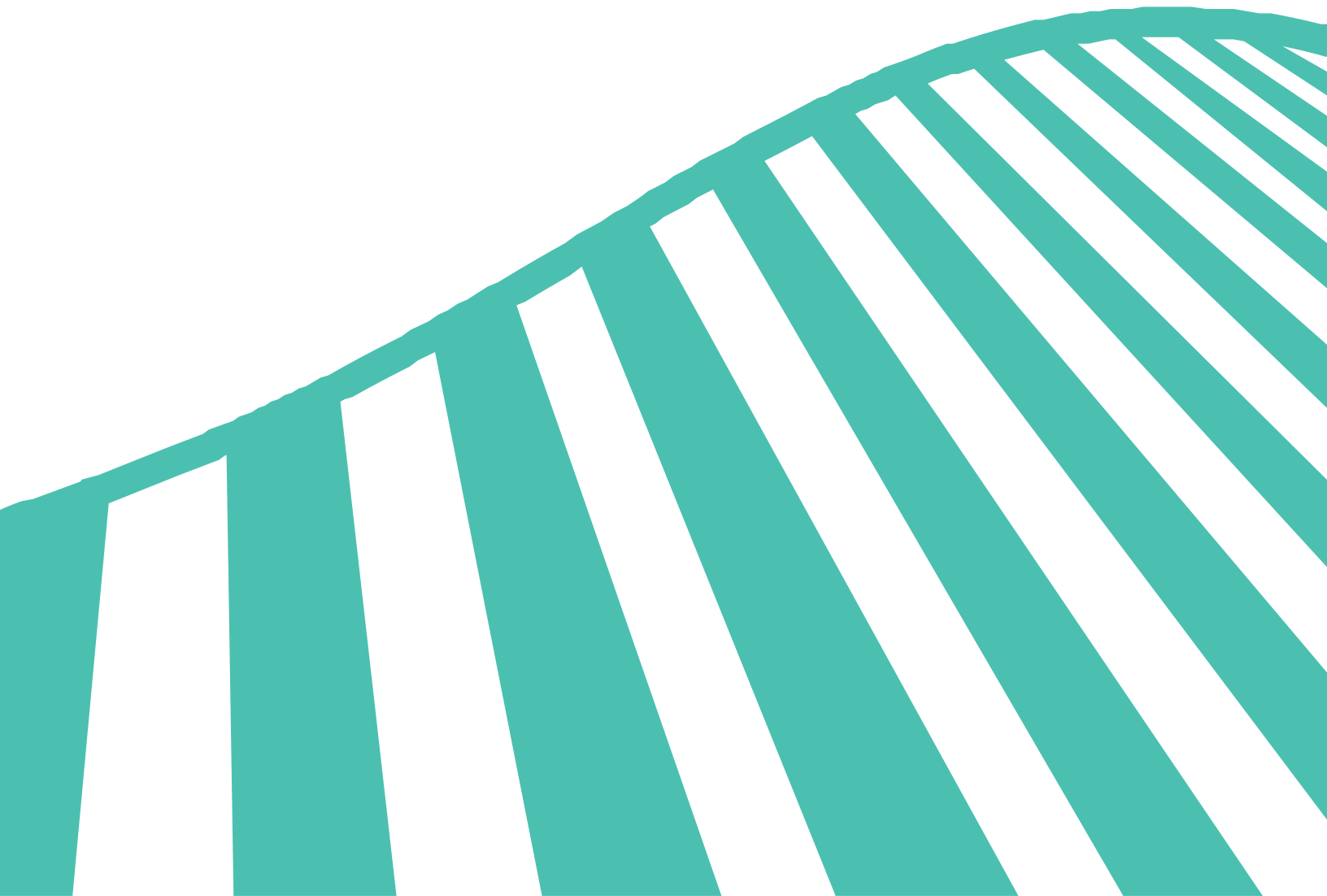




The Municipality of
**SOUTH
DUNDAS**

South Dundas Community Improvement Plan

Revised: July 2018





About the Community Improvement Plan

The Municipality of South Dundas is pleased to offer a community initiative that works toward improving our existing commercial industry. The Community Improvement Plan offers business and commercial owners (grants & loan) or renters (grants), within designated Community Improvement Areas, the opportunity to access funding through the form of grants and loans to improve their commercial buildings.

Finding the resources to improve an existing commercial business, whether it is improving an exterior façade, installing new signage or interior renovations, can be difficult. Through the Community Improvement Plan, grant and loan money will be made available to assist with exterior façade, signage and interior improvements. Improvements can range from the installation of new signage, to fully restoring historical features on a building.

Applications for this program are available through the Municipal office as well as the Municipal website. A Review Committee appointed by Council is responsible for the review of each application and the awarding of grants. Repayable loans are subject to Council approval.

This Plan is a guide for business owners/commercial property owners to use when considering funding options for their projects. The Plan lays out the eligibility criteria for each specific program as well as general guidelines to consider when undertaking an improvement project.

Introduction

The Municipality of South Dundas is a growing municipality and is the perfect place to live or locate your business. South Dundas is strategically situated in Eastern Ontario and is linked to larger urban centres through a variety of transportation networks.

Overview

A Community Improvement Plan (CIP) is a tool that allows a municipality to direct funds and implements policy initiatives toward a specifically defined project area. Section 28 of the Planning Act gives municipalities that have enabling policies in their Official Plans, the ability to prepare and enact, through By-law(s), Community Improvement Project Area(s) and a Community Improvement Plan. The Community Improvement Plan is intended to encourage rehabilitation initiatives and/or stimulate development. Once implemented, the plan allows municipalities to provide grants or loans to assist in the rehabilitation of lands and/or buildings within the defined boundaries of a Community Improvement Project Areas.



Purpose

The purpose of the Community Improvement Plan is to provide existing commercial businesses with financial incentives to improve their building's exterior facades, signage and/or building interior. Financial incentives will be in the form of grants and/or loans as made available through the Community Improvement Plan for eligible applicants.

Goals and Objectives

The objectives of the CIP include, but are not limited to:

- To maintain the well-being of areas in urban and rural settlement areas.
- To provide a safe, vibrant, pedestrian friendly environment.
- To provide an attractive and inviting environment.
- To provide a cleaner, healthier, safer environment.
- To increase employment, economic activity and investment.
- To provide for a balanced opportunity for growth and settlement.
- To ensure that community improvement projects are carried out within the Community Improvement Area. See Schedule A for the Map.
- To ensure the maintenance of the existing building stock.
- To encourage private sector investment and the strengthening of the economic base.
- To enhance the visual appearance of Community Improvement Project Areas.
- To revitalize the Urban Settlement Areas as commercial nodes and vibrant shopping destinations.
- To encourage the continued commercial vitality and economic viability through out all seasons of the year.
- To integrate the conservation of heritage resources within development and infrastructure decisions which may affect those resources.
- To create an attractive image of the Municipality that reflects the character of the community.
- To protect and enhance the character of the Village centres.

Community Improvement Areas

The CIP is composed of a single Community Improvement Project Area encompassing the Municipality of South Dundas in its entirety.

Legislation

Municipal Act

Section 106 of the Municipal Act prohibits a Municipality from providing assistance:



(1) Despite any Act, a municipality shall not assist directly or indirectly any manufacturing business or other industrial or commercial enterprise through the granting of bonuses for that purpose. 2001, c. 25, s. 106 (1).

(2) Without limiting subsection (1), the municipality shall not grant assistance by,

- a) giving or lending any property of the municipality, including money;
- b) guaranteeing borrowing;
- c) leasing or selling any property of the municipality at below fair market value; or
- d) giving a total or partial exemption from any levy, charge, or fee. 2001, c. 25, s. 106 (2).

Section 106 (3) provides an exception to the above:

Subsection (1) does not apply to a council exercising its authority under subsection 28 (6), (7) or (7.2) of the Planning Act or under section 365.1 of this Act. 2001, c. 25, s.

Planning Act

Section 28(1) of the Planning Act permits municipalities to approve a Community Improvement Plan. The Act defines a Community Improvement Plan as:

“a plan for the community improvement of a community improvement project area.”

Section 28 (1.2) explains the process under which a Community Improvement Plan can be established:

Where there is an Official Plan in effect in a local municipality or in a prescribed upper-tier municipality that contains provisions relating to community improvement in the municipality, the council may, by by-law, designate the whole or any part of an area covered by such an official plan as a community improvement project area. R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13, s. 28 (2); 2006, c. 23, s. 14 (3).

The Act further identifies provisions with respect to grants, loans, agreements, and maximum eligibility. It additionally requires the municipality to have provisions set out in their Official Plan.

Section 28 (7.3) of the Planning Act states:

The total of the grants and loans made in respect of particular lands and buildings under subsections (7) and (7.2) and the tax assistance as defined in section 365.1 of the Municipal Act, 2001 or section 333 of the City of Toronto Act, 2006, as the case may be, that is provided in respect of the lands and buildings shall not exceed the eligible cost of the community improvement plan with respect to those lands and buildings. 2006, c. 23, s. 14 (8); 2006, c. 32, Sched. C, s. 48 (3).



Official Plan of the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry

The Municipality no longer has an Official Plan, the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Official Plan is the guiding/enabling document for Community Improvement Plans. The United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Official Plan (approved February 4, 2018), addresses the Community Improvement Plan, as follows:

8.14.5 Community Improvement – Section 28

1. A Local municipality may, subject to the provisions of the Planning Act, carry out physical improvements within the community. The County may also make grants or loans to the Council of a local municipality for the purpose of carrying out a community improvement plan, on such terms as council considers appropriate. In establishing a Community Improvement Area, consideration shall be given to the following matters:

- a. The extent or deficiencies in public services, public service facilities or infrastructure.
- b. Building stock, including municipal buildings, which do not meet a Local Municipality's Property Standard By-law.
- c. The presence of vacant buildings/lands that could be developed, redeveloped, or converted to another use.
- d. The opportunity to expand the supply of housing.
- e. The need to improve the streetscape or aesthetics of an area.
- f. The presence of incompatible land uses.
- g. The presence of older industrial lands ('Brownfield') that exhibit deficiencies but provide opportunities for redevelopment.

2. The intent of this Plan is to recognize the entire County as a Community Improvement Area eligible for the establishment of one or more Community Improvement Project Areas.

A Local Municipality may implement measures for community improvement including, but not limited to:

- a. The designation of Community Improvement Project Areas by by-law and the preparation of Community Improvement Plans for one or more project areas.
- b. Scheduling community improvement projects in accordance with municipal budgets.
- c. Enforcement of the Property Standards By-law.
- d. Utilizing senior government funding programs and/or partnering or soliciting financial support or contributions in kind from the public or private sector.
- e. Supporting, through the development of land use and design criteria, proposals for conversion, infill, redevelopment or intensification of land or buildings.
- f. Pursuant to Section 28 (3) of the Planning Act, a Local Municipality may acquire and clear land for the purposes of implementing a program of community improvement.
- g. Preparing appropriate policies and guidelines to direct streetscape improvements in residential, commercial, and industrial areas.



- h. Providing and encouraging buffering techniques to reduce the impact of incompatible land uses using mechanisms such as site plan control and development permits.
- i. Considering the use of property tax or other financial or other incentives for the redevelopment of 'Brownfield' or older industrial or commercial areas or other areas considered suitable for redevelopment.
- j. Supporting Municipal Heritage Committee and heritage conservation initiatives as set out in the heritage policies of this Plan.
- k. Providing grants or loans to the registered owners or assessed owners of lands and buildings within a community improvement project area to pay for the whole or any part of the cost of rehabilitating such lands, or in undertaking other measures which conform to the community improvement plan.
- l. To reduce flooding in hazard or flood prone lands by encouraging the conservation authorities to develop and identify a two-zone concept for flood plain management in areas of historical development.

Municipality of South Dundas Economic Development Action Plan

The Municipality of South Dundas adopted an Economic Development Strategic Plan on April 18, 2017. Section 11.4 Community Development includes the following action point:

Undertake the creation of Community Improvement Plans for priority areas of South Dundas.



Commercial Building Improvement Grant & Loan Program

Purpose

To encourage and provide a program for exterior and interior design changes to stimulate redevelopment and revitalization of the Urban Settlement Area, Rural Settlement Areas, and fringe commercial areas.

To encourage and provide a program to rehabilitate existing commercial/mixed use buildings. This will promote improvement of the physical exterior conditions, signage and interior improvements that would otherwise be considered cost prohibitive by a landowner.

Façade Improvement and Signage Grant Program Description

The Municipality is providing two different grant programs for which a commercial property business and/or owners can apply for: Façade Improvements, and Signage/Awnings. The following grants are meant to improve the exterior conditions of existing structures within the designated CIP areas and provide funding for new signage and awnings. The Façade and Signage/Awning grants are only applicable to existing buildings. A maximum grant of \$5,000 is available: \$4,000 for façade improvements (including design and permit fees) and \$1,000 for signage/awnings.

Façade Improvement Grant

A onetime grant of 50% to a maximum of \$4,000 is available to assist property owners or tenants or assignees (under the provisions of Section 5.5 Eligibility) to improve the façade. Applicable design fees and building permit fees are eligible costs. Grant applicants shall consider the entire façade of the building.

Signage and Awning Grant

A onetime matching grant of 50% up to a maximum of \$1,000 is available to assist property owners or tenants or assignees (under the provisions of Section 5.5 Eligibility) to improve or install appropriate signage or awnings on an existing commercial building.

General Terms

- Works as set out in the Agreement must be completed prior to the grant portion being distributed and upon submission of proof of payment.
- An Owner/Tenant of a property may conduct the proposed works themselves, however, the Municipality will not grant funds for labour by the owner/tenant.
- Works must be completed within one year of the approved agreement unless an extension of a defined period (not to exceed 3 months) is approved by the Municipality.
- Grant funds are only released once the work is completed, receipts for the work are presented and work is completed to the satisfaction of the municipality.



- Applications reviewed as they are submitted, subject to available budgeted funding.

Commercial Improvement Loan Program Description

The purpose of Commercial Improvement Loan Program is to provide an interest free loan to commercial property owners (as set out under section 5.5 Eligibility). All successful applicants must enter into an agreement with the Municipality to receive the loan. Applicants can apply for a loan for exterior façade improvements, signage and/or interior improvements.

Commercial Improvements

In addition to exterior façade improvements and signage, Owners of an eligible commercial building can apply for an interest free loan to help finance the restoration, repair, or renovation of their building. Only owners of the building can apply to this program. Applicable design fees and building permit fees are eligible costs. Interior improvements are not eligible for grant money.

General Terms

- An interest free loan up to a maximum of \$20,000 repayable over 5 years is available to assist commercial property owners to improve their building in accordance with the Commercial Improvement program.
- An Owner of a property may conduct the proposed work themselves, however, the Municipality will not grant funds for labour by the owner.
- Only the Owner of a property can apply for the loan program.
- The loan portion is repayable over a five-year period, interest free as set out in the Agreement.
- Works must be completed within one year of the approved agreement unless an extension of a defined period (not to exceed 3 months) is approved by the Municipality.
- Loan funds are released when invoices are presented for the completed work.
- Applications will be reviewed as they are submitted, however, availability of loans cannot be guaranteed.

Design Guidelines

The following design guidelines are to help the property owner embarking on a restoration or improvement project. All applications are subject to committee review. The following design guidelines are meant to provide an overview of what the Review Committee is looking for, however, the applicant is not limited to these suggestions.

Exterior Façade Improvements

Exterior façade improvements are meant to restore and improve the aesthetic looks of an existing building. The purpose of façade improvements may be to restore heritage features



that have been covered up over time, to improve the quality of the materials or to enhance the street appeal of a business. The following recommendations for exterior façade improvements will be considered when reviewing an application.

- Repainting, cleaning, or re-facing of the front façade and the side façades if the sides are consistent with the front façade improvements being completed and only for a reasonable distance from the front of the building considering sight lines from the street.
- Repair or restoration of façade masonry, brickwork, or wood.
- Exterior woodwork.
- Replacement, repair or restoration of cornices, eaves, parapets, and other architectural features.
- Paint (including removal, surface preparation, cleaning and/or painting).
- Installation or repair of exterior lighting.
- Restoration of historic features.
- Continuity with existing/surrounding buildings.
- Entranceway modifications that improve the appearance and/or access to the commercial units.
- Replacement or repair of windows and doors with improved energy efficiency as part of a comprehensive façade improvement.
- Architectural or design fees may be eligible up to \$500 as part of the total grant awarded for completed construction.

Signage

Signage is one facet of improving the façade of an existing building. Signs help identify the location of a business as well as attract and draw in customers. The following design guidelines are highly recommended for (but are not limited to) the improvement and installation of signs within community improvement areas.

- Signs must conform to Section 3.15 of the Ontario Building Code, as amended.
- Signs attached to the same building should be located at similar height and be of similar size.
- Large neon signs, internally lit signs and/or flashing signs are strongly discouraged.
- Signs that are to be located along a County Road must obtain a sign permit from the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry.
- Signs that are not attached to a building must be less than 3.5 metres in height from the ground and must not block a public right-of-way.
- Signs should not cover up decorative, architectural and/or heritage features on a building.
- Shielded light sources are encouraged for the illumination of signs.
- Signs should not consume more than 25% of a window's surface.



- For buildings that are two storeys or greater in height, signs must be located no higher than the ceiling height of the first storey.
- Historic signs on existing buildings should be restored and reused if possible.
- Facia signs are considered as primary signs. Projecting/hanging signs are considered as secondary.
- Signs must be in accordance with the applicable Municipal, Provincial and Federal policies, by-laws, provisions, standards and guidelines.

Awnings

Awnings can add a decorative and historic touch to the front of a building. Awnings can also be used to further attract attention through the incorporation of signage.

- Awnings should not cover up decorative, architectural and/or heritage features.
- Awnings must comply with the building code.
- The installation or repair of canopies and awnings are encouraged.
- Signage may be incorporated into an awning for use as a secondary sign.
- Awnings should be used to project over individual windows or doorways.
- Retractable awnings and shed type awnings are encouraged.
- Awnings must be in accordance with the applicable Municipal, Provincial, and Federal policies, by-laws, provisions, standards and guidelines.

Façade Improvement Grant Example

A commercial building owner located within the Community Improvement Project Area is interested in improving their exterior façade through the Municipality of South Dundas' CIP program. The Owner is also looking at installing a new sign to provide greater visibility of their store and to improve the exterior condition of their façade.

The breakdown of costs is as follows:

New Signage: \$800
Exterior Improvements: \$3,500
Total Cost of Project: \$4,300

Under the Façade Improvement Program, the Owner is eligible for the following Grants:

New Signage Grant (50% of the eligible cost to a maximum of \$1,000): \$400
Exterior Improvements (50% of the eligible costs to a maximum of \$4,000): \$1,750
Total Grants Payable: \$2,150

On the completion of the exterior façade improvements and sign installation, the Review Committee inspects the improvements and the conditions of the agreement. The Owner has met all the requirements as per the agreement set out with the Municipality and is provided with a grant totaling \$2,150.



Commercial Improvement Loan Guidelines

The following guidelines detail the types of works that are considered eligible costs under the commercial improvement loan program. Applicants are not limited to the following guidelines. Further suggestions/proposals will be subject to the discretion of the Review Committee.

- Entrance modifications to provide barrier-free accessibility.
- Installation/upgrading of fire protection systems.
- Repair/replacement of roof.
- Structural repairs to walls, ceilings, floors and foundations.
- Water/flood/weatherproofing.
- Repair/replacement of windows and doors.
- Paving and repairs to parking lots.
- Landscaping improvements.
- Extension/upgrading of plumbing and electrical services for the creation of retail or office space.
- Installation of new or the required improvements to heating and ventilation and air conditioning systems.
- Other similar repairs/improvements related to health and safety issues, as may be approved.
- Architectural or design fees may be eligible up to \$500 as part of the total loan awarded for completed construction.

Eligibility

The following criteria will be used when evaluating and considering an application made for the Commercial Building Improvement Grant and Commercial Building Improvement Loan Programs.

- Must be located within the Commercial Improvement Area.
- Properties that have a commercial use and are either commercially zoned and/or commercially assessed (either fully or partially).
- Successful applicants/properties may reapply for grants and loans. New applicants/properties may receive priority for funding. Only one CIP loan can be outstanding on a property.
- Applicants must be commercial building owners or tenants of the buildings who operate a business within the CIP area.
 - Applicants for the CIP Grant program may be tenants of a property with the authorization of the Owner.
 - Applicants for the CIP Loan program must be the property owners.
- The Applicant is required to enter into an agreement with the Municipality.



- An application for a Commercial Building Improvement Program (grant and/or loan) must be consistent with the Official Plan and the Community Improvement Plan's goals and objectives.
- The provision of grants and/or loans is subject to funding availability and yearly budget allocation from South Dundas Council. However, the Municipality of South Dundas is committed to offering financial incentives for this term of Council, and the Municipalities' level of commitment will be revisited at the beginning of each new term of Council.
- Works completed or started prior to approval by the Municipality are not eligible. Costs in excess of the Agreement are the responsibility of the Owner/Applicant.
- Applications will be accepted and reviewed as they are submitted, subject to availability of funds and approval by Council.
- Total value of all grants and loans under the program cannot exceed the value of the work done.
- Stacking of grants is allowed (funding provided through the Local CIP may be used in partnership with other funding sources.)
- Applicants may apply for both the grant and loan programs. Interior improvements are only eligible under the loan program.
- Property owners who are in arrears of taxes, water and sewer or any other municipal accounts receivable are not eligible to receive a grant or loan.
- To be eligible, all outstanding work orders must be satisfied, and the applicant may not have any outstanding building permit or bylaw infractions.
- If the applicant is in default of any of the general or program specific requirements, or any other requirements of the Municipality, the Municipality may delay, reduce or cancel the approved grant/loan and require repayment of the approved grant/loan.
- The Municipality may discontinue any of the programs contained in this CIP at any time, but applicants with approved grants/loans will still receive said grant/loan, subject to meeting the general and program specific requirements.
- Eligible applicants can apply for one, more or all 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 subject property for which an applicant is making application under the programs contained in the CIP shall not exceed the eligible cost of the improvements to that property.
- Photographs of the properties/buildings that receive a grant/loan may be used by the Municipality to enable the monitoring and marketing of the CIP.
- Development must conform to the approved Official Plan, Zoning By-law and all other municipal by-laws, County By-laws, legislation and supporting regulations/approvals by other levels of government.
- Eligible façade improvements will include repair/restoration/ replacement/installation of exterior features including but not limited to the criteria as determined by the Municipality as set out in Section 5.4.



Application and Approval Process

Application Submission: Applicant submits application with supporting documentation.

Application Review & Evaluation: Review committee reviews the application in the context of the goals and objectives of the CIP. Committee recommends the application for approval by Council or rejects the application.

Application Approval: If an application is approved, an agreement is executed between the Municipality and the applicant. Depending on the program, a by-law may be required.

Payment of Funds: Applicant demonstrates that work has been completed as per the agreement. Funds are then released or paid to the applicant on completion of work.

- Applicants are required to complete the application form.
- Applicants are required to submit supporting documentation such as specifications of the proposed project including plans, drawings, and photographs of the existing building, past photos or drawings.
- A minimum of two quotes is required for the requested works. Consideration will be taken if the owner is completing the work themselves; however personal labour is not an eligible cost under this program.
- Applicants are required to obtain all necessary building, encroachment or work permits.
- Applications may be circulated to any internal municipal departments for review and comment.
- The Review Committee will also consider the following criteria when reviewing applications: location, total project value, project necessity for business continuation and whether funding was previously granted to the applicant or property.
- If the application meets all relevant criteria, the Review Committee will recommend approval of the application to Council. A business plan may be a requirement by the Review Committee.
- Final decisions on applications, extensions and allocation of funds shall be made by Council. If the Municipality delegates, its authority then the applicant shall be afforded an opportunity to appeal the staff/committee decision to Council.
- Upon approval by Council, the applicant will be required to sign a site-specific agreement with the Municipality. Council will approve or refuse any incentive or combination of incentives.
- Upon completion of the façade, awning and signage works as set out in the agreement and upon payment by the applicant, they are to submit proof of payment to the Municipality along with photos of said works.
- Upon completion of the commercial improvement loan work, they are to submit copies of the relevant invoices to the Municipality along with photos of said works.
- The Committee will review the documentation, photos and conduct a site inspection.



- If the Committee is satisfied with the completed works as outlined in the agreement, a cheque requisition will be submitted as set out in the agreement.
- The cheque requisition will be part of the next available cheque disbursement by the Municipality.
- All work approved by Council must be completed within one year of the date of the agreement or the Agreement shall be null and void.

Terms or Loan Repayment

The Recipient(s) shall repay the Loan as follows:

- The term of the Loan shall be 5 years and the annual principal amount of the Loan coming due in each year shall be added to the recipient(s)' municipal tax account and collected in the same manner as taxes as described in the Schedule B attached to the site-specific agreement.
- The loan shall be interest free for the term of the loan unless the loan is in default.

The Recipient(s) acknowledges that the Loan and any interest thereon shall form a lien or charge upon the property until the Loan has been repaid in full.

Should the property be sold prior to the fulfillment of the terms of the Agreement, the financial obligation shall immediately become due and payable, and shall be paid in full by the Recipient(s) before legal title can be transferred to the purchaser.

The loan agreement is non-transferable.

Monitoring Program

The CIP is intended to provide a proactive approach to the redevelopment of commercial property within the Municipality of South Dundas. The CIP is an opportunity for job retention and creation, increased tax assessment etc. The

Municipality will monitor:

- Jobs created/maintained.
- Approved applications
- Unapproved applications and the reasons
- Increase in municipal property assessment because of improvements.
- Compile participant comments on their experience.
- Monitor visual appearance of the community.

Marketing the CIP

The successful implementation of the CIP depends on the ability of the initiatives and funding opportunities to be effectively communicated to property owners, business owners,



and community organizations. The CIP and application forms will be available at the Municipal Office and on the Municipal website.

Amendments to the CIP

As the plan is implemented, the Plan may be refined to best meet the goals and objectives outlined in this plan. The programs may be altered at any time without an amendment to the plan. An expansion of the CIP area or an increase to the value of the financial programs would require amendment of the Plan in accordance with Section 28 of the Planning Act.

Review of the CIP

This CIP will be valid for five years from the date of Council adoption. The Municipality will have an opportunity to review the plan and bring forward recommendations prior to the lapsing of the five-year period as to whether the program should continue. The program may be renewed for a maximum of 3 (three) years by by-law.

Definitions

Agreement shall mean the terms, duration and default provisions of the grant/loan between the property owner and the Municipality. The Agreement is also subject to approval by Council.

Applicant shall mean the registered owner, assessed owner or tenants of lands and buildings within the Community Improvement Project Area and any person to whom such an owner or tenant has assigned the right to receive a grant or loan.

Community Improvement means 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 therefor, as may be appropriate or necessary;

Community Improvement Plan means a plan for the community improvement of a Community Improvement Project Area.

Community Improvement Project Area means 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.

Eligible Costs shall include the cost of materials, equipment, building permits and planning fees, and contracted labour. The cost of a study to determine the feasibility of undertaking



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the rehabilitation project may be eligible subject to consultation with the Municipality. Grants will be paid upon completion of work and approval by the Municipality.

Owner means the registered owner of the lands and includes any successors, assignees, agents, partners and any affiliated corporations.

Municipality means The Corporation of the Municipality of South Dundas.