



COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Municipality of South Bruce
(Mildmay and Teeswater)
May 24th 2013 DRAFT

Introduction:

1. Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of South Bruce has expressed a desire to establish a Community Improvement Plan for the downtown urban areas of Mildmay and Teeswater.

2. **Purpose (general):**

A CIP describes what a municipality intends to do to address various issues in a certain defined area, known as a Community Improvement Plan project area. Through CIPs municipalities can:

 - i. Focus public attention on local priorities and municipal initiatives;
 - ii. Target areas in transition or in need of repair, rehabilitation and redevelopment;
 - iii. Facilitate and encourage community change in a co-ordinated manner; and
 - iv. Stimulate private sector investment through municipal incentive-based programs.

3. **Legislation:**
 - i. Ontario Planning Act

Section 28 of Ontario's *Planning Act* allows municipalities to prepare CIPs, to establish a framework for municipalities to support and implement programs to encourage development and redevelopment, in accordance with Official Plan policies. Whether the reasons are physical, social, economic, or environmental, a community improvement approach is a flexible, comprehensive, co-ordinated and strategic framework for dealing with lands and buildings. For the purposes of carrying out a CIP, a municipality may engage in the following activities within the CIP project area:

 - i. Acquire, hold, clear, grade or otherwise prepare land for community improvement (28(3));
 - ii. Construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on land acquired or held by it in the CIP project area in conformity with the CIP (28(6));
 - iii. Sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of any land and buildings acquired or held by it in the CIP project area in conformity with the CIP (28(6)); and,
 - iv. Make grants or loans to registered owners, assessed owners and tenants of lands and buildings within the CIP 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 cost of rehabilitating such lands and buildings in conformity with the CIP (28(7)).

 - ii. Provincial Policy Statement (2005)

CIPs help to achieve the PPS objectives of healthy communities, a clean and safe environment and a strong economy. Community improvement is supported through PPS policies for:

 - i. Building strong communities
 - ii. Promoting efficient development and a mix of land uses
 - iii. Ensuring that necessary infrastructure and public service facilities are available
 - iv. Improving accessibility

- v. Conserving heritage resources
- vi. Supporting green design
- vii. Encouraging residential intensification

iii. County of Bruce Official Plan (2010)

Local Official Plans for Primary Urban Communities shall contain general development and land use policies dealing with community improvement. It is the policy of County Council to encourage each local municipality to prepare a CIP where appropriate.

iv. Municipality of South Bruce Local Official Plan (2012)

The Local Official Plan policies under Section 5.5 qualify the municipality to prepare and implement CIPs, and other mechanisms that are governed by Section 28. The SB CIP will establish a number of programs to implement the goals and objectives of the proposed official plan community improvement policies.

4. **Process:**

The following are the foundation for the South Bruce CIP:

- Comprehensive Zoning By-law (2011)
- Teeswater Big Dig and Streetscape Plans (2012-2013)

Over the years, the Municipality has been actively supporting revitalization efforts in both of its urban cores.

5. **Purpose (specific):**

The SB CIP establishes a framework for the Municipality to support and implement a series of programs over a 10-year period, to encourage the maintenance, rehabilitation and revitalization of public and private spaces, and to provide financial incentives to achieve these objectives.

6. **CIP Project Area:**

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 for any other environmental, social or community economic development reason”. Project areas range from specific properties, to streets, neighbourhoods and entire communities, while program coverage can span a wide spectrum of municipal goals and objectives including the programs noted in Section 8 of this CIP.

The municipality shall designate the CIP project area by By-law. The programs authorized in this CIP may be carried out within the CIP project area as identified on Schedule ‘A’ to the Plan.

7. **Goal:**

Section 5.5.2 of the South Bruce Official Plan outlines the following Community Improvement Goal:

To improve facilities and infrastructure in the Municipality's three urban areas that contributes to the community health, environmental, social and economic priorities and needs of the community.

8. Objectives:

Section 5.5.3 of the South Bruce Official Plan outlines the following Community Improvement Objectives:

- a) *To improve the physical appearance and economic health of the downtown commercial areas while elevating the status of these areas as destinations and promoting their unique community identity.*
- b) *To encourage development and redevelopment on private and/or public lands to improve the appearance and functionality of the downtown commercial areas, and recreational areas/ facilities of the Municipality.*
- c) *To improve and enhance the recreational facilities / opportunities within the Municipality by creating communities that are attractive, pedestrian-friendly, and distinctive.*
- d) *To ensure a built environment that supports and encourages active transportation while reducing automobile dependency and implement measures that ensure it is accessible to all.*
- e) *To promote the improvement of energy efficiency and other environmental standards for residential, commercial, industrial, public, recreational, institutional and other uses within the designated community improvement project areas.*

9. Programs:

The following Programs are authorized under the CIP:

- i. Commercial Building Façade Improvement Program
To cover a portion of the project costs for exterior improvements to the street-facing facade of existing buildings in the Mildmay and Teeswater CIP project areas.
- ii. Commercial Building Sign Improvement Program
To cover a portion of the project costs for perpendicular storefront sign and awning improvements on existing buildings in the Mildmay and Teeswater CIP project areas.
- iii. Infrastructure Works/Building Restoration and Accessibility Enhancements
For property tax assistance for remediation purposes to assist in bringing buildings up to current Ontario Building Code standards; and, accessibility enhancements to downtown businesses in accordance with the Ontarians Disabilities Act, 2001 and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.
- iv. Community Energy Efficiency
To promote:
 - Construction of new green buildings that meet LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification standards;

- Retrofit of existing buildings for energy efficiency (i.e. replacement of doors, windows, insulation, heating, etc.); and,
 - Alternative energy generating sources (i.e. rooftop solar panels).
- v. Streetscape Beautification, Signage & Landscaping Improvements
For improvements related to the streetscape including but not limited to the replacing/adding of light standards, street furniture (benches, banners, planters, garbage/recycling receptacles), sidewalk and lane treatments, parking, and signage.
- vi. Public Space, Parks and Recreation Works
For major capital projects geared to enhance, preserve and derive more economic benefits from public spaces within the CIP project area.

Programs i. through iv. are designed to stimulate private sector investment through municipal incentive-based programs. Programs v. and vi. are municipally-driven programs.

10. Program Guideline Framework:

The CIP Program(s) development shall be based on the following framework:

- i. Introduction / Overview
 - i. Program objective and details
- ii. Program Funding
 - i. Overview of Municipal funding
- iii. Eligibility and Program Area
 - i. Eligibility Criteria (see below)
 - ii. Financial Incentive (see below)
 - iii. Applicant responsibilities
 - iv. Considerations (compliance with guidelines)
 - v. Program Location (map)
- iv. Program Administration
 - i. Application process (submission deadlines and other requirements, timelines, number of grants per year, etc.)
 - ii. Administration (review criteria, evaluation, approval, agreements, inspections, completion)
 - iii. Improvements eligible for funding (i.e. signage, illumination, awnings, painting, cladding, etc.)

11. Eligibility Criteria

- i. Any application under the above-noted programs must be consistent with the Official Plan, Community Improvement Plan and any other design guidelines that may be implemented for the South Bruce CIP Project Area. Priority will be given to those applications which most closely meet the Program Guidelines that will be developed within the Framework as outlined in this Plan.
- ii. Priority for commercial properties within the designated CIP Project Area will be given for the following programs:
 - i. Commercial Building Façade Improvement Program

- ii. Commercial Building Sign Improvement Program
 - iii. Infrastructure Works/Building Restoration and Accessibility Enhancements
 - iv. Community Energy Efficiency
- iii. Any applicant to a CIP Program must be the registered owner of the property or an authorized agent. If a tenant wishes to apply, a letter from the building owner approving the work to be done is required.
- iv. Eligible project costs must be actual cash outlay to third parties acting at arm's length and which can be documented through original invoices or proofs of payment. Applicants will provide a minimum cash contribution to the project as outlined under Section 12 Financial Incentive depending on the type of Incentive that is implemented.
- v. The total of the financial incentive (grants, loans and tax assistance) shall not exceed the cost of improvements made to any buildings or lands.
- vi. Projects must be completed and invoices paid within a maximum of one year of the applicable Program or the date of agreement, whichever comes first.
- vii. Financial Incentives are not permitted to be retroactive, and only projects commencing following the approval of the project funding will be considered.
- viii. Applicants must not be in default of any municipal taxes or local improvement charges.
- ix. Applicants must comply with all provincial and local laws and regulations pertaining to licensing, permits, building code and zoning requirements. The Applicant is responsible for obtaining all building and other required permits and must be in conformance with all applicable health and safety standards.
- x. The Owner/Applicant shall enter into an agreement with the Municipality stipulating at a minimum:
 - i. Terms of the financial agreement;
 - ii. Timetable for provision of agreement and completion of the project;
 - iii. An undertaking by the owner to satisfy all municipal and other relevant laws and requirements for the project.

12. Financial Incentive:

Implementation of the financial incentives contained in the CIP is at the sole discretion of Council and is dependent on the availability of municipal funding.

Where applicable, financial incentive can be provided to the various CIP programs in the following ways:

i. Grant Program

Where a project satisfies the relevant municipal guidelines, a grant to cover up to 50% of the eligible costs of the improvement to a maximum of \$10,000 may be available on approved applications. Eligible costs may include professional design fees, material, labour and taxes necessary to complete the eligible work. In the event a project involves a second improvement, a grant of up to 50% of the eligible cost to a maximum of \$15,000 may be approved.

The grant would be payable after the applicant executes a Commitment Agreement with the municipality, construction is complete and has been inspected by the appropriate approval authority, and upon presentation of proof of accounts paid for the completed project. A maximum of one year is allowed

for completion. The Agreement would specify eligible works and require no changes to work on the improvement for five years without municipal approval.

13. **General:**

i. Timeframe

The CIP shall remain in effect for ten (10) years following its adoption by Council.

ii. Amendments

Amendments to the CIP would not normally be required if a municipality is discontinuing or cancelling a program; or, if funding to a program is decreased. Decisions respecting funding allocations to CIP programs are typically part of the annual Council budget process. However, amendments to the CIP may be required for a change or expansion in the geographic area to which financial or land programs outlined in a CIP apply; or, a change in the eligibility criteria (i.e. addition of new municipal assistance programs involving grants, loans, tax assistance or land; or, an increase to a financial incentive to be offered within a municipal CIP program). Such amendments require pre-consultation with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing in order to assess additional liability which may be incurred by the Municipality.

iii. Participation

In order to carry out the Community Improvement Goals and Actions of this Plan, the Municipality may participate and coordinate grants or loans with other levels of government pursuant to Section 28(7.2) of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990 for the purpose of carrying out a community improvement plan.

14. **Implementation:**

The municipality may prepare a ten-year implementation plan to address matters related to the timing of construction of improvements, promotion of the policies and programs, and staging and monitoring of CIP programs.

15. **Monitoring:**

Program monitoring shall occur on an annual basis to determine the following:

- i. Established targets from program uptake are being met;
- ii. Desired outcomes for the downtown are being achieved;
- iii. Program participants are completing their commitments; and
- iv. Overall benefits of the program.