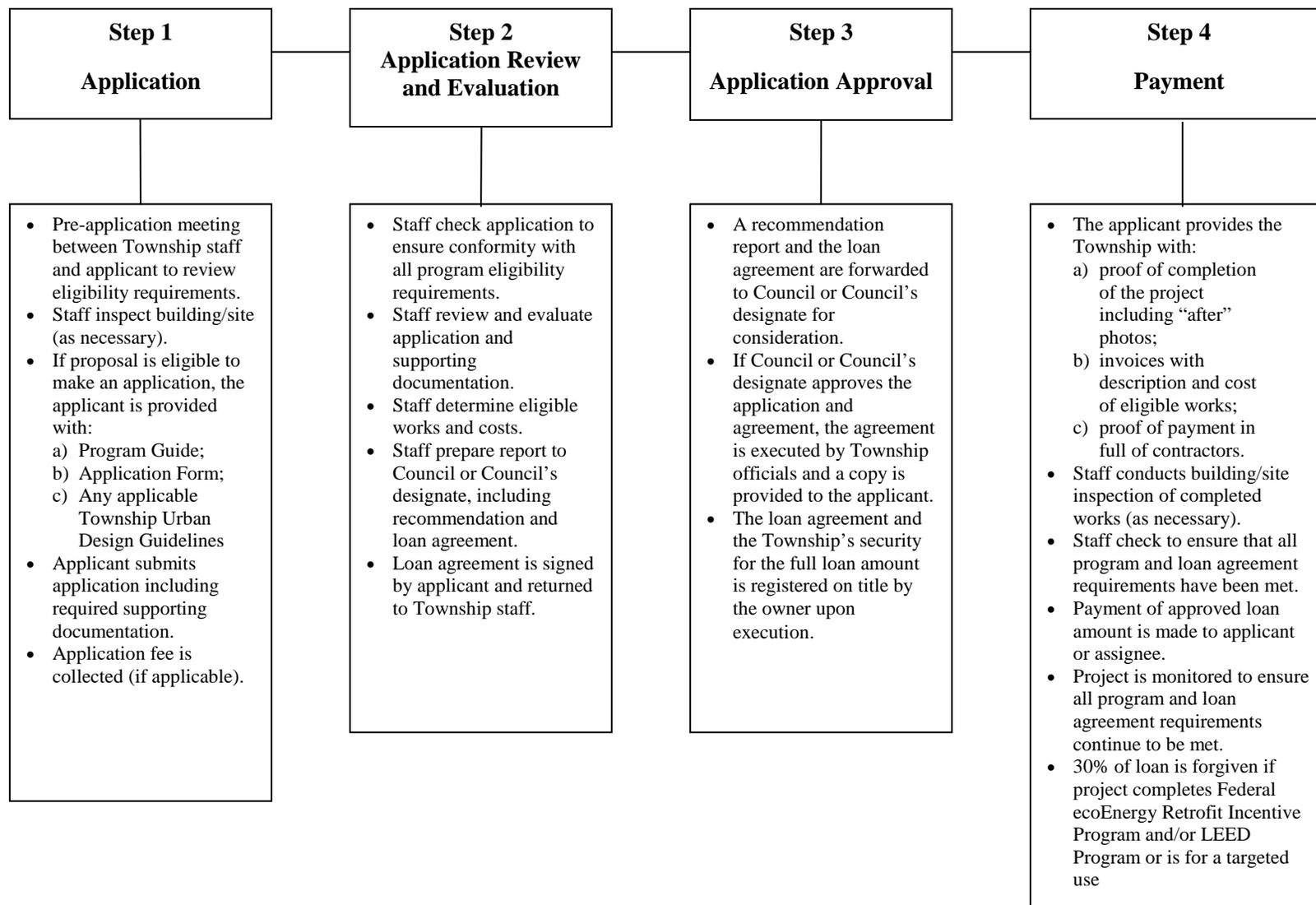
- a) the loan Agreement has been executed by the applicant and the Township;
- b) the loan has been secured via registration of the loan agreement and security in favour of the Township on title;
- c) construction of the eligible works is completed;
- d) photographic evidence of the completed works (satisfactory to the Township) has been submitted;
- e) staff have inspected the completed works (as necessary) to ensure that the project has been completed in accordance with the program application and loan agreement;
- f) invoices clearly showing the amount paid for all eligible works have been submitted;
- g) written verification that all contractors have been paid in full has been provided; and,
- h) staff are satisfied with all reports and documentation submitted.

Prior to advance of the loan, Township staff will check to ensure that all program requirements and agreement requirements have been met. If all program requirements and loan agreement requirements have been met to the Township's satisfaction, then the Township will advance the loan in conformity with the loan agreement.

Partial loan advances prior to completion of construction may be considered in some cases. The loan is repayable in equal monthly payments over 5 years with 15% of the loan repayable every year and a lump sum payment of outstanding loan funds at the end of 5 years. If the project completes the Federal ecoEnergy Retrofit Incentive Program and/or the LEED Program or the project is for a targeted use as defined by the Township, then this will result in 30% of the loan being forgivable at the end of the loan repayment period.

Township staff will monitor the project, periodically checking that the project is in compliance with the loan agreement requirements. Township staff will take appropriate remedies as specified in the loan agreement if the applicant defaults on the agreement.

**Figure D-1 Commercial Building Rehabilitation Loan Program Administration**



## **APPENDIX E**

### **Infill, Intensification and Redevelopment Grant Program Administration**

(This appendix does not form an operative part of the Community Improvement Plan and may be changed from time to time, as required, without amendment to the CIP)

### **Step 1 – Application Submission**

Applicants will be required to have a pre-application consultation meeting with Township staff in order to determine program eligibility, proposed scope of work, project timing, etc...

Township staff will perform an initial site visit(s) and inspection(s) of the building/property (if necessary).

Before accepting an application, Township staff will screen the proposal and application. If the application is not within the Community Improvement Project Area, or the application clearly does not meet the program eligibility criteria, the application will not be accepted. If Township staff determine that the application is not acceptable for one or more of the above noted reasons, the application will be returned to the applicant with a letter explaining the reason for not accepting the application. Acceptance of the application by the Township in no way implies program approval.

The Township may request that applications for this program be accompanied by supporting documentation, including but not necessarily limited to:

- a) photographs of the existing building facade;
- b) historical photographs and/or drawings;
- c) a site plan and/or professional design study/architectural drawings;
- d) specification of the proposed works including a work plan for the improvements to be completed and construction drawings;
- e) professional design study/architectural drawings;
- f) estimated project construction costs, including a breakdown of said costs;
- g) impact studies such as traffic studies and studies of microclimatic conditions (sun, shadow, wind)
- h) environmental reports and/or a Record of Site Condition (RSC);
- i) a Business Plan; and,
- j) any other financial information.

An application fee may be collected at the time of application.

### **Step 2- Application Review and Evaluation**

Applications and supporting materials and documentation are reviewed by Township staff against program requirements and applicable Township guidelines. Township staff will determine the eligible works and costs.

The determination of eligible works and costs and the recommendation on the application will be guided by Township approved Urban Design Guidelines and any other Township approved guidelines, as amended from time to time, and other appropriate reference material as determined by staff.

For buildings designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, the facade restoration and building improvement works should be supported by documentation in the form of historic photographs or drawings clearly showing the feature(s) to be restored or reconstructed.

<sup>7</sup>Township staff will utilize the actual pre-project Township property taxes and estimated post-project assessed value, applicable tax rates and proposed level of LEED certification to calculate the estimated post-project property taxes, increase in Township and Regional property taxes, and the estimated annual and total grant amount to be provided.

A recommendation report will be prepared by Township staff. If this report recommends approval of the application, a grant agreement satisfactory to the Township Solicitor will also be prepared. This agreement will contain conditions to ensure that the project is commenced and completed in a timely fashion. This agreement will be forwarded to the applicant to be dated and signed. Once the signed agreement has been returned to the Township, the Council application approval process can commence.

### **Step 3 – Application Approval**

The recommendation report along with the grant agreement (if report recommends approval) is forwarded to Council or Council’s designate for consideration. If Council or Council’s designate approves the application and grant agreement, the agreement is executed (signed and dated) by Township officials and a copy is provided to the applicant.

It is recommended that the decision on all applications an Infill, Intensification and Redevelopment Grant be made by Council for an initial period of at least two years. After this period, Council may elect to designate Township staff. However, applicants may still appeal to Council any decision by Township staff to not approve an application that has been accepted by Township staff.

### **Step 4 - Payment**

Prior to payment of the grant, the applicant must provide the Township with:

- a) photographic evidence of the completed project satisfactory to the Township;
- b) other documentation proving completion of the project, e.g., engineer’s report (if required);
- c) all final reports and documentation as required.

Township staff will conduct a final building/site inspection (as necessary) to ensure that the project has been completed in accordance with the grant application and agreement.

Once the project is complete, an occupancy permit has been issued, and the property has been re-valued by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation, the property owner will be sent a new tax bill. After the property owner has paid in full the new property taxes for one (1) year, the Township will check to ensure that:

- a) the applicant has not filed any assessment appeals; and,
- b) all program and grant agreement requirements have been met.

If all program and grant agreement requirements have been met to the Township’s satisfaction, then the Township will calculate the actual tax increment and grant payment based on the level of LEED certification actually achieved. The grant payment will be calculated as the difference between post-project Township taxes and pre-project Township taxes multiplied by the

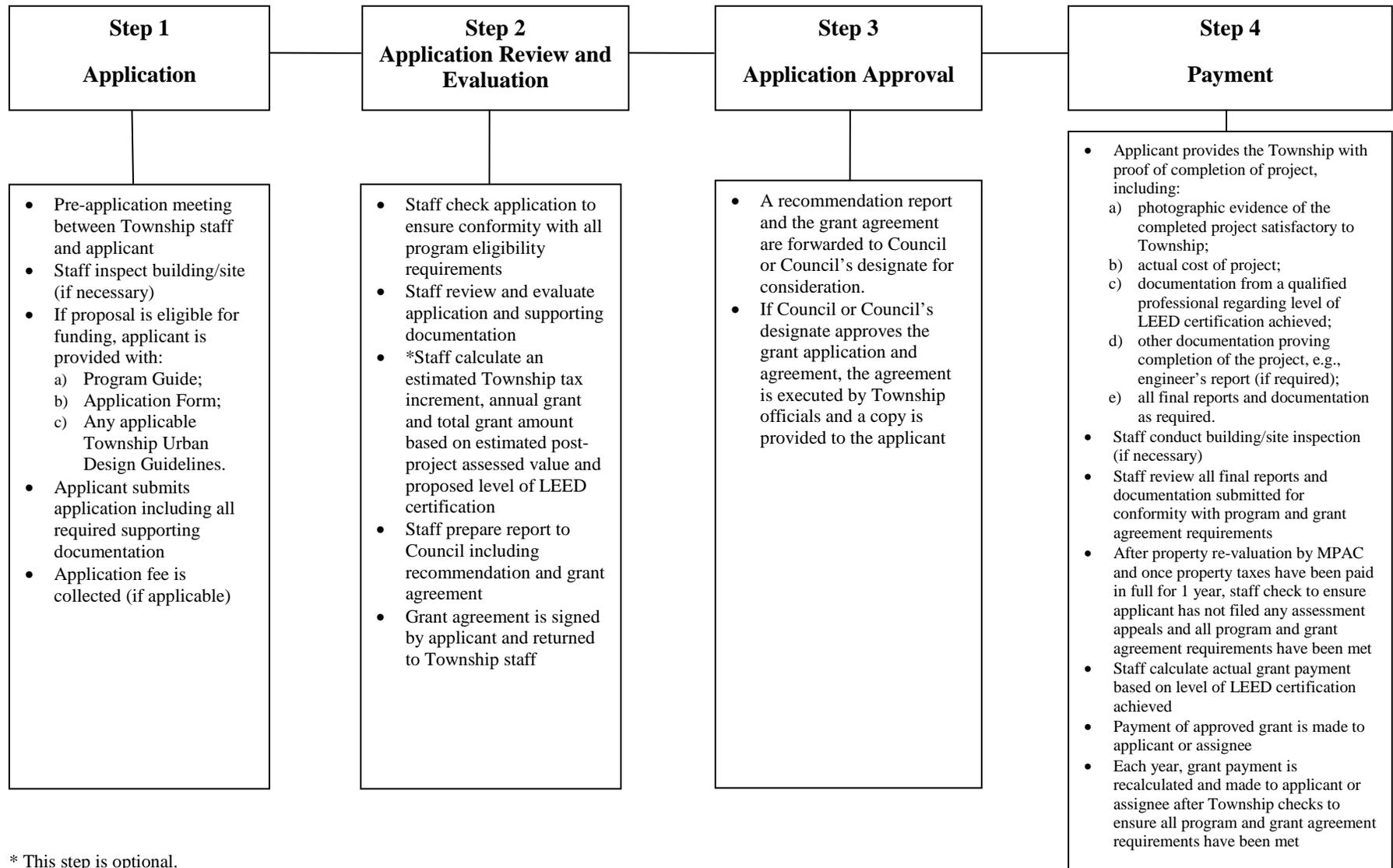
---

<sup>7</sup> This step is optional

applicable grant rate based on level of LEED certification. The Township will then issue payment of the grant in the form of a cheque in the amount specified as per the calculation of the actual grant payment.

Township staff will monitor the project, periodically checking that the project is in compliance with all program and grant agreement requirements. Township staff will take appropriate remedies as specified in the grant agreement if the applicant defaults on the agreement.

**Figure E-1 Infill, Intensification and Redevelopment Grant Program Administration**



## **APPENDIX F**

### **Planning and Building Fees Grant Program Administration**

(This appendix does not form an operative part of the Community Improvement Plan and may be changed from time to time, as required, without amendment to the CIP)

### **Step 1 Application Submission**

Upon completion and substantial occupancy of the project, an application for a Planning and Building Fees Grant can be made.

Before accepting an application, Township staff will screen the application. If the application is not within the Community Improvement Project Area, or the application clearly does not meet the program eligibility criteria, the application will not be accepted. If Township staff determine that the application is not acceptable for one or more of the above noted reasons, the application will be returned to the applicant with a letter explaining the reason for not accepting the application. Acceptance of the application by the Township in no way implies program approval.

Applications will include receipts for all eligible development and building fees paid to the Township.

### **Step 2 Application Review and Evaluation**

Applications and receipts materials will be reviewed by Township staff to determine eligible costs. A decision on the grant application will be made by Township staff, subject to delegation of this approval authority from Council.

It is recommended that all applications for a Planning and Building Fees Grant be approved by Township staff.

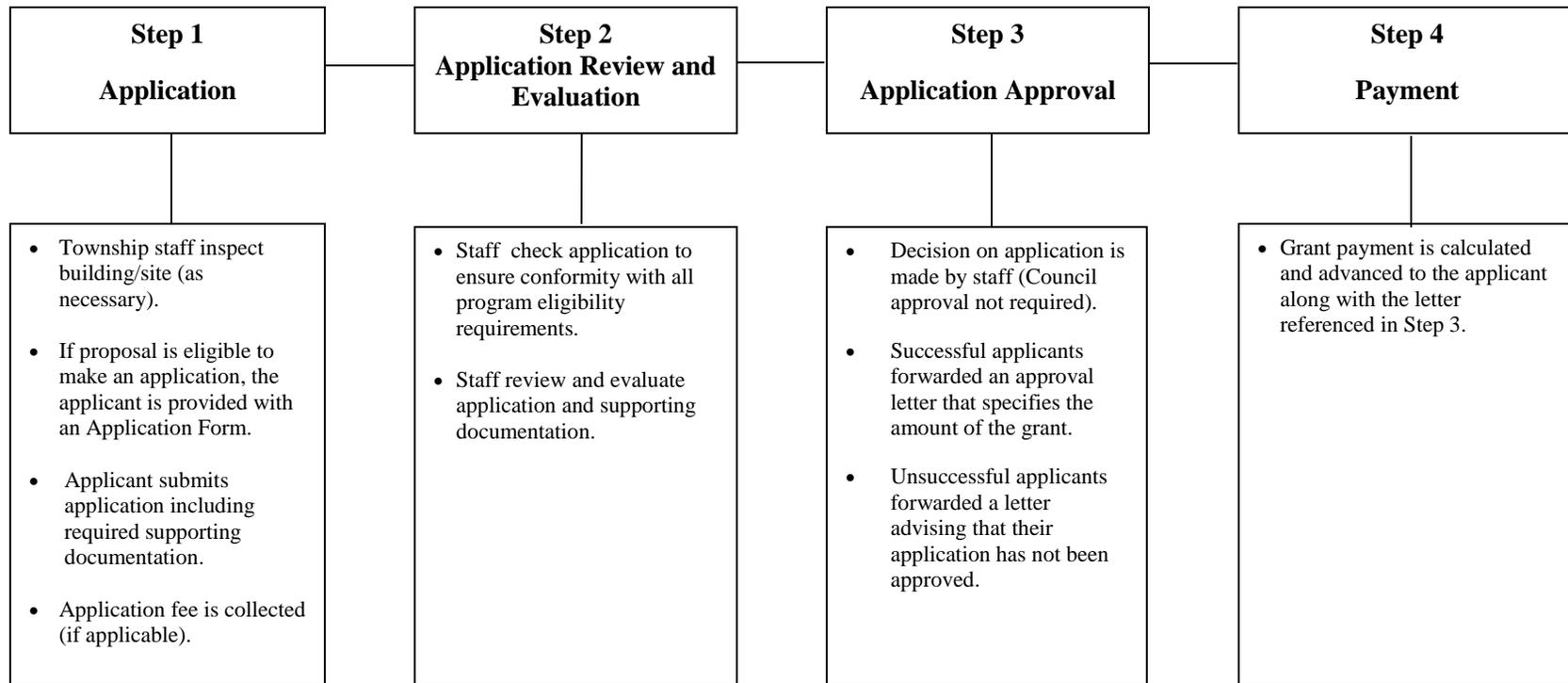
### **Step 3 Application Approval**

If an application is approved, the applicant will be sent a letter that outlines the amount of the grant. If an application is not approved, the applicant will also be advised by letter.

### **Step 4 Payment**

Grants approved under this program would be paid to the applicant at the same time as the approval letter referenced in Step 3 above.

**Figure F-1 Planning and Building Fees Grant Program Administration**



## **APPENDIX G**

### **Development Charge Exemption Program Administration**

(This appendix does not form an operative part of the Community Improvement Plan and may be changed from time to time, as required, without amendment to the CIP)

### **Step 1 Application Submission**

Only owners of properties are eligible to apply for this program. Applicants will be required to have a pre-application consultation meeting with Township staff in order to determine program eligibility, proposed scope of work, project timing, and preliminary development concept including proposed building size, height and density, number of residential units, gross floor area of residential and commercial space and other project details. This pre-application meeting shall occur prior to commencement of any works to which the development charge grant will apply.

Township staff will perform an initial site visit(s) and inspection(s) of the building/property (as necessary).

Before accepting an application, Township staff will screen the proposal and application. If the application is not within the Community Improvement Project Area, or the application clearly does not meet the program eligibility criteria, the application will not be accepted. If Township staff determine that the application is not acceptable for one or more of the above noted reasons, the application will be returned to the applicant with a letter explaining the reason for not accepting the application. Acceptance of the application by the Township in no way implies program approval.

The Township may request that applications for this program be accompanied by supporting documentation, including but not necessarily limited to:

- a) photographs of the existing building facade;
- b) historical photographs and/or drawings;
- c) a site plan and/or professional design study/architectural drawings;
- d) specification of the proposed works including a work plan for the improvements to be completed and construction drawings;
- e) professional design study/architectural drawings;
- f) estimated project construction costs, including a breakdown of said costs;
- g) impact studies such as traffic studies and studies of microclimatic conditions (sun, shadow, wind)
- h) environmental reports and/or a Record of Site Condition (RSC);
- i) a Business Plan; and,
- j) any other financial information.

### **Step 2- Application Review and Evaluation**

Applications and supporting materials and documentation are reviewed by Township staff against program requirements and applicable Township guidelines.

The recommendation on the application will be guided by Township approved Urban Design Guidelines and any other Township approved guidelines, as amended from time to time, and other appropriate reference material as determined by staff.

For buildings designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, any facade restoration and improvement works should be supported by documentation in the form of historic photographs or drawings clearly showing the feature(s) to be restored or reconstructed.

If the application meets the general and program specific requirements and is approved, the 75% Development Charge Exemption will be applied at the time that development charges are normally paid, i.e., at issuance of building permit.

Township staff will review the application to determine if the applicant is eligible for the 25% development charge equivalent grant based on whether or not the project will achieve of LEED certification and the level of incorporation of Regional Smart Growth principles.

A recommendation report will be prepared by Township staff regarding the 25% development charge equivalent grant. If this report recommends approval of the application, a grant agreement satisfactory to the Township Solicitor will also be prepared. This agreement will contain conditions to ensure that the project is commenced and completed in a timely fashion (or the grant approval is lost) and that the grant level to be provided is tied to actual LEED certification or actual incorporation of Regional Smart Growth principles achieved by the construction project. This agreement will be forwarded to the applicant to be dated and signed. Once the signed agreement has been returned to the Township, the Council application approval process can commence.

### **Step 3 – Application Approval**

The recommendation report along with the grant agreement (if report recommends approval) is forwarded to Council or Council's designate for consideration. If Council or Council's designate approves the application and grant agreement, the agreement is executed (signed and dated) by Township officials and a copy is provided to the applicant.

It is recommended that the decision on all applications for the 25% Development Charge Exemption Grant be made by Council for an initial period of at least two years. After this period, Council may elect to designate Township staff. However, applicants may still appeal to Council any decision by Township staff to not approve an application that has been accepted by Township staff.

### **Step 4 - Payment**

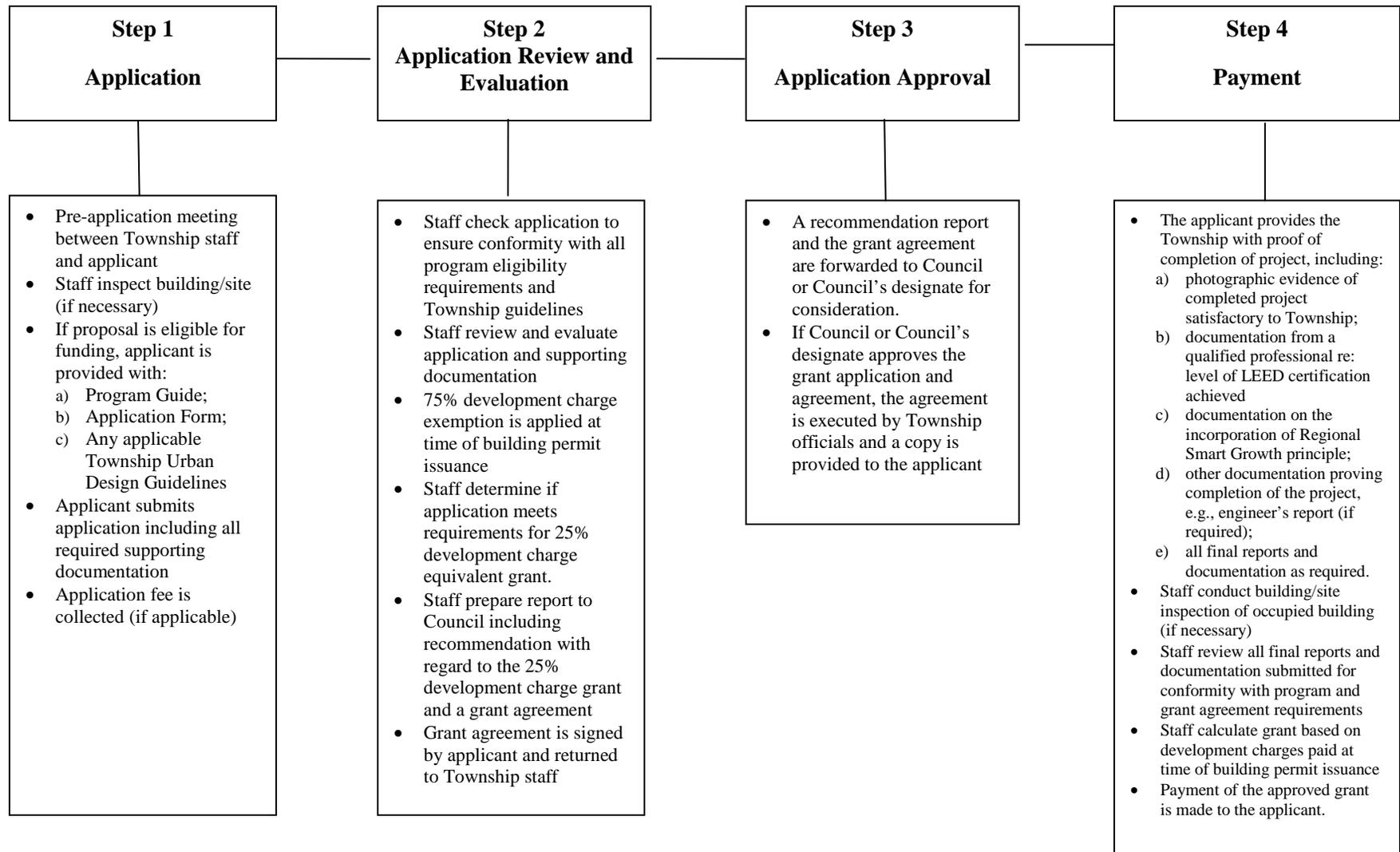
The Township will collect the 25% of development charges normally payable at the time of building permit issuance. Prior to payment of the grant, the applicant must provide the Township with:

- a) photographic evidence of the completed project satisfactory to the Township;
- b) documentation from a qualified professional with respect to the level of LEED certification achieved by the project (as applicable);
- c) description of how the project incorporated at least 3 of the 5 Regional Smart Growth principles;
- d) other documentation proving completion of the project, e.g., engineer's report (if required);
- e) all final reports and documentation as required.

Township staff will conduct a final building/site inspection (as necessary) to ensure that the project has been completed in accordance with the grant application and agreement. Once the project is complete and an occupancy permit has been issued, Township staff will ensure that all

program and grant agreement requirements have been met to the Township's satisfaction. The Township will calculate the amount of the 25% development charge equivalent grant. The Township will then issue payment of the grant in the amount specified as per the calculation of the actual grant payment.

**Figure G-1 Development Charge Exemption Program Administration**



## **APPENDIX H**

### **Public Art Grant Program Administration**

(This appendix does not form an operative part of the Community Improvement Plan and may be changed from time to time, as required, without amendment to the CIP)

### **Step 1 – Application Submission**

Applicants will be required to have a pre-application consultation meeting with Township staff in order to determine program eligibility, proposed scope of work, project timing, etc...

Township staff will perform an initial site visit(s) and inspection(s) of the building/property where the public art is to be installed (if necessary).

Before accepting an application, Township staff will screen the proposal and application. If the application is not within the Community Improvement Project Area or the application clearly does not meet the program eligibility criteria, the application will not be accepted. If Township staff determine that the application is not acceptable for one or more of the above noted reasons, the application will be returned to the applicant with a letter explaining the reason for not accepting the application. Acceptance of the application by the Township in no way implies program approval.

The Township may request that applications for this program be accompanied by supporting documentation, including but not necessarily limited to drawings/models of the art work and a work plan for the art work(s) to be completed and installed.

An application fee may be collected at the time of application.

### **Step 2- Application Review and Evaluation**

Applications and supporting materials and documentation are reviewed by Township staff against program requirements and applicable Township guidelines. Township staff will then determine eligible works and costs.

A recommendation report will be prepared by Township staff. If this report recommends approval of the application, a grant agreement satisfactory to the Township Solicitor will also be prepared. This grant agreement will include conditions regarding the ongoing maintenance and use of space for the public art. This agreement will be forwarded to the applicant to be dated and signed. Once the signed agreement has been returned to the Township, the Council application approval process can commence.

### **Step 3 – Application Approval**

The recommendation report along with the grant agreement (if report recommends approval) is forwarded to Council or Council's designate for consideration. If Council or Council's designate approves the application and grant agreement, the agreement is executed (signed and dated) by Township officials and a copy is provided to the applicant. This agreement must be registered on title by the applicant to ensure the ongoing maintenance and use of space for the public art should the property be sold.

It is recommended that the decision on all applications for the Public Art Grant Program be made by Council because Council must approve the proposed art work.

#### **Step 4 - Payment**

Prior to payment of the grant, the applicant must provide the Township with:

- a) photographic evidence of the completed works satisfactory to the Township;
- b) invoices for all eligible work done clearly showing the amount paid for eligible works, including materials, installation, and lighting and landscaping that highlights the public art; and,
- c) proof of payment of contractors in full.

Township staff will conduct a final building/site inspection (as necessary) to ensure that the project has been completed in accordance with the grant application and agreement.

Prior to issuance of the grant payment, Township staff will check to ensure that all program requirements and grant agreement requirements have been met. If all program requirements and grant agreement requirements have been met to the Township's satisfaction, then the Township will issue payment of the approved grant in conformity with the grant agreement.

Township staff will monitor the project, periodically checking that the project is in compliance with all program and grant agreement requirements. Township staff will take appropriate remedies as specified in the grant agreement if the applicant defaults on the agreement.

**Figure H-1 Public Art Grant Program Administration**

