



Community Improvement Plan



March 2024

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1.0 PREAMBLE TO THE TOWN OF TILLSONBURG COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Community improvement planning is commonly used as a tool to provide assistance to municipalities to address challenges related to growth management, accessibility and development. It provides a means of planning and financing development activities that effectively assist in the redevelopment of lands, buildings and infrastructure, as well as the creation of affordable housing, as through the implementation of various financial incentives.

The intent of a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) is to outline, in one document, the possible range of improvement options which may be undertaken to promote and encourage renewal, redevelopment and rehabilitation within the key areas of the Town requiring investment. The Plan is also intended to provide general design direction to complement and assist with the implementation of the financial incentive programs enabled by this CIP.

The Plan is intended to provide a list of suggested incentive programs that Council might draw upon in its decision making to direct funding towards developments deemed as a priority to assist with downtown improvement and attracting investment for significant development projects. As such, the Town is not obligated to implement all of the incentives outlined in this Plan, and may discontinue or reduce funding for the incentives at any time. Further, Town Council reserves the right to determine, at its sole discretion, the implementation schedule of the proposed financial incentives contained in the Plan.

1.2 LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

1.2.1 Municipal Act

Ontario's Municipal Act, 2001 is the principle statute governing municipal organization and the delivery of services in Ontario. The Act came into effect on January 1, 2003, replacing the 1990 Municipal Act. Effective January 1, 2007, the *Municipal Statute Law Amendment Act* introduced significant amendments to the Municipal Act, providing municipalities with greater flexibility to meet community expectations and fulfilling responsibilities.

Section 106 of the Municipal Act prohibits municipalities from directly or indirectly assisting any manufacturing business or other industrial or commercial enterprise through the granting of financial incentives, a practice that is commonly referred to as 'bonusing'. Notwithstanding Section 106, the Act does provide an exception which allows a municipality to offer certain incentives where the said municipality has approved a Community Improvement Plan in accordance with Section 28 of the Planning Act.

1.2.2 Planning Act

The Planning Act empowers the Council of a lower-tier or local municipality to designate Community Improvement Project Areas (CIPAs) and develop CIPs in accordance with the

Act. Where a municipality has an approved CIP in place, the Act directs that the municipality may:

- Acquire, hold, clear, grade, otherwise prepare, sell, lease or otherwise dispose of lands;
- Construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on lands acquired or held by the municipality;
- Make grants or loans to registered owners, assessed owners and tenants of lands or buildings to pay for the whole or part of any cost of rehabilitating such lands or buildings; and
- Enter into agreements with any government authority for conducting studies and for the preparation, implementation and financing of plans and programs.

1.2.3 Provincial Policy Statement

The 2020 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS)– provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. The PPS establishes the policy foundation for regulating the development and use of land and supports the provincial goal of enhancing the quality of life for the citizens of Ontario. The PPS is issued under Section 3 of the Planning Act, which requires that all decisions affecting land use planning matters “shall be consistent with” policy statements issued under the Act.

The PPS provides high-level policy direction pertinent to community improvement areas, including intensification, redevelopment, mixed land use and heritage preservation. In this regard the PPS generally promotes:

- Land use patterns in settlement areas based on densities and a mix of land uses that use land and resources efficiently, promote energy efficiency and provide a range of uses and opportunities for intensification and redevelopment (Section 1.1.3.2);
- Opportunities for intensification and redevelopment where this can be accommodated taking into account existing building stock or areas, including brownfield sites (Section 1.1.3.3);
- Development standards which facilitate intensification, redevelopment and compact form (Section 1.1.3.4);
- Providing an appropriate range of housing types and densities to meet projected requirements of current and future residents with residential intensification, densities which support active transportation modes including public transit, and redevelopment which facilitates a compact form (Section 1.4.3);
- Planning of streets and spaces which meet the needs of pedestrians, foster social interaction and facilitate community connectivity (Section 1.5.1);
- A land use pattern, density and mix of uses which minimizes vehicle trips and supports transit and active transportation (Section 1.6.7.4);
- Opportunities for economic development, maintaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of the downtown and main streets and encouraging a sense of place by conserving features that help define culture (Section 1.7.1);
- Energy conservation and efficiency and improved air quality through compact form and a structure of nodes and corridors, focusing employment and other travel-

intensive uses on sites which are well served by transit, improving the mixture of employment and housing to shorten commute journeys, design to maximize energy efficiency and conservation (Section 1.8.1); and,

- Conservation of significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes (Section 2.6.1).

1.2.4 Oxford County 10-Year Shelter Plan and Master Housing Strategy

The County of Oxford adopted a 10-year Shelter Plan in 2014 for the purpose of providing a vision of how housing services and supports should be delivered to meet the diverse needs of the community. As required by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH), a five-year review of the Plan took place in 2019, highlighting a number of projected outcomes and strategies into 2024, including the preservation and optimization of existing housing stock and an increase in the affordable rental housing supply.

In light of rising rental and housing costs, and the growing wait-list for community housing, affordable housing was further identified as a top priority item in the 2022 County Budget Survey. While the creation of affordable housing is central to the County's 10-Year Shelter Plan, based on significant changes in the housing market, there was a need to consider a Master Housing Strategy (MHS) to support the implementation of additional housing options. Through the completion of the MHS, it was determined that a lack of housing supply is leading to less affordability and more demand on rental housing. In light of this, the MHS was developed in an effort to provide a variety of strategies and initiatives to assist in addressing the current housing supply shortage. Of note, the Strategy included the consideration of incentives to further promote more affordable housing options throughout the County.

In following development of this strategy, County Council further authorized their staff to review the CIP with the intent of formally exempting affordable housing projects from County planning application fees and encouraging Area Municipalities to consider similar incentives with respect to Affordable Housing.

1.2.5 Oxford County Official Plan

Central Area Vision

Section 8.1.1 of the Oxford County Official Plan outlines the Municipal Planning Strategy for the Town of Tillsonburg, as articulated in Chapter 8 of the Official Plan. The goals articulated in Section 8.1.1 serve as general guidelines for detailed policy development. The Town aims to maintain and promote the downtown as the hub or heartbeat of the town, rich in commercial diversity and amenities which bolster its role as the focal point of the community.

In the future, the Central Area of the Town of Tillsonburg will remain as the most functionally diverse area of the Town and will serve as the primary business, cultural and administrative

centre. The commercial core of the Central Area will remain a viable regional retail shopping district capable of meeting the day to day and specialty needs of residents of the Town as well as serving the southern part of Oxford County and portions of Elgin and Norfolk Counties. At the same time the Central Area will increasingly serve as a people place and will have increased day and night activity through the introduction of residential development within and near the Central Area and through better integration of the Central Area with the wider community.

New buildings and spaces will reflect a human scale of development which results in a significantly enhanced pedestrian environment. The heritage resources of the Central Area will be protected through heritage conservation and enhanced through new development which respects nearby heritage buildings.

To support the Town's goal of a vibrant central area, the Town supports the creation of new residential units within commercial and institutional buildings within the Central Area through the development of appropriate zoning standards.

In addition, the Official Plan directs that where new development, expansion, or redevelopment is undertaken, Site Plan Control shall address issues such as parking, signage, lighting, barrier-free design and vegetation, to the effect of ensuring compatibility with adjacent land uses and achieving an overall high quality of development.

Residential Areas

Official Plan policies in Section 8.2 facilitate a variety of housing type, tenure, cost and location that meets the changing needs of all types of households by providing for a variety and mix of housing throughout the Town.

A strategic aim of the Town is also to promote and facilitate the provision of affordable housing through the co-operative efforts of all levels of government, the private sector and volunteer interest groups through such means as technical assistance, land conveyances, joint ventures, regulatory measures, and incentives.

Cultural Heritage Policies

The Official Plan requires that significant built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes that are valued by the community, be conserved. Section 8.3.2.2.5 of the Official Plan recognizes the importance of conserving and enhancing the Town's heritage resources, including buildings, structures, sites and landscape elements having architectural, historical or cultural significance. In this regard the Town:

- Shall maintain the heritage resources which are in its ownership and shall ensure that public improvements are sensitive to the heritage character of the resource. In addition Town Council shall require that essential heritage elements are conserved, incorporated or maintained when any new use or development of such feature is proposed;

- May designate individual buildings or sites in the Central Area under the Ontario Heritage Act;
- May authorize the use of the density bonus provisions or transfer of density provisions of the Planning Act, in accordance with Chapter 10, Implementation Measures, as incentives to the private sector for heritage conservation;
- May administer programs of senior levels of government directed towards heritage conservation and may develop complementary municipal programs to maintain and enhance heritage elements in the Central Area.

The CIP should support these policies in the Official Plan by recognizing existing cultural heritage resources and promoting the preservation and restoration of potentially significant properties within the Community Improvement Project Area.

Transportation Policies

According to Section 8.3.2.2.6, a strategic approach for Transportation is to provide for a safe, convenient and aesthetically pleasing integrated transportation system which will promote cycling and walking in the Central Area while continuing to provide adequate facilities to meet vehicular needs.

The Town also endeavours to support improvements to the transportation system which will increase the use of bicycles and walking in the Town for commuting to work, shopping and other purposes, consistent with efforts to improve air quality, energy efficiency and non-auto modes of transportation.

Community Improvement Policies

Section 10.4 of the County Official Plan includes policies intended to direct County and Area Municipal actions regarding upgrading, redeveloping and rehabilitating the physical environment of existing, older residential neighbourhoods, ancillary open space and recreational areas, commercial centres and industrial areas. The policies are intended to guide both private and public community improvement activities within designated community improvement project areas and are premised on a number of goals, including:

- The upgrade and improvement of municipal hard services, social and recreational facilities and public utilities;
- The preservation and upgrade of older residential neighbourhoods and settlements;
- The strengthening of existing central areas;
- The improvement of existing industrial areas by encouraging further development and redevelopment;
- Consideration of participation in senior government funding assistance programs; and
- Encouraging the coordination of municipal, private and community organizations in promoting community improvement efforts.

In addition to a number of general criteria for the designation of community improvement areas, the Official Plan provides additional guidance for identifying residential, commercial

and industrial improvement areas based on, among other matters, the structural integrity of building stock, lack of community facilities and, in the case of commercial improvement districts, those areas that are experiencing high vacancy rates, inadequate off-street parking and poor traffic circulation.

Contaminated Sites

Section 10.4.6 of the Official Plan provides that where a redevelopment proposal demonstrates a change in land use on a site where contaminants may be present, the County and/or Town will require that environmental site assessment and site cleanup be undertaken as required in accordance with Section 3.3.3.2. The County and/or Town may:

- Provide grants and/or loans to owners and tenants of properties to assist in clean up and redevelopment of the lands or buildings to conform with the Community Improvement Plan;
- Cancel or not increase the municipal portion of the property tax on sites during the rehabilitation period; and,
- Cancel or not increase the education portion of the property tax on sites during the rehabilitation period with the approval of the Ministry of Finance.

1.2.6 Central Area Design Study

The Central Area Design Study was completed in 2012 by Brook McIlroy, Town staff, and County Planning Staff. It was approved by Council in September 2012. The main objectives of the design study are:

- Elevate and promote the cultural heritage and built form of Broadway Street;
- Create an urban design vision that highlights the diverse character of the Central Area of Tillsonburg, while prioritizing inherently sustainable approaches;
- Identify the unique character areas within the Central Area and prepare specific visions and urban design guidelines for each;
- Improve connection within the Central Area as well as between the downtown and the surrounding community;
- Transform Broadway Street into a weekday, evening, and weekend destination with a mix of uses and activities.

Town staff have identified that the successful implementation of the study will be tied to incentives and CIP programs that will encourage property owners and developers to use the recommendations of the Design Study into their projects.

To date, through a Façade Improvement Program Grant, the Town and Tillsonburg BIA has partnered with numerous businesses and property owners to improve the façade of buildings at prominent locations in the downtown.

1.3 PROCESS

In August 2015, Town Staff together with Planning staff initiated the review of the three existing Community Improvement Plans (Dereham Forge, Van Norman, Tillsonburg Gateway CIPs) and determined it would be advantageous to develop a new comprehensive Town-wide CIP that would identify several financial incentive programs to assist with renewal in the Downtown areas of the Town, vacant industrial sites, and brownfield projects within the Town. The consolidated Town-wide CIP was approved in 2017. Subsequently, it was determined in 2022 that an update to the CIP to reflect housing needs was required.

The Town CIP has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of Section 28 of the Planning Act. The draft Community Improvement Plan (CIP) was circulated to the prescribed public bodies as required by Section 17 of the Act and a final draft was prepared, reflecting those comments received through the noted circulation, where applicable.

2.0 TOWN OF TILLSONBURG COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

2.1 COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT AREA (CIPA)

The CIP applies to all lands within the Town of Tillsonburg, as identified on Appendices I, respectively.

2.2 PURPOSE

The purpose of the Town CIP is to promote the development and redevelopment of buildings and lands within the Town's Central Area (areas designated as Central Business District & Entrepreneurial District as depicted on Schedule T-1 of the Oxford County Official Plan), support brownfield redevelopment opportunities, support redevelopment of vacant employment buildings throughout the Town and support the Town's Housing objectives and other goals and objectives as outlined in the Town's Community Strategic Plan.

2.3 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The fundamental goal of the CIP is to promote development in the Central Areas and employment lands by encouraging property and business owners to improve the visual quality and function of buildings with a view to enhancing the long-term viability and economic stability of the Town. The goals of the CIP are consistent with the policies of the County Official Plan and compliment the directives of the County's 10-Year Shelter Plan and the Master Housing Strategy.

Generally, the objectives of the CIP are to:

- facilitate the ongoing viability, vitality and revitalization of the Central Area of the Town;
- encourage long-term investment that improves the economic climate of the Town;
- outline a set of key design principles to form a basis for improvement efforts;
- improve the physical and visual quality of the existing building inventory;

- conserve and strengthen traditional heritage features within designated community improvement areas by encouraging improvement that is 'sympathetic' to the history of the area and encouraging reuse;
- promote a visually attractive, safe and clean public realm that is accommodating and accessible to all users;
- stimulate private investment activity and private property maintenance;
- creation of affordable housing for low and moderate income households by assisting to minimize the barriers and costs associated with the development process;
- further promote and encourage the development of affordable housing;
- use existing services and infrastructure more effectively;
- stimulate investment in housing that meets the goals and objectives of the Community Strategic Plan; including various forms of accommodation along the Housing Continuum (such as Affordable/Affordable Rental*); and,
- increases the sense of community participation and civic pride.

*NOTE: AFFORDABLE HOUSING HAS TYPICALLY BEEN DEFINED AS EITHER OWNERSHIP OR RENTAL HOUSING WHERE MONTHLY HOUSING COSTS DO NOT EXCEED 30% OF GROSS MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME. AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING HAS ALSO BEEN DEFINED AS UNITS RENTED AT OR BELOW THE CMHC AVERAGE MARKET RENT, AS PROVIDED BY THE MINISTRY OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS AND HOUSING. FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS PLAN, THE DEFINITION FOR THESE CATEGORIES OF HOUSING WILL BE AS DEFINED IN THE CURRENT VERSION OF THE COUNTY OF OXFORD'S MUNICIPAL HOUSING FACILITIES BY-LAW.

2.4 MONITORING AND CHANGES TO THE CIP

The Town supports actions that may be undertaken to promote revitalization and renewal, either through the use of one initiative or a combination of complementing incentives. However, the Town is not obligated to implement the incentive programs as outlined in this Plan and may choose to discontinue any incentive associated with the CIP at the sole discretion of Town Council.

Where Town Council resolves to discontinue a program or incentive, any approved projects underway at the time will generally be honoured until the development is concluded.

2.5 IMPLEMENTATION

Council shall prepare and adopt a set of guidelines and procedures to establish specifics on how the various elements of the Plan will be implemented. The guidelines will address such issues as the application and approval procedures, agreement requirements, and how decisions will be made regarding which projects receive approval.

At the time Council establishes its annual budget, Council will determine the maximum contribution to be made available to various programs under the CIP for the current year.

The Town will conduct periodic reviews of the programs being implemented under the CIP to determine their effectiveness and to determine whether funding levels should be increased or decreased, or whether modifications to the program should be made. Any

changes to the financial incentives programs will require pre-consultation with Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH).

3.0 FINANCIAL INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

This section outlines the financial incentive programs that may be implemented by the Town through the CIP. These incentive programs are designed to stimulate and assist new development, redevelopment and rehabilitation of vacant, underutilized or deteriorated properties in the designated areas of the Town and may be funded by way of both grants and loans.

Annual limits on expenditures/funds to be made available for the financial incentive programs in this Plan will be determined by Town Council who may also adjust rebate amounts in accordance with available funds and Community Strategic Plan objectives. Detailed program implementation policies will also be established by the Town for the programs identified in this Plan.

The following general implementation and eligibility criteria shall apply to all financial incentive programs offered through this plan:

- Applications for funding shall generally be submitted prior to the issuance of a building permit. Grants will only be paid out after the applicable improvements have been completed and inspected by the Town and all outstanding work orders have been satisfied;
- All taxes and other Municipal financial obligations for a property must be paid in full before any grant or loan is paid to an eligible property owner. The Town reserves the right to request an independent audit of the applicants accounts, at the expense of the applicant;
- If a property is under an assessment appeal, the grant or loan application will be held in abeyance until the appeal is resolved;
- Any program applicant may be required to provide a business plan and detailed cost estimates for the proposed works as part of the application;
- Participating property owners may be required to enter into an agreement with the Town specifying such items as the level of loan or grant available and the terms and conditions associated with the loan or grant, including the circumstances whereby an owner would be obligated to repay the Town for any loans or grants received;
- If a building erected or improved with a program grant or loan is demolished prior to the expiry of the grant or loan period, or the property is not maintained in a satisfactory state of repair consistent with Town By-laws, the grant or loan is forfeited and will be recovered by the Town;

- To be eligible for any of the funding programs, the proposed work shall conform with the goals of this CIP, all Town policies, standards and procedures including the Town's Property Standards By-law, Town's Sign By-law, Town Zoning By-law, site plan guidelines and the Central Area Design Study as appropriate, and will be subject to review and the issuance of all required planning and development approvals and building permits;
- All construction should be completed within two (2) years of the application being approved or following the issuance of a building permit as determined by the Town in its sole and absolute discretion, acting reasonably. Failing which, the approved funding, either all or in part, shall be cancelled.
- The total cost of all grants and loans provided by the Town and County combined may not exceed the total cost of rehabilitation;
- All applications for assistance under this CIP will be considered on a 'first come, first served' basis and will be restricted to the limit of budgeted funding. Should the number of eligible projects exceed the annual funding available, those eligible projects will be held in queue until, and if, funding becomes available the following year;
- Any applicant may be required to provide detailed quotes and/or cost estimates for services and materials subject to an application;
- The Town may, at any time, discontinue or cancel funding of a program.
- Unused funds from a particular program may to be transferred to reserve for CIP use in future years at the discretion of Town Council.

The following is a brief description of each program that may be offered at the discretion of Town Council within all or part of the Community Improvement Project Area. A summary of the program descriptions appear in Appendix II of this Plan.

3.1 INCREMENTAL TAX REBATE PROGRAM

This program is intended to provide a grant to owners of lands and buildings who undertake improvements or redevelopment that result in an increased property assessment. The amount of the grant provided will depend on the amount of the municipal portion of property taxes that has increased as a result of the improvements. The increase in realty tax represents the annual municipal realty tax in each year following improvement or redevelopment of lands and buildings over and above municipal realty tax prior to improvement or redevelopment of the lands in question. All commercial and residential properties located in the Central Area are eligible for this program. Residential, Commercial and Industrial areas outside of the Central Area may also be eligible where applicable. For additional clarity, the only residential properties outside of the Central Area that may be considered under this program are multi-residential projects, non-profit owned rental or ownership projects, or affordable housing projects subject to an appropriate funding

agreement with the County, or Additional Residential Unit developments that meet one or more Town housing objectives (as outlined in the Community Strategic Plan).

The increase in taxes, or tax increment, is calculated by subtracting the municipal portion of property taxes before reassessment from the municipal portion of property taxes after reassessment. The Town may provide any proportion of the increment for any length of time that Council deems appropriate, to a maximum of 10 years. The tax increment does not include any increase/decrease in municipal taxes due to a general tax rate increase/decrease, or projects that result in a tax class change without an increase in assessment due to redevelopment. Where a redevelopment results in a tax class change, the pre-project assessment shall be set as the initial value in the new tax class. The pre-project municipal property taxes will be calculated by taking the pre-project assessment multiplied by the current year tax rate of the applicable property class.

The first year of the program shall generally be the first full tax year after completion of the project and following the issuance of the occupancy permit.

For clarity, the specific calculation used in determining the annual grant amount shall be:

Annual Grant = (Post-project Municipal Property Taxes – (Pre-project Assessment * Current Year Municipal Tax Rate)) * Increment Tax Rebate Percentage.

3.2 FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

This program is intended to provide a loan or grant to encourage exterior renovations which are in keeping with the desired aesthetic effect and historical/heritage characteristics of buildings within the designated areas. Eligible improvements may consist of external repairs to façades, including signage, lighting and security enhancements, entrances and display windows. Interior work is not eligible. All commercial and residential properties in the Central Area shall be eligible and commercial properties outside of the Central Area may be eligible at prominent locations.

3.3 ALLEYWAY FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

This program is intended to provide a loan or grant to property owners in the Central Area to assist with non-street front façade improvements to be consistent with the Central Area Design Study and to improve the appearance of rear alleys and other visible servicing corridors. All commercial and residential properties in the Central Area shall be eligible.

For the purposes of this program, a non-street front facade shall mean a portion of a non-street front building that is visible from an adjacent street or alleyway. All works shall be pre-approved and generally be in keeping with the Central Area Design Study or other design guidelines as may be approved from time to time.

3.4 ACCESSIBILITY RENOVATION PROGRAM

This program is intended to provide a grant to improve accessibility to and of existing commercial buildings and properties through the renovation of building entrances, upgrading of doors, installation of power assist door operators, installation of ramps, elevating devices, and accessibility washrooms for the public.

This grant is intended to provide funds to assist owners and tenants of existing commercial buildings, particularly older buildings in the Central Area, with accessibility improvements to improve the accessibility of commercial spaces in the Town.

3.5 BUILDING PERMIT FEE REBATE PROGRAM

This program is intended to provide a grant equivalent to the fees paid for Building Permits. The program is meant to stimulate and encourage development and property improvements.

3.6 ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN GRANT PROGRAM

This program is intended to provide a grant to owners of lands and buildings in the Central Area who wish to hire a professional such as an architect (for preparing designs, estimates, etc.), an engineer (for structural analysis) or accredited designer (landscape, interior, lighting or graphics/signage) to develop a project concept for other programs offered under this CIP. Design Grants may be applied for prior to the submission of an application for such applicable program. All design work shall generally be in keeping with the Central Area Design Study to be eligible for funding through this program. All commercial properties in the Central Area shall be eligible.

3.7 LEGAL AND REGISTRATION COSTS

In order to provide additional motivation for those landowners accessing the CIP programs, the Town may assume a portion of the legal costs and costs associated with registration of agreements for all of the above listed programs.

3.8 CONTAMINATED PROPERTY OR SUBSTANDARD BUILDING INCENTIVE PROGRAM

This program is intended to stimulate private sector investment in the reuse and redevelopment of suspected contaminated sites or Substandard Buildings and partially offset the costs associated with the site/building assessment and remediation.

Incentives offered by the Town could include a grant equivalent to 50% of the cost of a environmental or building hazard study including a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment, designated substances and hazardous materials survey, remedial work plan or risk assessment. A maximum grant would be determined by Town Council per environmental study and per property.

3.9 HOUSING PROJECT Incentive Program

The Town may provide loans, either interest bearing or interest free, or grants for projects that increase the supply of non-market housing, i.e. affordable, attainable or community housing projects (e.g. non-profit owned, Habitat for Humanity). Financial support should be accompanied by a legal and binding commitment by the project owner/manager in terms of providing these non-market housing units, or by way of a municipal housing facilities agreement with the County. In general, commitments should be longer term in nature and demonstrate benefits that exceed the support provided.

In addition, Oxford County currently offers an Affordable Housing Incentive Program. This Program will provide a waiver for the costs of applicable County planning application fees, including Condominium, Official Plan Amendment and Consent, as set out in the County's Fees and Charges By-Law.. The County of Oxford is strongly committed to working with the Town to cooperatively and effectively address housing needs. The County CIP and the Town's CIP works together to address common housing goals in a partnership beneficial to both levels of government, with the understanding that varying incentives can be provided at each level.

To complement the County's Affordable Housing Incentive Program, and provide further incentives for affordable housing, the Town of Tillsonburg may offer eligible housing projects a waiver from Town planning application fees. The waiver does not include any deposits required to cover the costs of peer reviews in relation to studies submitted in support of a planning application.

In order to qualify for the Housing Project Incentive Program, the eligible housing project must be located within the Town limits, and generally meet one or both of the following criteria:

- An affordable rental housing project that is subject to a Municipal Housing Facilities Agreement with the County, pursuant to Section 110(1) of the *Municipal Act* and County By-law 4664-2006, as amended, including appropriate securities, to ensure the property is developed and maintained, either primarily or partially, as affordable rental housing for a specified term.
- An affordable ownership housing project that is developed by Habitat for Humanity, or a similar non-profit organization that is devoted to providing affordable ownership housing, and is subject to a Municipal Housing Facilities Agreement, pursuant to Section 110(1) of the *Municipal Act* and County By-law 4664-2006, as amended, or a similar funding agreement, with the County, including appropriate securities to ensure the property is developed and offered, either primarily or partially, as affordable ownership housing for a specified term.

The Town of Tillsonburg is committed to working with the County of Oxford to cooperatively and effectively address housing needs. The Town's CIP enables the both levels of Local Government to further address common housing goals in a partnership beneficial to both

levels of government, with the understanding that varying incentives can be provided at each level.

The Town of Tillsonburg may, in accordance with its Community Improvement Plan, and subject to the sole and absolute discretion of Town Council, provide any/all of the support programs offered by the Town even in the case where the project is not subject to a Municipal Housing Facilities Agreement or owned by a non-profit organization.

3.10 COMMERCIAL BUILDING INTERIOR RENOVATION PROGRAM

The Commercial Building Interior Renovation Program provides grants for renovations to commercial properties within the Town of Tillsonburg. Interior improvements to commercial units can help property owners and new business tenants fill vacant storefronts, support a more vibrant street life, and create better first impressions of the community. The Program is available to owners of vacant properties or tenants of vacant street level buildings subject to approval by Town Council and available funding.

Tenants applying to the Program must have the property owner's written permission to make any improvements to the property and apply for this program. Grants can be up to 50% of the costs of eligible **interior improvements** to a maximum of \$10,000. Applications for work totaling less than \$2,500 are ineligible. Common areas (foyers or hallways) are not eligible unless improved along with a commercial unit.

Eligibility

Eligible applications must answer yes to **all** of the following:

- Commercial unit is located on the main floor and facing the street;
- Commercial unit is located within the Town of Tillsonburg;
- Building is at least 20 years old;
- Commercial unit has been vacant for at least 6 months prior to applying to the Program or has been underutilized over the last 3 years;
- Application submitted prior to the start of construction;
- By construction's end, and for the length of the maintenance period, windows and doors will not be covered by security bars, grills, rolling shutters or doors, posters, large window appliques, vinyl wraps or otherwise obscured; and,
- By project's end, the commercial unit must have a minimum 2-year lease with a commercial tenant.

Eligible Work

Eligible work improvements are to the interior of the commercial unit only and include at least three of the following:

- Structural repairs;

- Electrical upgrades;
- Plumbing upgrades and fixtures (i.e. sinks, toilets, etc) but does not include backflow valve installation;
- HVAC;
- Flooring and/or doors, windows and ceilings;
- Demising walls;
- Drywall and/or painting;
- Improved accessibility (i.e. ramps, handrails, accessible washrooms);
- Fire safety compliance (i.e. sprinklers); and,
- Improvements related to health and safety; including asbestos/other hazardous material abatement;

Eligible costs that can be reimbursed through the Program also include architecture/design/engineering fees (20% maximum), project management/administration fees (10% maximum), demolition, equipment rentals and labour costs.

Ineligible items of work include:

- Non-permanent fixtures such as bars or cabinetry;
- Appliances, furniture, window coverings and other moveable objects;
- Lightbulbs;
- Permit fees, service fees and insurance; and
- Gas, tools, consumables, cell phone fees and other incidental costs.

The Commercial Building Interior Renovation Program is not a maintenance program to fix broken windows, interior lighting or security systems, clean clogged plumbing and/or replace ceiling panels. The intent of the Program is to improve the function, efficiency and interior appearance of commercial business premises.

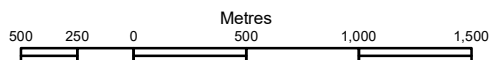
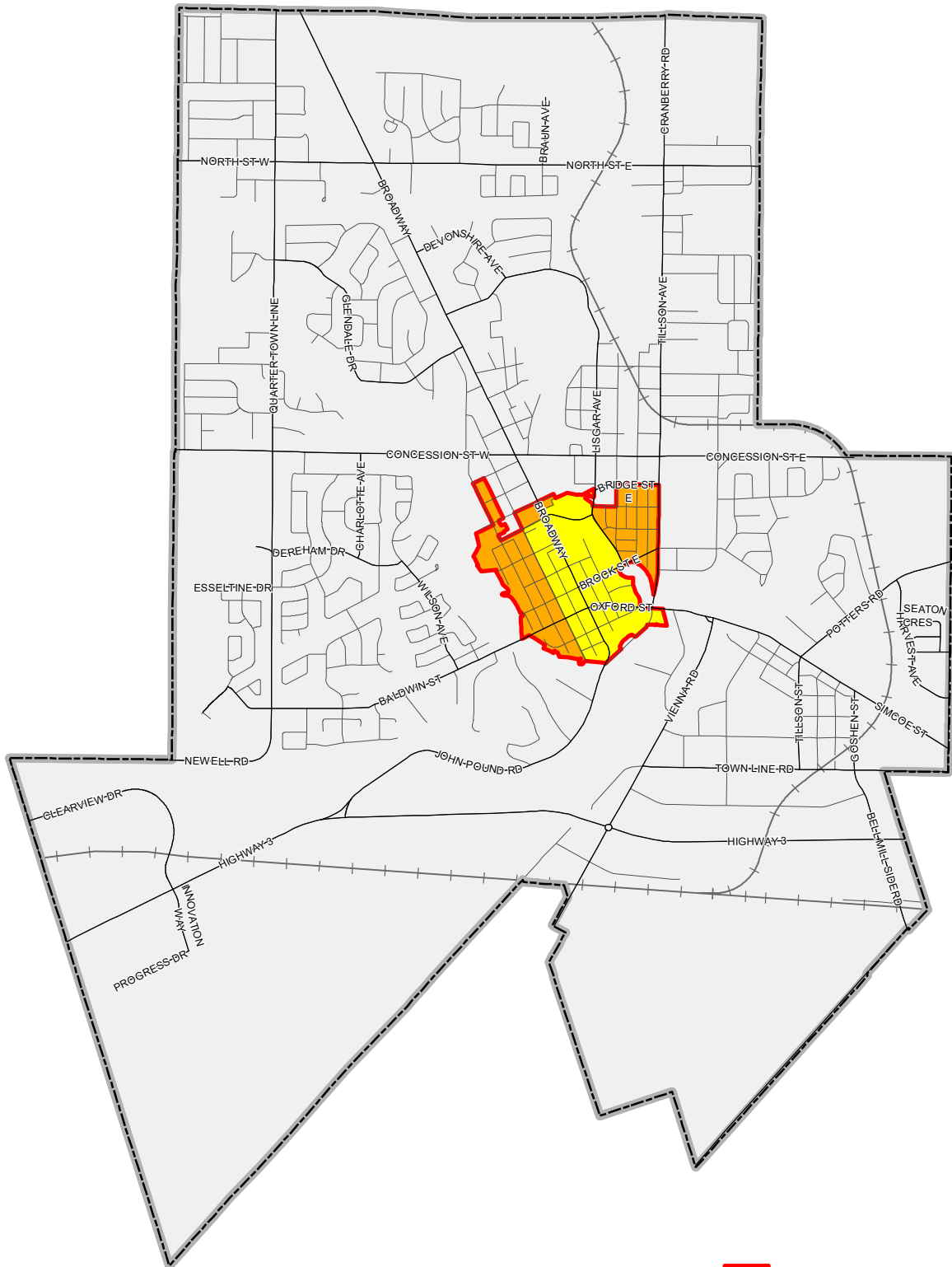
3.11 COUNTY TAX GRANT BACK INCENTIVE PROGRAM

The County has also adopted a Community Improvement Plan that applies to those lands within the County of Oxford that are subject to a local municipal downtown, central area, or village core-oriented community improvement plan. All lands within the Central Area of the Town of Tillsonburg, as identified on Appendix I, have been designated by County Council, by by-law, as a Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA) for the purpose of administrating the CCIP.

Similar to the tax incentive program offered through the Town CIP, the County CIP provides a tax grant back to owners of commercial, industrial or institutional properties and buildings who undertake improvements or redevelopment that result in an increased property assessment.

Where a property is eligible for a tax grant back in accordance with the eligibility criteria as contained in the Town CIP and is located in the Central Area, as defined in the County CIP, the subject property may be eligible to receive a grant back for the increased County portion of taxes that would result in the proposed redevelopment or improvement. As the County CIP is intended to complement and enhance the incentives offered through the Town CIP, this duplication of financial assistance is acknowledged and will be permitted.

APPENDIX 1
TOWN OF TILLSONBURG
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT AREA



- Central Area
- Central Business District
- Entrepreneurial District
- Town of Tillsonburg Community Improvement Project Area

APPENDIX II**TOWN OF TILLSONBURG COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN****SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES**

PROGRAM	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA
Alleyway Façade Improvement Grant	<p>Interest free loan or grant for alleyway building facade improvements and works to comply with the Central Area Design Study, for properties in the Central Area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50/50 matching funds. • Maximum of \$10,000 per project. • Commercial properties in the Central Area are eligible. • Projects that incorporate Ontario Building Code improvements such as stairs, railings, guards, fire escapes, etc. are also eligible. • Projects that meet energy conservation and efficiency goals shall be given a higher score.
Architectural Design Grant Program	<p>Grant to offset cost of retaining professionals to provide acceptable design(s), in accordance with the Town Central Area Design Study for eligible properties in the Central Area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50/50 matching funds. • Maximum of \$2,500 per project. • Commercial properties in the Central Area are eligible. • Affordable or social housing projects are eligible
Contaminated Property or Substandard Building Redevelopment Grant Program	<p>Grant to cover up to 50% of the cost of an environmental or building hazard study including a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (ESA), designated substances and hazardous materials survey, remedial work plan or risk assessment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50/50 matching funds. • Maximum of \$10,000 per project. • Applicant must provide a copy of the final report to the Town.

PROGRAM	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA
<p>Building Permit Fee Rebate Program</p>	<p>Rebate of Building Permits fees for commercial, industrial and multi-residential properties in the CIP area. Commercial Properties outside of the Central Area are not eligible for building permit grants.</p> <p>Industrial Projects – Small (Project value of \$150,000 to \$1,000,000)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant of 100% of the applicable building permit fees offered as a rebate once the project is completed. <p>Industrial Projects – Large (Project value of \$1,000,000 or more)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant of 50% of the applicable building permit fees up to a maximum of \$20,000, or other amount as may be approved by Council, offered as a rebate once the project is completed. <p>Commercial Projects – Central Area (Minimum project value of \$150,000) Rebate of the applicable building permit fee offered once the project is complete, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General renovations/rehabilitations - 25% Rebate; • Projects that will improve the overall attractiveness of the streetscape and downtown - 50% Rebate; • Projects that meet above criteria and provide exemplary attention to detail and a high level of design – 75% Rebate. <p>Social Housing Projects as defined herein may be eligible for 100% rebate of Building Permit Fees for the units meeting this definition</p>
<p>Facade Improvement Grant</p>	<p>Interest free loan or grant for exterior renovations of buildings within the Central Area. Eligible improvements may consist of external repairs to facades, including signage, lighting and security enhancements, entrances and display windows. Interior renovations will not be eligible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50/50 matching funds. • Maximum of \$10,000 per façade. • Commercial properties in the Central Area are eligible. • Other commercial properties outside of the Central Area may also be eligible at prominent locations. These projects will not be eligible for the matching BIA funds. • Project shall conform to the design principles contained within the Town’s Central Area Design Study as determined by the Façade Improvement Review Committee. • Projects that meet energy conservation and efficiency goals shall be given a higher score. • Affordable or social housing projects may also be eligible subject to Council approval and funding

PROGRAM	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA
<p>Accessibility Renovation Grant</p>	<p>Grant, of up to \$3000, to improve accessibility to existing commercial buildings and properties through the renovation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • building entrances; • upgrading of doors; • installation of power assist door operators; • installation of ramps; • elevating devices; • accessible washrooms for the public. <p>This grant is intended to provide funds to assist owners and tenants of existing commercial buildings, particularly older buildings in the Central Area, with accessibility improvements to improve the accessibility of commercial buildings within the Town.</p>

<p>Incremental Tax Rebate Program</p>	<p>Grant to rebate increase in Town property taxes resulting from improvements or redevelopment of lands and buildings, for properties located in the CIP area. Projects must meet the following general eligibility criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increased property assessment value; • Support Town objectives such as increased residential density, affordable or social housing, retail, business services and industrial diversity as contained in the Town’s strategic plans; • Conform to the principles of the Town’s Central Area Design Study (where applicable); • Additional criteria including 75% of the front of the building is comprised of glass, brick or stone and preference given to projects that use a brick consistent with the yellow heritage brick evidenced throughout the downtown (for properties zoned ‘Central Commercial (CC)’ & ‘Entrepreneurial (EC)’, where applicable). • Projects that meet energy conservation and efficiency goals, as well as water conservation and re-use goals shall be given a higher score. <p>Commercial and Multi-Residential Projects Within the Central Area (Including Affordable or Social Housing Projects) - Phase-in Schedule</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General renovations/rehabilitations – Rebate of 100% of increased taxes in year 1, 80% in year 2, 60% in year 3, 40% in year 4 and 20% in year five, with full taxes payable in year 6. • Projects that improve the overall attractiveness of the streetscape/community and provide attention to detail and a high level of design – Rebate of 50% of increased taxes from years 1 – 6, 40% of increased taxes in year 7, 30% in year 8, 20% in year 9, 10% in year 10, with full taxes payable in year 11. • Projects that are of strategic interest to the community and provide exemplary attention to detail and a high level of design – Rebate of 100% of increased taxes from years 1 – 6, 80% in year 7, 60% in year 8, 40% in year 9 and 20% in year 10, with full taxes payable in year 11. <p>Commercial and Multi-Residential Projects Outside the Central Area (Including Affordable or Social Housing Projects) - Phase-in Schedule</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General renovations/rehabilitations – Rebate of 100% of increased taxes in year 1, 80% in year 2, 60% in year 3, 40% in year 4 and 20% in year five, with full taxes payable in year 6. • Projects that improve the overall attractiveness of the streetscape/community and provide attention to detail and a high level of design – Rebate of 50% of increased taxes from years 1 – 6, 40% of increased taxes in year 7, 30% in year 8, 20% in year 9, 10% in year 10, with full taxes payable in year 11. • Projects that are of strategic interest to the community and provide exemplary attention to detail and a high level of design – Rebate of 100% of increased taxes from years 1 – 6, 80% in year 7, 60% in year 8, 40% in year 9 and 20% in year 10, with full taxes payable in year 11. <p>Industrial Projects - Phase-in Schedule</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General renovations/rehabilitations – Rebate of 100% of increased taxes in year 1, 80% in year 2, 60% in year 3, 40% in year 4 and 20% in year five, with full taxes payable in year 6. • Projects that improve the overall competitiveness of Tillsonburg’s economic base while provide a high level of design – Rebate of 50% of increased taxes from years 1 – 6, 40% of increased taxes in year 7, 30% in year 8, 20% in year 9, 10% in year 10, with full taxes payable in year 11. • Projects that are of strategic interest to the community and provide a high level of design – Rebate of 100% of increased taxes from years 1 – 6, 80% in year 7,
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PROGRAM	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA
	60% in year 8, 40% in year 9 and 20% in year 10, with full taxes payable in year 11.
Legal and Registration Costs Grant	<p>Grant to reimburse legal costs and costs associated with the registration of agreements associated with the above programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town staff may register applicable agreements on title, or provide a grant to a maximum of \$250 to reimburse legal costs of having a solicitor register the applicable agreements on title.
Commercial Building Interior Renovation Program	<p>Grant, of up to \$10,000 to assist with interior renovations of existing commercial buildings including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structural repairs; • Electrical upgrades; • Plumbing upgrades and fixtures (i.e. sinks, toilets, etc); • HVAC; • Flooring and/or doors, windows and ceilings; • Demising walls; • Drywall and/or painting; • Improved accessibility (i.e. ramps, handrails, accessible washrooms); • Fire safety compliance (i.e. sprinklers); and, • Improvements related to health and safety; including asbestos/other hazardous material abatement; <p>This grant is intended to provide supportive funding for renovations to commercial properties within the Town of Tillsonburg in order to fill vacant storefronts, support a more vibrant street life, and create better first impressions of the community.</p>

APPENDIX III

TOWN OF TILLSONBURG COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

RECOMMENDED INCREMENTAL TAX REBATE GUIDELINES - DECISION MAKING MATRIX

DEVELOPMENT TYPE	CRITERIA	LEVEL OF TAX INCREMENT GRANT
<p>Downtown Commercial and Multi-Residential (including Affordable or Social Housing) Projects</p>	<p>Projects that meet General Downtown Development Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General property renovations/ rehabilitations that will improve the attractiveness of the Downtown 	<p>Year 1 - 100% rebate Year 2 - 80% rebate Year 3 - 60% rebate, Year 4 - 40% rebate Year 5 - 20% rebate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rebate amount is calculated based on incremental assessment growth • Full taxes are payable in year 6 • Only Multi-Residential projects with a minimum of 4-units are considered
	<p>Projects that meet High Level Downtown Development Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves the overall attractiveness of the streetscape/community • Projects that conform to some of the design and general guidelines contained in the Town’s Central Area Design Study <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ E.g. Matching height with adjacent buildings, building maintains/ improves consistency with heritage elements from adjacent buildings • Improved accessibility 	<p>Years 1 to 6 - 50% rebate of the incremental tax increase Year 7 - 40% rebate Year 8 - 30% rebate Year 9 - 20% rebate Year 10 - 10% rebate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rebate amount is calculated based on incremental assessment growth • Full taxes are payable in year 11 • Only Multi-Residential projects with a minimum of 4-units are considered
	<p>Projects that meet Strategic Level Downtown Development Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that conform to many of the design and general guidelines contained in the Town’s Central Area Design Study • Incorporate environmental sustainability features and technology that results in 	<p>Years 1 to 6 - 100% rebate of the incremental tax increase Year 7 - 80% rebate Year 8 - 60% rebate Year 9 - 40% rebate Year 10 - 20% rebate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rebate amount is calculated based on incremental assessment growth • Full taxes are payable in year 11 • Only Multi-Residential projects with a minimum of 4-units are considered

	<p>energy conservation and reduced environmental impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved accessibility with no barriers to access 	
<p>Commercial and Multi-Residential (including Affordable or Social Housing) Projects Outside of Downtown</p>	<p>Projects that meet General Development Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General property renovations/ rehabilitations that will improve the attractiveness of the community 	<p>Year 1 - 100% rebate Year 2 - 80% rebate Year 3 - 60% rebate Year 4 - 40% rebate Year 5 - 20% rebate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rebate amount is calculated based on incremental assessment growth • Full taxes are payable in year 6
	<p>Projects that meet High Level Development Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves the overall attractiveness of the streetscape/community • Projects that provide a higher level of architectural design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ E.g. majority of front of building comprised of glass, brick or stone, inclusion of heritage elements 	<p>Years 1 to 6 - 50% rebate of the incremental tax increase Year 7 - 40% rebate Year 8 - 30% rebate Year 9 - 20% rebate Year 10 - 10% rebate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rebate amount is calculated based on incremental assessment growth • Full taxes are payable in year 11
	<p>Projects that meet Strategic Level Development Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significantly improves the overall attractiveness of the streetscape/ community • Provides for a high level of architectural design: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ E.g. majority of front of building comprised of glass, brick or stone, inclusion of heritage elements • Incorporates environmental sustainability features and technology that results in energy conservation and reduced environmental impact 	<p>Years 1 to 6 - 100% rebate of the incremental tax increase Year 7 - 80% rebate Year 8 - 60% rebate Year 9 - 40% rebate Year 10 - 20% rebate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rebate amount is calculated based on incremental assessment growth • Full taxes are payable in year 11

<p>Industrial Projects</p>	<p>Projects that meet General Development Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General property renovations/ rehabilitations that will improve the attractiveness of the community 	<p>Year 1 - 100% rebate Year 2 - 80% rebate Year 3 - 60% rebate, Year 4 - 40% rebate Year 5 - 20% rebate</p> <p>Rebate amount is calculated based on the incremental assessment growth only</p> <p>Full taxes are payable in year 6</p>
	<p>Projects that meet High Level Development Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves the overall attractiveness of the streetscape/community • Projects that provide a higher level of architectural design: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ E.g. majority of front of building comprised of glass, brick or stone, inclusion of heritage elements 	<p>Years 1 to 6 - 50% rebate of the incremental tax increase Year 7 - 40% rebate Year 8 - 30% rebate Year 9 - 20% rebate Year 10 - 10% rebate</p> <p>Rebate amount is calculated based on the incremental assessment growth only</p> <p>Full taxes are payable in year 11</p>
	<p>Projects that meet Strategic Level Development Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significantly improves the overall attractiveness of the streetscape/community • Provides for a high level of architectural design: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ E.g. majority of front of building comprised of glass, brick or stone, inclusion of heritage elements • Incorporates environmental sustainability features and technology that results in energy conservation and reduced environmental impact • Supports growth in key economic sectors for the Town, E.g. Automotive, High Tech Manufacturing, Agri-food/Food Processing, Energy, etc. 	<p>Years 1 to 6 - 100% rebate of the incremental tax increase Year 7 - 80% rebate Year 8 - 60% rebate Year 9 - 40% rebate Year 10 - 20% rebate</p> <p>Full taxes are payable in year 11</p>