



# Town of Renfrew **COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

Final | December 8, 2015





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# 1 | INTRODUCTION

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The Town of Renfrew is an historic community located on the Bonnechere River at the convergence of Highway 60, Highway 132 and the Trans-Canada Highway (Highway 17). The Town of Renfrew is one of Renfrew County's primary urban settlements, with a population of approximately 8,200 as of 2011. Given its strategic location, the Town serves as a commercial and transportation hub within the County. Raglan Street serves as the main route connecting all three highways through the Town, and Raglan Street South functions as the Town's primary commercial corridor running through the Town's historic downtown core.

A Community Improvement Plan (CIP) for the Town of Renfrew has been prepared to serve as a long-term strategy to revitalize the community, improve the quality of life of the community's residents, better utilize underdeveloped properties and to promote private investment in land and buildings. The Plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Section 28 of the *Planning Act*. Traditionally, CIPs have been used by municipalities as a revitalization tool to achieve community planning, urban design and economic development objectives for a defined area, including downtown areas. A CIP accomplishes this by allowing municipalities to offer financial incentives to landowners and tenants, and to study and plan for capital projects and other municipal leadership initiatives. The Town of Renfrew CIP articulates a long-term vision for the Town, and provides a framework that guides community improvement toward that vision, through the identification of financial incentive programs and municipal leadership initiatives. The CIP allows the residents of the Town, along with identified stakeholders, to participate in the on-going revitalization and improvement of the Town of Renfrew.

Sections 1 and 11 as well as any illustrations and photographs are not operative components of this Plan, but are intended for convenience purposes only. Sections 2 through 10 include the operative policies and programs of the Town's CIP.

## 1.1 Background

On January 24, 2014, Council approved a recommendation by Town staff to initiate the preparation of a CIP. Council had previously approved the designation of the entire Town as a community improvement project area within the adoption of the Official Plan in 2006 (this is discussed further in Section 2.3). In October 2014, the Town retained MMM Group to undertake the preparation of a CIP for the Town of Renfrew in consultation with Staff, Council, the public, and stakeholders. The study process included:

- A review of background materials, including, but not limited to the *Planning Act*, the *Municipal Act*, the *Ontario Heritage Act*, the Provincial Policy Statement (2014), the Town of Renfrew Official Plan, the County of Renfrew Official Plan, the Zoning By-law (By-law No. 46-2010), and other relevant Town by-laws;
- The preparation of a Background Report, which provided a basis for preparing a CIP, including a summary of background materials, an observational strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats analysis (SWOT), and an analysis of critical needs;



- A public open house and workshop was held on January 28, 2015 to discuss options for incentive programs and municipal leadership initiatives, and to present the findings of the background review and SWOT analysis;
- A second public open house was held on April 22, 2015 to present the programs of the Draft Community Improvement Plan to the public; and
- A statutory public meeting was held on November 24, 2015 to present the CIP formally for public input.

This Plan has been prepared based on the recommendations contained in the Background Report (discussed in Section 2.4), as well as through further discussions and consultation with the Town, stakeholders and the public.

## 1.2 Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of this Plan is to facilitate the revitalization and improvement of the Town of Renfrew. Revitalization and improvement refers, in a broad sense, to activities that contribute to economic development, beautification, quality of life, aesthetic improvements, environmental sustainability, and the creation of a sense of place.

Examples of activities that contribute towards long-term revitalization include:

- the improvement and beautification of buildings, façades and properties;
- the adaptive reuse and restoration of historic properties and structures;
- improvement of community infrastructure, open spaces and pedestrian networks;
- the remediation and redevelopment or reuse of environmentally contaminated properties (brownfields);
- the sensitive and appropriate redevelopment of underutilized properties, or development of existing properties (e.g., conversion of upper storey space for residential uses);
- improvement of buildings to enhance accessibility for persons with disabilities; and
- promotion of economic development and business growth.

The revitalization and improvement of the community will take many different forms and will require the participation of the Town, the public, and various stakeholders. This Plan establishes a set of financial incentive programs, detailed in Sections 5 and 6, aimed at encouraging private investment to undertake many of the above-noted activities. Eligible projects are listed for each incentive program, along with details regarding the value of the financial incentive and how the funding is calculated.

This Plan also presents an opportunity for municipal leadership in planning capital projects. Section 4 of this Plan details the initiatives that form part of the Municipal Leadership Strategy and includes policies regarding the implementation and timing of recommended projects. The Plan recognizes that improvements achieved through the various municipal initiatives can serve as catalysts for further private investment, and are therefore critical to an overall revitalization strategy.

## 1.3 Application of this Plan

This Plan applies to the geographic area designated by a by-law of the Town as the Community Improvement Project Area. Activities under this Plan can only take place within the designated Community Improvement Project

Area. Council may choose to modify the Community Improvement Project Area By-law by passing another by-law to replace it.

Generally, the purpose of this Plan is to promote the revitalization of the Town. Revitalization means different things to different neighbourhoods and areas of the community. In the downtown, revitalization will take place in the form of façade improvements, adaptive reuse of historic buildings, improvements to upper storeys, brownfield remediation, streetscaping, and other improvements. In the commercial areas, such as along Stewart Street and O'Brien Road/Veteran's Memorial Boulevard, revitalization will be better focused on improved landscaping and redevelopment opportunities and well as improvements to encourage walkability.

The Community Improvement Project Area identifies five "districts." Within each district, different financial incentives are made available, as specified in the eligibility criteria of each program under Sections 5 and 6. The Municipal Leadership Strategy, identified in Section 4 of this Plan, is intended to apply to the entire Town of Renfrew, although the programs are focused on different areas as stated in the details of each program.

## 1.4 How to Use this Plan

The Town of Renfrew CIP enables the Town to issue financial incentives to private property owners interested in undertaking improvements to their building, property, or to developing or redeveloping their land. The financial incentive programs outlined in this Plan will be used by local businesses, property owners, and tenants, and are intended to facilitate community-enhancing property and building improvement projects. This Plan is intended to be read and interpreted in its totality. Interpretation of the Plan will be at the sole discretion of the Council or its designated approval authority. Programs will be made available only when Council assigns incentive funds. Available funding for incentive programs may change on an annual basis based on Council's consideration and to reflect the Town's evolving community improvement needs.

Interested property owners and tenants are encouraged to review this plan and to contact the Town of Renfrew directly to confirm their eligibility, discuss their project, and to identify the types of financial incentives that could be applicable. General eligibility criteria, which apply to all financial incentive programs, are provided within Section 8.6. In addition, the financial incentive programs, outlined in Sections 5 and 6, provide program-specific eligibility criteria.

The process for applying for financial incentives is generally outlined in Section 8.7 of this Plan. Section 8.7 also outlines the materials required in support of a financial incentive application. Interested individuals are required to set up a pre-application consultation meeting in order to discuss application requirements, scope of work, and project timing. The applicant will then be required to submit a complete application including all required forms and supporting documentation, as confirmed in the pre-application consultation. The Plan's designated Administrator will review the application against the eligibility requirements and recommend approval or refusal.

In most cases, applicants will be required to submit at least two construction/supplier quotes, as well as drawings to illustrate how the proposed improvements will look. The drawings will help the Town determine whether the application complies with the design criteria contained in Section 9 of this Plan. In some cases, it may be necessary for the drawings to be prepared by qualified professionals, in order for the Town to confirm the accuracy and intent of the proposed improvements. Applicants will be encouraged to review and adhere to the design criteria when designing their improvements. Applications that do not adequately implement these design principles may not be approved.

## **1.5 Relationship to Other Laws, Regulations, Standards, Codes, Etc.**

This Plan does not exempt anyone from any required approvals or compliance with any applicable Federal, Provincial, County or Town requirements. Projects may be subject to building permits, planning approvals, sign by-law compliance and other approvals or compliance as may be applicable to the particular application and property. In order to receive approval of a grant under this Plan, applicants will need to receive all other required approvals as may be applicable.



## 2 | BASIS OF THE PLAN

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A Community Improvement Plan (CIP) is a tool established under Section 28 of the *Planning Act*. The Plan must consider and conform to other policy plans and studies and it must be prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Planning Act*. This section briefly discusses the basis for preparing a CIP for the Town of Renfrew. A more detailed discussion of the basis for the CIP is included in the Background Report prepared as the foundation for this Plan.

### 2.1 Legislative Authority

This Plan is prepared in accordance with the *Planning Act*, which provides the legislative authority for the Town to prepare a CIP.

Section 28 of the *Planning Act*, 1990, as amended, gives the Town of Renfrew the legislative authority to define a community improvement project area and prepare a community improvement plan for that area. The Plan must be prepared in accordance with the community improvement policies of the Town's *Official Plan* and the specific powers granted under the *Planning Act*. In accordance with subsections 106(1), (2) and (3) of the *Municipal Act*, the Town may not provide financial assistance or bonusing to a commercial or other industrial enterprise, unless the assistance is provided through a CIP prepared in accordance with the *Planning Act*.

#### Community Improvement

Section 28(1) of the *Planning Act* defines community improvement as “the planning or replanning, design or redesign, resubdivision, clearance, development or redevelopment, construction, reconstruction and rehabilitation, improvement of energy efficiency, or any of them, of a community improvement project area, and the provision of such residential, commercial, industrial, public, recreational, institutional, religious, charitable or other uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements or facilities, or spaces therefor, as may be appropriate or necessary” and includes the provision of affordable housing under Section 28(1.1).

#### Community Improvement Project Area

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.”

#### Community Improvement Plan

A community improvement plan is defined in the *Planning Act* as “a plan for the community improvement of a community improvement project area.”

#### Tools and Activities under the *Planning Act*

The *Planning Act* outlines the tools and activities which may be exercised through a community improvement plan and within a designated community improvement project area. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Under Section 28(3), Council may acquire, hold or clear land;
- Under Section 28(6), Council may construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on land acquired or held by the Municipality, or it may sell or dispose of land in conformity with the community improvement plan; and
- Under Section 28(7), the Town may make grants or loans to registered owners or tenants of land in the community improvement project area to pay for eligible costs associated with community improvement. In accordance with Section 28(8), eligible costs include costs related to an environmental site assessment, environmental remediation, development, redevelopment, construction and reconstruction of lands and buildings for rehabilitation purposes or for the provision of energy efficient uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements or facilities.

## 2.2 Provincial Policy Statement (2014)

The Provincial Policy Statement (2014) provides municipalities with policy direction and guidance related to land use planning and development. The Provincial Policy Statement emphasizes efficient and effective land use planning and serves as a pillar upon which plans and policies are developed at a municipal level, in a manner consistent with Provincial interests. CIPs are planning tools that can proactively implement the Provincial Policy Statement, including its policies for redevelopment, intensification, remediation of brownfields, urban renewal, sustainability, enhancing the vitality of downtown areas, and long term economic prosperity.

## 2.3 Official Plan Policies

In accordance with the *Planning Act*, in order to prepare a CIP, the Town of Renfrew's Official Plan must contain policies to enable and guide the preparation of a CIP. The Town's Official Plan provides the following guidance on the preparation of a CIP for the Town of Renfrew.

Section 15.10 of the Official Plan provides general policies for community improvement and revitalization activities. Section 15.10(1) notes that community improvement projects are to be undertaken for the purpose of "upgrading, redeveloping and rehabilitating the physical environment of older neighbourhoods, recreational areas, commercial centres and industrial areas." As per Section 15.10(1) of the Official Plan, the entire Town of Renfrew has been designated as a Community Improvement Project Area. This designation is interpreted to mean that any lands in the Town of Renfrew may be considered for community improvement, subject to the policies of the Plan. However, a community improvement project area by-law must be prepared and passed in accordance with Section 28(2) of the *Planning Act*, in order to adopt a Community Improvement Plan.

## 2.4 Background Review and Discussion Paper

A background review and discussion paper entitled the "Town of Renfrew Community Improvement Plan Background Report" was prepared in February 2015 to provide a basis for the Community Improvement Plan. The Background Report included a detailed analysis of relevant legislation, policies and by-laws; a critical needs analysis of the Town of Renfrew and its potential for community improvement activities; and a presentation of options for financial incentive programs and municipal leadership initiatives that could address the Town's critical needs.

The Background Report does not form a component of this Plan. However, readers of this Plan may find the Background Report to be a useful supplementary resource. For this reason, this Plan sometimes refers to the Background Report for informational purposes.

## 2.5 Community Consultation

A Public Open House and Workshop was held on January 28, 2015. The purpose of the meeting was to:

- Introduce the study, its purpose, and process;
- Present the findings of the review of relevant legislation, policies and regulations;
- Present the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis, as well as the assessment of critical needs;
- Obtain input on the community's view of the Town's assets, as well as the issues that may be addressed by a community improvement plan; and
- Obtain input on options for financial incentive programs and municipal leadership programs.

The format of the meeting included an open house, a formal presentation, as well as an interactive workshop session. A summary of the input received from this meeting is included in the Background Report.

A second public open house was held on April 22, 2015, to consult upon proposed programs for the Draft Community Improvement Plan. The meeting included:

- A refresher on the purpose of the study and the process;
- A summary of the Background Report and input received at the first Public Open House;
- A presentation of proposed financial incentive programs and municipal leadership programs;
- An identification of considerations for implementing and administering the Plan; and
- A discussion and questions and answers session.

Finally, a statutory public meeting was held on November 24, 2015 with Council.

## 3 | APPROACH TO COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT

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Community improvement is a long-term process involving incremental improvements. Over time, many improvements can yield real and visible improvement. A series of goals and objectives, guided by a long-term vision, can be used to evaluate individual decisions to ensure that improvements are working towards achieving the desired ends. This section outlines the overall intent of this Plan and the types of activities that the Town will undertake to achieve the intent of this Plan.

### 3.1 Community Improvement Vision, Goals and Objectives

#### 3.1.1 Vision

The vision statement serves as the guiding beacon for the Community Improvement Plan. It describes what the community sees as the desired future of the Town of Renfrew, to be achieved through the successful implementation of this Plan. Based on consultation with the community, and on the critical needs for the Town of Renfrew, the following statement establishes the long-term vision for community improvement activities:

**“The Town of Renfrew is a beautiful, complete, and historic community. The Town represents a key commercial service centre and activity hub within Renfrew County, offering a high quality of life and a variety of shops, services and recreational opportunities. The historic main street is renowned as a unique shopping destination, exemplified by the Town’s historic buildings, high-quality streetscape and specialized shops. The historic downtown takes advantage of the Town’s proximity to Ottawa; the Town of Renfrew functions as a gateway between Ontario’s east, west and its north connecting the Nation’s Capital, cottage country and many of Ontario’s most visited wilderness destinations.”**

### 3.1.2 Goals and Objectives

The Plan is further guided by goals and objectives to ensure that community improvement activities are contributing to the achievement of the broad vision statement. Financial incentives and municipal leadership programs should contribute toward achieving one or more of the following goals and measurable objectives:

<b>Goal #1</b>	<b>The Town of Renfrew’s vibrant downtown core, and particularly historic Raglan Street South, is the heart of the Town, and is an attractive place to work, live and visit.</b>
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| Objectives: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Promote and encourage redevelopment of underutilized properties, or buildings in poor condition, including brownfield properties.</li> <li>● Promote and encourage improvements to buildings, façades and signage.</li> <li>● Achieve a pedestrian-oriented streetscape through the use of pedestrian-scaled signage.</li> <li>● Support the design and implementation of streetscape and public realm improvements such as lighting, signage, branding, sidewalk treatments and street furniture.</li> <li>● Utilize upper storeys of buildings along Raglan Street South as residences through the reuse, rehabilitation and improvement of this space.</li> <li>● Increase the number of planters and trees in the downtown core.</li> <li>● Where space permits, encourage patios/sidewalk cafés along Raglan Street South.</li> <li>● Promote the use of high-quality awnings to create façade interest and shelter for pedestrians.</li> <li>● Promote and encourage improvements to the appearance and functionality of parking areas and rear façades/entrances on Argyle Street South and Plaunt Street South.</li> <li>● Establish a clear, long-term streetscaping and urban design strategy for the downtown core.</li> <li>● Advance a strategy for improving the Hall Avenue/Veteran’s Memorial Boulevard/Raglan Street South intersection.</li> </ul> |
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**Goal #2      The Town of Renfrew’s community character is bolstered by attractive and well maintained historic buildings.**

- Objectives:
- Promote and encourage continued use and adaptive reuse of historic buildings.
  - Promote and encourage the restoration of façades to their original state, using original materials and/or through the restoration of architectural details, based on available documentation.
  - Encourage the designation of historic buildings in the Town under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.
  - Improve the signage and façades that are not compatible with the Town’s historic character, and encourage the maintenance of existing historic façades.
  - Ensure that building additions and development proposals are compatible with the community’s historic character and characteristic ‘main street’ feel.

**Goal #3      The Town of Renfrew is a well-connected community that promotes healthy living by minimizing physical barriers to accessibility and maximizing walkability for all.**

- Objectives:
- Improve the walkability of streets through sidewalk improvements, and provide additional street furniture to create opportunities for rest.
  - Encourage improvements to accessibility for all persons, including improvements to entryways, accessibility ramps, open space infrastructure, leveling of sidewalks, etc., as appropriate.
  - Design streetscape improvements to be pedestrian oriented and accessible, and remove or relocate existing impediments.
  - Improve the pedestrian crossings in the downtown core, particularly along Raglan Street South (e.g., improved demarcation/treatment of pavement and consideration for signalization).
  - Improve pedestrian connectivity between the downtown core and adjacent residential areas, as well as connectivity between Raglan Street South and rear parking areas.



**Goal #4      The Town of Renfrew has a strong identity and sense of place and is an attractive, well-known destination for visitors and day tourists.**

- Objectives:
- Create a distinctive visual gateway at Highway 17 which incorporates wayfinding to promote the downtown core of the Town of Renfrew, and beautify and improve the approach to the downtown core along Veteran’s Memorial Boulevard.
  - Establish a strategy to beautify and improve public spaces. Consider the development of a public square in the downtown, by reconfiguring the Town Hall square or exploring other potential sites.
  - Support the design of installations, where appropriate (i.e., the McDougall Mill Museum, NHA/NHL Museum) that promote the Town’s unique heritage in an interactive manner. The Town’s swinging bridge is an example of an interactive feature that supports understanding of the Town’s history and celebrates the importance of the Bonnechere River and the former Mill.
  - Optimize parking utilization with directional signage, and explore measures to ensure that highly available parking spaces (e.g., on-street parking along Raglan Street South) are available for visitors.

**Goal #5      Remediate brownfield sites and underutilized sites to create opportunities for compatible infill and intensification, particularly in proximity to Raglan Street South and the historic downtown area.**

- Objectives:
- Promote the redevelopment of brownfield sites in a manner that is compatible with the Town’s historic character with a focus on sites in closest proximity to the downtown core.
  - Explore the potential to utilize the Province’s Brownfields Financial Tax Assistance Program initially as part of a pilot project.
  - Consider preparing development concepts for brownfield properties in close proximity to the downtown core, to set expectations for future development. These could be integrated as part of a more comprehensive urban design strategy for the downtown core.
  - Maintain an inventory of brownfield sites as a tool to advance economic development opportunities.

### 3.2 Community Improvement Project Area

All community improvement activities described in this Plan, including the municipal leadership programs and financial incentive programs, will only be undertaken within an area currently designated as a Community Improvement Project Area.

The Community Improvement Project Area is designated by by-law, passed by Council, in accordance with Section 28 of the *Planning Act*. Changes to the Community Improvement Project Area will not require amendment to this Plan, but can be implemented by passing a new by-law. As noted previously, the entire Town of Renfrew has been designated as a Community Improvement Project Area under the by-law adopting the Official Plan; however, since this was not a by-law under Section 28 of the *Planning Act*, a specific Community Improvement Project Area by-law is required before this Plan can be adopted.

The Community Improvement Project Area is not included in this Plan, as it is passed by a separate by-law and may be subject to change by Council. Readers should consult with the Town to identify the most current Community Improvement Project Area.

The Community Improvement Project Area is recommended to include five Districts, which are referenced in this Plan. Different financial incentive programs will be made available in each district as indicated in Sections 5-6, and as generally described as follows:

1. The **Downtown Core District** consists of properties fronting on Raglan Street South, and is the most prominent component of the Town's main street. This District is subject to the broadest range of financial incentive programs, since there is a concentration of heritage buildings and a broad range of improvement opportunities, such as accessibility, façades, signage, as well as the potential reuse of upper storey spaces.
2. The **Downtown Periphery District** consists of commercial and mixed use properties located off the immediate 'main street' of Raglan Street South. This includes properties fronting onto Argyle Street South, Plaunt Street South, and the cluster of properties north of the core, just south of the Bonnechere River. In this District, the focus is on promoting parking area and landscaping improvements, as well as accessibility improvements.
3. The **Stewart Street Commercial District** consists of commercial and vacant properties along Stewart Street, at the north end of the community. While this area was once a major commercial area, it is now in need of redevelopment and improvements to reflect its importance as a major gateway into the community, including the downtown. Accordingly, grants for property and landscaping improvements, accessibility improvements, as well as tax increment equivalent grants are applicable to promote revitalization in this area.
4. The **O'Brien Road/Veteran's Memorial Boulevard Commercial District** consists principally of commercial properties fronting on O'Brien. These properties are important because they are highly visible, located along the Town's principal 'gateway' to the downtown. Accordingly, within this district, properties are eligible for landscaping and property improvement grants and accessibility grants to encourage improved aesthetics and promote more walkability.
5. A **Town-Wide District** has been identified to recognize that there may be brownfields located throughout the Town. Accordingly, the brownfield incentive programs under Section 6 apply throughout the Town.

### **3.3 Community Improvement Activities**

The revitalization of the Town of Renfrew is best approached as a partnership between the Town and private stakeholders, such as property owners, business owners and tenants. The Town will not be able to successfully implement this Plan on its own. There will be a role for other organizations such as the Business Improvement Area, the Renfrew and Area Chamber of Commerce, the Renfrew Industrial Commission and service clubs to promote the incentives of this Plan and champion its implementation. These organizations can also complement the programs of the Plan through their own initiatives, such as maintaining seasonal streetscape beautification improvements, like flower plantings, lighting, light post banners, and so on.

The Town will lead its own programs and initiatives to demonstrate its leadership in community revitalization, including specific improvements to streetscapes and public spaces, other capital improvements, further studies, marketing/administration of the Community Improvement Plan, and support for community involvement. The private sector will become engaged in revitalization by participating in private property improvements, and accessing the financial incentives outlined in this Plan as made available by the Town.

Financial incentives in the form of grants may be offered to private landowners or tenants to assist them in improving their properties. Eligible landowners and tenants will be encouraged to re-use, improve and redevelop their property through the availability of these incentives. The financial incentive programs, including eligibility requirements and other details, are established in Section 5 of this Plan. In addition, financial incentives for the revitalization of brownfield sites are outlined in Section 6 of this Plan. It is not the intent of this Plan to require Council to fund or operate all of the identified incentive programs throughout the life of this Plan. At Council's discretion, based on feedback from Town staff and input from the Community and stakeholders, different programs may be implemented in any given year by adjusting funding to specific programs.

The Municipal Leadership Strategy is outlined in Section 4 of this Plan. It is not intended that all of the programs under the Municipal Leadership Strategy be completed within a certain timeframe. Some of the initiatives will be considered by Council individually as part of its annual budgeting process. In some cases, there may be an opportunity to involve other government agencies, perhaps as funding partners or in other roles as may be agreed upon between the Town and the interested stakeholder.

## 4 | MUNICIPAL LEADERSHIP STRATEGY

The Municipal Leadership Strategy is a series of actions, projects, programs and tools that have been identified as opportunities for the Town and other stakeholders to improve the community, including improvements to infrastructure, streetscapes and other public areas, or to assist in filling in gaps and helping to eliminate barriers to private improvements. As noted, other organizations including the Business Improvement Area, the Renfrew and Area Chamber of Commerce, the Renfrew Industrial Commission, etc., can support implementation of municipal leadership strategies, through activities such as streetscape beautification, plantings, and other complementary initiatives.

In some cases, the projects recommended in this Section require separate capital budgets to implement. In other cases, the projects will require more detailed studies. Many of the projects require time commitments from dedicated staff members who will lead the implementation of this Strategy.

An approximate timeframe for implementing each initiative is provided, and is based on the relative priority and importance of each initiative. This Plan recognizes that the implementation of initiatives will be subject to funding availability, relative urgency and need, as well as other factors. The timing of each initiative should be considered a target for the Town. The Town may engage in these programs at its sole discretion.

The Municipal Leadership Strategy is comprised of the following initiatives, described in the following subsections:



▶ Downtown Urban Design Study/Guidelines and Streetscape Master Plan



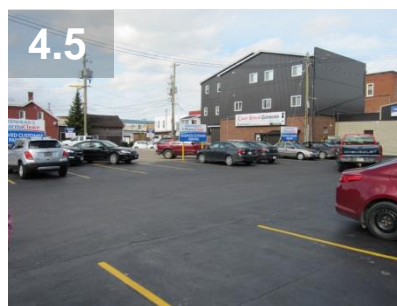
▶ Heritage Property Tax Incentives



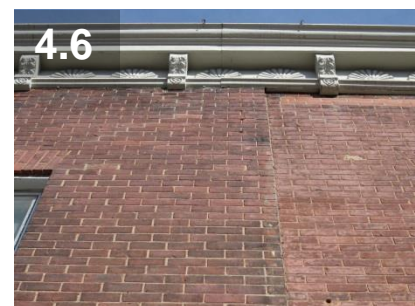
▶ Gateway Improvements



▶ Sign By-law Update



▶ Downtown Parking Study and Strategy



▶ Municipal Heritage Committee

## 4.1 Downtown Urban Design Study/Guidelines and Streetscape Master Plan

### 4.1.1 Description

To further the improvement of the community in a manner that reflects the goals and objectives of this Plan, it will be greatly beneficial for the Town to undertake a Core Area Urban Design Study/Guidelines and Streetscape Master Plan. The intent of this study would be to establish a very clear, long-term design vision for the downtown core of the Town of Renfrew, and could be implemented through a combination of capital projects by the Town as well as through privately initiated streetscape improvements as part of development applications.

The study should address:

- A long-term, master plan for streetscaping improvements, providing guidance for future capital improvements as well as maintenance. The master plan should focus on Raglan Street South, however, critical improvements to Argyle Street, Plaunt Street and connecting streets may be needed to address connectivity to Raglan Street South. Elements of the streetscape component would include:
  - Programming the right-of-way (i.e., space dedicated to vehicular traffic, on-street parking, sidewalks, planting/amenity areas and consideration for bike lanes);
  - Configuration and programming of the sidewalk;
  - Sidewalk improvements (preferred materials and identification areas where reconstruction of sidewalks is a priority);
  - Improvements to lighting;
  - Improvements to benches and other street furniture;
  - Planting of trees and landscaping;
  - Demarcation of on-street parking;
  - Wayfinding signage and signage for parking; and
  - Improvements to pedestrian crossings (e.g., lighting/signalization);
- High-level development concepts for brownfield sites and potential infill sites, including optimization of rear parking areas, within the downtown core;
- Recommendations for improvements to public space with the goal of creating a public square designed for year-round use, such as reconfiguration of the Town Hall park or another appropriate site;
- Potential improvements to pedestrian connectivity to parking areas and between streets, including linkages to streets and areas outside the immediate downtown core;
- Recommended guidelines for built form, massing, height, setbacks, façade articulation and other matters, to guide infill development proposals and redevelopment proposals;
- Conceptual improvements to the intersection at Raglan Street South/Veteran's Memorial Boulevard and Hall Avenue, and identification of the process and cost for undertaking a redesign of the intersection;

- Any recommended modifications to zoning or Official Plan policies to codify critical recommended design guidelines; and
- Coordination with beautification activities undertaken by the Business Improvement Area.

The implementation of this strategy may require the acquisition and improvement of land for the purposes of acquiring strategic properties; acquiring land for creating linkages between the downtown core and surrounding streets or neighbourhoods; and/or reconfiguring the intersection at Raglan Street South/Veteran's Memorial Boulevard and Hall Avenue. Accordingly, this Plan enables the acquisition and improvement of land in accordance with subsection 28(3) of the *Planning Act* for the purposes of implementing the Downtown Urban Design Study/Guidelines and Streetscape Master Plan as may be prepared.

#### **4.1.2 Timing**

The development of the Downtown Urban Design Study/Guidelines and Streetscape Master Plan is recommended as a short-term initiative, with completion of the document recommended by the end of 2016. Should funding be constrained, it is recommended that the Streetscape Master Plan component be prioritized.

#### **4.1.3 Cost**

The cost of the study will vary significantly depending on the ultimate scope. At a minimum, it is recommended that the Town undertake the Streetscape Master Plan component at an estimated cost of approximately \$20,000 to \$30,000 (exclusive of detailed design/construction plans). Combined, the Downtown Urban Design Study/Guidelines and Streetscape Master Plan could be in the order of \$50,000 to \$100,000 depending on the desired scope outlined in the Terms of Reference.

#### **4.1.4 Districts (Refer to Section 3.2)**

This program is intended to apply principally to the Downtown Core District, although the scope could include portions of the Downtown Periphery District, particularly with respect to enhancing the public realm along Argyle Street and Plaunt Street and improving connectivity with Raglan Street South.



## 4.2 Heritage Property Tax Relief Program

### 4.2.1 Description

The Town may consider implementing a Heritage Property Tax Relief Program as provided under Section 365.2 of the *Municipal Act*. The program offers owners of eligible heritage properties a reduction in annual property taxes levied for municipal and education purposes. The program is intended to encourage the preservation, restoration and enhancement of heritage properties. The Town stands to benefit from the preservation of the Town's historic building stock as a quality of life asset for the community, while facilitating objectives for business retention and expansion. In particular, the implementation of this program would help encourage the designation of properties under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, ensuring their long-term protection.

If implemented, the program would provide a reduction or refund for between 10% and 40% of taxes levied for municipal and educational purposes on eligible properties. In order to be eligible, a property would need to be:

- Located within the Community Improvement Project Area; and
- Designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* (or be part of a Heritage Conservation District under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*); or
- Subject to an easement agreement that is either (a) with the Town under Section 37 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* or (b) with the Ontario Heritage Trust under Section 22 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*; or
- Listed on the Town of Renfrew Register of Designated Heritage Properties (as per Section 27 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*) for which a Program Agreement exists between the Municipality and Owner.

Additionally, the implementing by-law can establish other criteria that must be satisfied in order for a property to be considered eligible. Further, the by-law can establish procedures for applying for the tax reduction or refund. The Town can further require that applicants re-apply on an annual basis, giving the Town flexibility to manage the financial impact of the program.

### 4.2.2 Timing

It is recommended that staff consider and evaluate the value of this program in detail and report to Council in the medium term (2016-2017). If Council chooses to implement the program, a by-law would be prepared in accordance with Section 365.2 of the *Municipal Act*.

### 4.2.3 Cost

The cost of evaluating this program will principally consist of staff time. However, it may be desirable for the Town to consult with a heritage professional to provide technical advice.

If the program is implemented, the financial impact of this program will effectively be a reduction in property tax revenue for any properties eligible for the taxation incentive. As more properties are designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act* and become eligible for the tax incentive, the costs of this program would increase. However, the costs should be weighed in consideration of the benefits of maintaining historic properties. The implementation of the program can be reconsidered annually and measures can be taken to manage financial impact (e.g., program duration or criteria).

**4.2.4 Districts (Refer to Section 3.2)**

This program will be most relevant to the Downtown Core District and to the Downtown Periphery District, where the majority of heritage buildings will be concentrated. However, consideration should be made to apply the program across the Town to more broadly promote heritage conservation.

## 4.3 Gateway Improvements

### 4.3.1 Description

The Town of Renfrew and downtown would benefit from gateway or entrance features and signage which make reference to the Town's history. The gateway features should be designed to be appropriate to Renfrew's history, landmarks and features, and may integrate wayfinding features. The priority gateway area is located at the intersection of O'Brien Road (Highway 60) and Highway 17/417, although other important gateways are located on Stewart Street and Highway 132 approaching the community. The appropriate Town official will work with the Ministry of Transportation Ontario (MTO) to discuss solutions to corridor control and signage issues.

The implementation of a gateway feature may require the acquisition of private land. This Plan therefore enables the acquisition and improvement of land in accordance with subsection 28(3) of the *Planning Act* for the purposes of implementing the gateway feature.

### 4.3.2 Timing

The Highway 17/417 (at O'Brien Road) gateway project is recommended as a long term initiative which should be coordinated with the Province's plans to twin Highway 17. The Highway 60 (Stewart Street) and Highway 132 gateway initiatives are similarly considered to be long-term initiatives, though they are considered to be of lower importance than the Highway 17/417 gateway. However, conceptual design of the gateway features could be integrated as a component of the scope for the Streetscape Master Plan project. In the short term, with respect to the Highway 17/417 Gateway, the Town should meet with the Province to discuss timing, approval process and implementation of a gateway feature. In the medium term, consideration would be made to acquire land (as may be needed) and to conduct detailed design. Construction would be considered in the long-term.

### 4.3.3 Cost

The estimate to complete the design of each gateway is in the order of \$5,000 to \$10,000 for conceptual design, and up to \$25,000 for design and coordination of approvals with MTO where required. However, if the project is integrated with the Downtown Urban Design Study/Guidelines and Streetscape Master Plan, the conceptual design costs may be reduced. The cost of implementation, construction and maintenance of the feature should be estimated as part of the design of the gateway feature as these costs will vary significantly depending on the preferred design and whether there is a need for land acquisition. A rough estimate for construction costs would be in the order of \$75,000 to \$150,000, depending on the design, land needs and other factors. Additionally, there could be annual maintenance costs, such as maintaining any plantings or lighting features as may be integrated in the design.

### 4.3.4 Districts (Refer to Section 3.2)

This program is not intended to be limited within the boundaries of a specific district. The gateway projects should be located at an appropriate location near the Highway 17/417 gateway at O'Brien Road, the Highway 60 (Stewart Street) southbound entry into the Town and the Highway 132 eastbound entry into the Town.

## **4.4 Sign By-law Update**

### **4.4.1 Description**

The Town may undertake a review of its Sign By-law (By-law No. 19-95) in order to update requirements so that they are generally consistent with the goals and objectives of this Plan. In particular, consideration can be made to update the By-law to provide special requirements for the downtown core, where signs should be more pedestrian-oriented. Additionally, consideration may be made to update the Sign By-law to help reduce sign clutter in the Town.

### **4.4.2 Timing**

The update of the Sign By-law is recommended as a medium term initiative with implementation by 2018.

### **4.4.3 Cost**

The Town may undertake the Sign By-law Update internally, meaning that the cost will principally consist of staff time. However, retaining a consultant may result in a cost of approximately \$5,000 - \$10,000.

### **4.4.4 Districts (Refer to Section 3.2)**

This program is not intended to be applied to a specific District. Consideration may be made to update sign by-law requirements across the whole Town, or to focus on a specific area, such as the Downtown Core.

## **4.5 Downtown Parking Study and Strategy**

### **4.5.1 Description**

The Town may benefit from undertaking a study to analyze parking supply and demand and making recommendations to optimize the utilization of existing parking. The study should move towards achieving the goal of providing access to on-street and off-street parking as needed by the public, merchants and employees. The Downtown Parking Study and Strategy may also consider incentives for the development of public parking spaces on private property.

### **4.5.2 Timing**

The completion of the Downtown Parking Study and Strategy is recommended as a medium term initiative with completion targeted by 2018. However, it is noted that completion of this initiative could inform and impact the Downtown Design Study/Guidelines and Streetscape Master Plan (Section 4.1), so there may be benefits in completing the strategy prior to (or as part of) the Downtown Design Study/Guidelines and Streetscape Master Plan.

### **4.5.3 Cost**

Retaining a consultant to complete the study may cost approximately \$20,000 - \$30,000. Costs could be reduced if Town staff is able to undertake or supplement parking demand surveys and provide detailed parking supply data.

### **4.5.4 Applicable Districts (Refer to Section 3.2)**

This program will apply to the Downtown Core District and the Downtown Periphery District.

## **4.6 Municipal Heritage Committee**

### **4.6.1 Description**

The Town may establish a municipal Heritage Committee in accordance with Section 28 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The purpose of the committee is to advise Council on heritage conservation matters, including designations under Part IV (buildings) and Part V (heritage conservation districts) of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. In the context of the Community Improvement Plan, the Committee may advise on financial incentive applications related to heritage properties as well as advising on streetscaping initiatives in historic areas. A member of the Heritage Committee may also be involved in the approval authority for making decisions on financial incentive programs.

### **4.6.2 Timing**

To advance this initiative, the first step would consist of a background review exercise, in which staff would evaluate the benefits of a Municipal Heritage Committee. This could include a review of other nearby and similar municipalities. Should Council ultimately approve a recommendation to proceed with establishing such a Committee, a by-law would be prepared in accordance with Section 28 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, to designate the Municipal Heritage Committee and its responsibilities. The program is targeted for completion in the short term, by 2017.

### **4.6.3 Cost**

Costs associated with this program are principally related to staff time to research the Municipal Heritage Committee and to administer the Committee, should it be formed. There may be some expenses related to the operation of the Committee.

### **4.6.4 Applicable Districts (Refer to Section 3.2)**

A Municipal Heritage Committee would address heritage issues in the Town as a whole.



# 5 | FINANCIAL INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

The private sector needs to be engaged in community improvement to revitalize the Town. While municipal leadership programs may help address public lands, improvements to private property would need to be initiated by property owners and tenants. Financial incentives are established to help stimulate private investment in buildings and properties. In accordance with the *Planning Act* and the Town’s Official Plan, the Town may offer grants or loans to property owners and tenants to help cover eligible costs and further community improvement goals. Under Section 28(7.3) of the *Planning Act*, the total amount of grants is not able to exceed the amount of eligible costs of a project. However, in this Plan, the total amount of grants cannot exceed 50% of the total eligible costs of a project.

The following set of financial incentive programs are established by this Plan. Note that Section 6 details programs specifically related to the remediation of brownfield properties.



▶ Façade, Building and Signage Improvement Grant



▶ Property, Landscaping and Parking Area Improvement Grant



▶ Accessibility Improvement Grant



▶ Planning and Building Permit Fee Grant



▶ Tax Increment Equivalent Grant

## 5.1 Façade, Building and Signage Improvement Grant

### 5.1.1 Purpose

The façade, building and signage improvement grant is intended to encourage the rehabilitation, repair and/or improvement of buildings and façades on the part of property owners and tenants, along with the improvement of signage, and the installation of pedestrian-scaled, attractive signage. The eligibility criteria ensure that these improvements are consistent with the goals and objectives of this Plan. As established by the eligibility criteria improvements must be attractive, make use of historic or high-quality materials, and must be consistent with the Town of Renfrew's character. These improvements will benefit the aesthetics of the streetscape, encourage better maintenance of private properties, enhance the activity of the street, promote walkability and encourage conservation of historic properties.

### 5.1.2 Eligible Costs

1. Repair, replacement or restoration of façade masonry, brickwork, and/or architectural detailing;
2. Repair, replacement or installation of awnings and canopies;
3. Replacement, repair, improvement or installation of signage on building façades, including signage lighting;
4. Painting, cleaning or other similar treatments to improve façades or enhance their durability over the long term, provided that these activities are:
  - a. part of a larger improvement project (i.e., associated with other eligible costs listed in this program); and/or
  - b. Considered to be essential to the restoration of a building designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act* or listed by the Town of Renfrew as being of historical interest, in accordance with the *Ontario Heritage Act*;
5. Painting or installation of murals or similar wall art (side and rear façades only); Costs associated with professional architectural services in association with the design of the above eligible projects; or
6. Any combination of the above.

### 5.1.3 Program Details

1. The maximum amount of a grant for a façade or building improvement is \$5,000.00 or 50% of the eligible costs, whichever is lesser.
2. The maximum grant for a signage improvement is \$2,500.00 or 50% of the eligible costs, whichever is lesser.
3. The maximum amount of a grant for professional architectural services shall not exceed 15% of the grant that is calculated for eligible construction costs.
4. The grant may be combined with other grant programs. This grant shall not be combined with the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant, which exists as a stand-alone incentive program.

#### **5.1.4 Payment of Grant**

1. The grant will be paid as a single payment upon completion of the improvements, to the satisfaction of the Plan's Administrator.

#### **5.1.5 Eligibility Criteria**

1. All general eligibility criteria outlined in Section 8.6 shall apply. For clarity, this shall mean that the project must comply with all Town by-laws, policies, standards, guidelines and Official Plan and zoning, as well as any applicable Provincial, Federal or government agency requirements (e.g., conservation authority).
2. Application submission shall be in accordance with the application submission requirements under Section 8.8. For clarity, this shall typically include submission of a site plan or drawings to demonstrate the intended improvements and modifications being proposed. Where required, this shall be accompanied by a building permit.
3. Improvements shall comply with the design criteria outlined in Section 9, along with any and all design guidelines as may be implemented by the Town in the future.
4. Where a property is designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act* or listed by the Town as being of historical interest, applicants may be required to submit historical research and documentation on the subject property in support of the grant application. The Town may be able to supplement this information based on its own information and records.
5. Only commercial and mixed use properties (as defined in Section 8.1) are eligible for this grant. For clarity, single detached dwellings and other residences are not eligible for this grant.

#### **5.1.6 Applicable Districts (Refer to Section 3.2)**

1. This program shall be available to property owners and tenants within the Downtown Core District as designated in the current Community Improvement Project Area by-law.

## 5.2 Property, Landscaping and Parking Area Improvement Grant

### 5.2.1 Purpose

This grant is intended to encourage property owners and tenants to improve their property, including landscaping, parking areas, pedestrian connections, sidewalk cafés/patios and other improvements. The eligibility criteria ensure that these improvements are consistent with the goals and objectives of this Plan.

### 5.2.2 Eligible Costs

1. Professional landscaping and/or installation of alternative ground cover treatments, such as xeriscaping (native plants);
2. Resodding, provided it is a component of a larger landscaping improvement project (i.e., associated with other eligible projects in this program);
3. Repair, replacement and improvements to driveways and parking areas in rear or side yards, such as permeable surfaces, decorative surfaces, or installation of landscaping in front yard or side yard parking areas;
4. Installation or improvement of a permanent sidewalk café or patio that is located at the edge of the sidewalk (for clarity, an outdoor sitting area that is not directly adjacent to the sidewalk or which is located on municipal property is not eligible, and a temporary sidewalk café or temporary/moveable components of a sidewalk café are not eligible);
5. Installation or improvement of pedestrian walkways;
6. Tree planting;
7. Installation of benches or permanent planters;
8. Services of a professional landscape architect to design the features noted above; or
9. Any combination of the above.

### 5.2.3 Program Details

1. The maximum amount of the grant is \$3,500.00 or 50% of the eligible costs, whichever is lesser.
2. The maximum amount of a grant for the services of a professional landscape architect shall not exceed 15% of the grant that is calculated for eligible costs.
3. The grant may be combined with other grant programs as indicated in Section 8.6. This grant shall not be combined with the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant, which exists as a stand-alone incentive program.

### 5.2.4 Payment of Grant

1. The grant will be paid as a single payment upon completion of the improvements, to the satisfaction of the Plan's Administrator(s).

### **5.2.5 Eligibility Criteria**

1. All general eligibility criteria outlined in Section 8.6 shall apply. For clarity, this shall mean that the project must comply with all Town by-laws, policies, standards, guidelines and Official Plan and zoning, as well as any applicable Provincial, Federal or government agency requirements (e.g., conservation authority).
2. Application submissions shall be in accordance with the application submission requirements under Section 8.8. For clarity, this shall typically include submission of a site plan or drawings to demonstrate the intended improvements and modifications being proposed. Where required, this shall be accompanied by a building permit.
3. Proposals shall comply with the design criteria outlined in Section 9 of this Plan, along with any and all design guidelines adopted by the Town in the future that may be applicable at the time of applying for the grant.
4. Only commercial or mixed use properties (as defined in Section 8.1) shall be eligible for this grant. For clarity, single detached dwellings shall not be eligible for this grant.

### **5.2.6 Applicable Districts (Refer to Section 3.2)**

1. This program shall be available to property owners and tenants within the Downtown Core District, the Downtown Periphery District, the Stewart Street Commercial District and the O'Brien Road/Veteran's Memorial Boulevard Commercial District, as designated in the current Community Improvement Project Area by-law.

## **5.3 Accessibility Improvement Grant**

### **5.3.1 Purpose**

The accessibility improvement grant is intended to promote improvements to properties, including access ramps, entryway widening, as well as leveling or repairs to pathways and stairs. It is intended that any improvements incented under this grant program will exceed the applicable requirements of the Ontario Building Code. The grant will contribute to the accessibility and walkability of the Town.

### **5.3.2 Eligible Costs**

1. Installation of new automatic doors;
2. Installation of new wheelchair access ramps;
3. Widening of public entryways;
4. Leveling or repairs to pathways/accesses and stairs; and
5. Any combination of the above improvements.

### **5.3.3 Program Details**

1. The maximum amount of a grant for the accessibility improvement is \$3,500.00 or 50% of the eligible costs, whichever is lesser.
2. The grant may be combined with other grant programs. This grant shall not be combined with the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant, which exists as a stand-alone incentive program.

### **5.3.4 Payment of Grant**

1. The grant will be paid as a single payment upon completion of the improvements, to the satisfaction of the Plan's Administrator.

### **5.3.5 Eligibility Criteria**

1. Only commercial and mixed-use (as defined in Section 8.1) properties are eligible for this grant. For clarity, single detached dwellings and other residences are not eligible for this grant.
2. All general eligibility criteria outlined in Section 8.6 shall apply. For clarity, this shall mean that the project must comply with all Town by-laws, policies, standards, guidelines and Official Plan and zoning, as well as any applicable Provincial, Federal or government agency requirements (e.g., conservation authority).
3. Application submissions shall be in accordance with the application submission requirements under Section 8.8. For clarity, this shall typically include submission of a site plan or drawings to demonstrate the intended improvements and modifications being proposed. Where required, this shall be accompanied by a building permit.
4. Improvements shall comply with the design criteria outlined in Section 9, along with any and all design guidelines as may be implemented by the Town in the future.

5. Accessibility improvements shall be above and beyond the requirements of the Ontario Building Code, as applicable to the property.

**5.3.6 Applicable Districts (Refer to Section 3.2)**

1. This program shall be available to property owners and tenants within the Downtown Core District, the Downtown Periphery District, the Stewart Street Commercial District and the O'Brien Road/Veteran's Memorial Boulevard Commercial District, as designated in the current Community Improvement Project Area by-law.



## 5.4 Planning and Building Permit Fee Grant Program

### 5.4.1 Purpose

Application and permit fees imposed by the Town may present barriers to investment and redevelopment in the Town. This program is intended to encourage sensitive, attractive and desirable infill development and redevelopment by reducing the costs involved with making improvements to private property.

### 5.4.2 Eligible Costs

1. Development of a vacant property for commercial, office or a mix of uses;
2. Redevelopment of a property for commercial, office or a mix of uses;
3. Major additions to a commercial or mixed use property, involving an increase of at least 25% of the existing gross floor area;
4. Infrastructure work including the improvement or reconstruction of existing on-site public infrastructure (water services, sanitary and storm sewers);
5. Conversion of upper-storey space in a mixed-use or commercial building to residential units;
6. Major improvements to parking areas, such as the replanning or reconfiguration of parking areas;
7. Professional services by an engineer, architect, or professional planner;
8. Any combination of the above; and
9. In general, any projects which are eligible for other incentives outlined in this Plan will also be eligible for the Planning and Building Fee Grant if the applicant is required to obtain planning approvals or a building permit.

### 5.4.3 Program Details

1. **Planning Fee Grant:** A grant to a maximum of \$2,500.00 is available to cover the cost of minor variance applications, zoning by-law amendment applications or site plan applications. The grant may equal 100% of the Town's fees, provided it does not exceed \$2,500.00. Further, the grant cannot exceed 50% of the eligible costs listed above.
2. **Building Permit Fee Grant:** A grant to a maximum of \$2,500.00 is available to cover the cost of building permit fees or demolition permit fees. The grant may equal 100% of the Town's fees, provided it does not exceed \$2,500.00. Further, the grant cannot exceed 50% of the eligible costs listed above.

### 5.4.4 Payment of Grant

1. **Planning Fee Grant:** The grant is paid after the works are completed, to the satisfaction of the Administrator(s). This includes full payment of any applicable planning and building permit fees to the maximum amount of the grant. The grant is intended to act as a rebate for these fees.
2. **Building Permit Fee Grant:** The grant is paid after the works are completed, to the satisfaction of the Administrator(s). This includes full payment of any applicable planning and building permit fees to the maximum amount of the grant. The grant is intended to act as a rebate for these fees.

3. The planning fee and building permit fee grants may be combined with other grant programs, as indicated in Section 8.6. This grant shall not be combined with the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant, which exists as a stand-alone incentive program.

#### **5.4.5 Eligibility Criteria**

1. All general eligibility criteria outlined in Section 8.6 shall apply. For clarity, this shall mean that the project must comply with all Town by-laws, policies, standards, guidelines and Official Plan and zoning, as well as any applicable Provincial, Federal or government agency requirements (e.g., conservation authority).
2. Application submissions shall be in accordance with the application submission requirements under Section 8.8. For clarity, this shall typically include submission of a site plan or drawings to demonstrate the intended improvements and modifications being proposed. Where required, this shall be accompanied by a building permit.
3. Where applicable, proposals shall comply with the design criteria outlined in Section 9 of this Plan, along with any and all design guidelines adopted by the Town in the future that may be applicable at the time of applying for the grant.

#### **5.4.6 Applicable Districts (Refer to Section 3.2)**

1. This program shall be available to property owners and tenants within the Downtown Core District, the Downtown Periphery District and the Stewart Street Commercial District.

## 5.5 Tax Increment Equivalent Grant

### 5.5.1 Purpose

The Tax Increment Equivalent Grant is intended to encourage desirable and attractive infill development and redevelopment in the Town. The Tax Increment Equivalent Grant cannot be combined with any other grant in this Plan. To ensure that the development or redevelopment proposal is in the Town's best interests, the design of the project will need to comply with the Plan's design principles, as described in the eligibility criteria.

### 5.5.2 Eligible Costs

1. Development of a vacant property for commercial, office or a mix of uses;
2. Redevelopment of a property for commercial, office or a mix of uses;
3. Adaptive reuse of a property to suit a new commercial, office or mix of uses;
4. Major additions to a commercial or mixed use property, involving an increase of at least 25% of the existing gross floor area;
5. Infrastructure work including the improvement or reconstruction of existing on-site public infrastructure as may be required to service a proposed commercial, office or mixed-use development (water services, sanitary and storm sewers);
6. Conversion of upper-storey space in a mixed-use or commercial building to residential units, or major renovations or improvements to upper storey residential space;
7. Streetscaping improvements required as part of a proposed development;
8. Professional services by an engineer, architect, or professional planner; or
9. Any combination of the above.

### 5.5.3 Program Details

1. The Tax Increment Equivalent Grant is offered to eligible property owners only where the property assessment increases as a result of development, redevelopment or major improvement, and there is a subsequent increase in municipal property taxes. Grants will be equal to a percentage of the municipal tax increase resulting from the improvements, and will be paid to the owner each year for a maximum of 10 years at the sole discretion of the Town. In year one, the amount of the grant may equal up to 90% of the tax increment. In subsequent years, the amount shall decrease until it reaches 0%. Generally, the amount of the grant will increase between 10% and 20% per year. However, the rate of decrease of the value of the grant will be at the sole discretion of the Town and outlined in the financial incentive program agreement. The total amount of all tax increment equivalent grants shall not exceed 50% of the total eligible costs of the improvements.

### 5.5.4 Payment of Grant

1. The Tax Increment Equivalent Grant is paid after the improvements are completed to the satisfaction of the Administrator(s), and after the property owner's taxes are fully paid. In subsequent years, the annual grant is recalculated and paid after taxes are fully paid.

2. The Tax Increment Equivalent Grant shall not be combined with any other incentive outlined in this Plan. It is intended that this program be a stand-alone incentive program and that the owners of a property not accumulate incentives under the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant and another incentive program. The property owner will be responsible for the entire cost of the project.

#### **5.5.5 Eligibility Criteria**

1. All general eligibility criteria outlined in Section 8.6 shall apply. For clarity, this shall mean that the project must comply with all Town by-laws, policies, standards, guidelines and Official Plan and zoning, as well as any applicable Provincial, Federal or government agency requirements (e.g., conservation authority).
2. Application submissions shall be in accordance with the application submission requirements under Section 8.8. For clarity, this shall typically include submission of a site plan or drawings to demonstrate the intended improvements and modifications being proposed. Where required, this shall be accompanied by a building permit.
3. Where applicable, proposals shall comply with the design criteria outlined in Section 9 of this Plan, along with any and all design guidelines adopted by the Town in the future that may be applicable at the time of applying for the grant.
4. At its sole discretion, the Town may require the applicant to submit a business plan, prepared to the satisfaction of the Town, in relation to an application for the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant.
5. To be eligible for Tax Increment Equivalent Grant, the property shall be improved such that the amount of work undertaken is sufficient to result in an increase in the assessed value of the property.
6. In order to determine the suitability of the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant, prior to submitting an application for the program, eligible applicants may be required to estimate the total potential value of the tax increment, based on current assessment values and anticipated investment.
7. If the total value of the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant is significantly less than the applicant's estimated value, at the sole discretion of the Town, the applicant may be given the opportunity to withdraw their application for the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant program, and submit an application for one or more of the other incentive programs in this Plan as may be applicable to the project.
8. Should an eligible applicant be approved for the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant, and if the subject property is sold, in whole or in part, before the original grant period lapses, the original owner may not be entitled to receive the remaining grant payments, in accordance with the terms of the program agreement. The payments are also non-transferrable to the new owner unless specifically stipulated as part of the Financial Incentive Program Agreement executed between the owner and the Town.

#### **5.5.6 Applicable Districts (Refer to Section 3.2)**

1. This program shall be available to property owners and tenants within the Downtown Core District, the Downtown Periphery District and the Stewart Street Commercial District.

# 6 | BROWNFIELD INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

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The brownfield incentive programs are intended to assist in recapturing the social and economic value of brownfield properties. Financial incentives are established to help stimulate private investment for undertaking the rehabilitation and redevelopment of such properties. There are several suspected brownfield sites in the Town of Renfrew which are visible from the main gateway routes. Remediation of these sites is desirable to improve the aesthetics of these gateway routes and the downtown. Further, brownfield remediation provides opportunities for intensification and offers environmental benefits.

The following brownfield incentive programs are established by this Plan:



▶ Environmental Study Grant



▶ Brownfield Property Tax Assistance Program

## **6.1 Environmental Study Grant Program**

### **6.1.1 Purpose**

The risks and costs associated with brownfield rehabilitation are often key barriers to the rehabilitation and redevelopment of brownfield properties. Additionally, the lack of information on specific properties, and the reluctance of property owners to undertake and fund environmental studies, inhibits interest in addressing these properties. The Environmental Study Grant Program will promote the completion of studies with respect to environmental conditions of properties by owners that otherwise may not occur due to cost premiums associated with these assessments. The Town of Renfrew will benefit from the undertaking of environmental studies since it will bring about detailed information regarding the potential remediation costs of potential brownfield properties within the Town.

### **6.1.2 Eligible Costs**

1. Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (ESA);
2. Phase III ESA;
3. Remedial Work Plan; and/or
4. Risk Assessment Plan.

### **6.1.3 Program Details**

1. Grants for the completion of a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (ESA), a Phase III ESA, Remedial Work Plan, and/or a Risk Assessment Plan may be provided to eligible applicants for a total of 50% of the cost to complete the study (or studies) to a maximum of \$5,000 per property.

### **6.1.4 Payment of Grant**

1. Grants will be provided to the property owner following the submission and acceptance of the final completed study by the Town.
2. Grants are provided on a one-time basis to each eligible applicant for each approved project.
3. The environmental study grant may be combined with other grant programs, as indicated in Section 8.6. This grant shall not be combined with the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant, which exists as a stand-alone incentive program.

### **6.1.5 Eligibility Criteria**

1. All of the General Eligibility Requirements (outlined in Section 8.6) apply. For clarity, this shall mean that the project must comply with all Town by-laws, policies, standards, guidelines and Official Plan and zoning, as well as any applicable Provincial, Federal or government agency requirements (e.g., conservation authority).
2. Application submissions shall be in accordance with the application submission requirements under Section 8.8. For clarity, this shall typically include submission of a site plan or drawings to demonstrate the intended improvements and modifications being proposed. Where required, this shall be accompanied by a building permit.

3. To be eligible for the Environmental Study Grant Program, a Phase I ESA must be completed and submitted to the Town in order to demonstrate that site contamination is likely.
4. All environmental studies must be completed by a “qualified person” as defined in Section 8.1.
5. Any studies prepared with an Environmental Study Grant may become the property of the Town of Renfrew, at the discretion of the Town.

**6.1.6 Applicable Districts (Refer to Section 3.2)**

1. This program shall be made available within the Town-wide District as indicated in the current Community Improvement Project Area by-law.



## 6.2 Brownfield Property Tax Assistance Program

### 6.2.1 Purpose

Offering tax assistance to owners of brownfield properties will encourage the cleanup and redevelopment of these properties, and contribute to achieving the goals of this Plan. In accordance with Section 365.1 of the *Municipal Act*, the Town may defer or cancel all or a portion of municipal taxes during the period in which the brownfield site is being cleaned up or redeveloped (the rehabilitation period and development period, as defined in the *Municipal Act*). The Town may also apply to the Minister of Finance, on behalf of the property owner, to have the education portion of the property taxes deferred or cancelled.

### 6.2.2 Eligible Costs

1. Eligible costs relate to reducing the concentration of contaminants on, in, or under the subject property to permit a record of site condition to be filed in the Environmental Site Registry under Section 168.4 of the *Environmental Protection Act*. Eligible costs include costs for:
  - a. Phase III Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs) and Risk Assessment Plans (except where such a cost has been included as part of an issued Environmental Study Grant);
  - b. Environmental remediation costs, including any action taken to reduce the concentration of contaminants on, in or under the property to permit a Record of Site Condition to be filed in the Environmental Site Registry under Section 168.4 of the *Environmental Protection Act*;
  - c. Costs related to complying with any certificate of property use issued under Section 168.6 of the *Environmental Protection Act*;
  - d. The costs of preparing a Record of Site Condition;
  - e. Placing clean fill and related grading;
  - f. Installing environmental and/or engineering controls or works, as specified in the Phase III ESA and/or Risk Assessment Plan;
  - g. Monitoring, maintaining and operating environmental and engineering controls/works, as specified in the Phase III ESA and/or Risk Assessment Plan; and
  - h. Environmental insurance premiums.

### 6.2.3 Program Details

1. **Municipal Tax Assistance:** The Town may pass bylaws to provide a deferral or cancellation of all or a part of the municipal taxes on a brownfield site during the Rehabilitation Period and Development Period, as defined in Section 365.1(1) of the *Municipal Act*. The total value of the tax assistance will not exceed the total eligible costs, which are defined in the eligibility requirements above. The level and duration of the tax assistance will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Prior to passing the by-law approving the tax assistance, the Town will be required to notify the Ministry of Finance. Within 30 days of passing the by-law, the Town will also be required to notify the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Minister of Finance.
2. **Provincial Tax Assistance:** The Town may apply for Provincial Tax Assistance, on behalf of the owner, to cancel or freeze all or a portion of the education portion of property taxes. The application will need to be

approved by the Minister of Finance, and may be subject to a different timeline than the approved Municipal Tax Assistance. The Town must be offering municipal tax assistance in order for the owner to be eligible for Provincial tax assistance.

3. The brownfield property tax assistance program may be combined with other grant programs, as indicated in Section 8.6. This grant shall not be combined with the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant, which exists as a stand-alone incentive program.

#### 6.2.4 Payment Details

1. **Municipal Tax Assistance:** The municipal portion of the property tax assistance is limited to the Rehabilitation Period and Development Period of the project. The municipal portion of the property tax assistance will be undertaken in accordance with the provisions of Section 365.1 (1) of the *Municipal Act*. The municipal portion of the property tax assistance may start at the beginning of the Rehabilitation Period and run for a period specified by Council in a by-law, but shall not extend beyond the time periods outlined in Section 365.1(1) of the *Municipal Act*, which is the earlier of a) eighteen months, b) the date a Record of Site condition is filed, or c) when the total amount of tax assistance is equal to the eligible remediation costs (as defined above in 6.2.2). The Development Period begins when the Rehabilitation Period ends, and concludes on the earlier of a) the end date specified in the by-law or b) when the tax assistance is equal to the eligible remediation costs. The duration of tax assistance may consist of both the Rehabilitation Period and Development Period, subject to the limitations for each period as described above. The implementing by-law is to specify whether the tax assistance will occur during the Rehabilitation Period, the Development Period, or both.
2. **Provincial Tax Assistance:** The exemption may commence at the start of the Rehabilitation Period, and continue through the Development Period, for a maximum time period as defined in the implementing by-law, and subject to program and termination requirements established by Section 365.1(1) of the *Municipal Act*. The education portion of the property tax assistance may be delivered on a different timetable from the municipal portion of the property tax assistance for the given property. The conditions imposed by the Minister of Finance for the education portion of the property tax assistance under Section 365.1 of the *Municipal Act* may differ from those outlined in this Plan.

#### 6.2.5 Eligibility Criteria

1. A property must have had a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment undertaken which concluded that action is required to remediate the site.
2. All general eligibility criteria outlined in Section 8.6 shall apply. For clarity, this shall mean that the project must comply with all Town by-laws, policies, standards, guidelines and Official Plan and zoning, as well as any applicable Provincial, Federal or government agency requirements (e.g., conservation authority).
3. Application submissions shall be in accordance with the application submission requirements under Section 8.8. For clarity, this shall typically include submission of a site plan or drawings to demonstrate the intended improvements and modifications being proposed. Where required, this shall be accompanied by a building permit.
4. Successful applicants may also be eligible for other financial incentive programs, provided that the total value of incentives does not exceed the total eligible cost of rehabilitating the land and buildings.

5. At its sole discretion, the Town may require preparation of a business plan or feasibility study as a condition of approving tax assistance.
6. Application of Provincial tax assistance shall be at the sole discretion of the Town. Initially, the Town may wish to seek Provincial tax assistance on behalf of the owner on a “pilot project basis only, and discontinue such applications in the future. Should the Town choose not to apply for Provincial tax assistance, such a decision shall not require an amendment to this Plan.

**6.2.6 Applicable Districts (Refer to Section 3.2)**

1. This program shall be made available within the Town-wide District as indicated in the current Community Improvement Project Area by-law.

# 7 | MONITORING & EVALUATION STRATEGY

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This Community Improvement Plan (CIP) is primarily intended to be a flexible revitalization tool. As circumstances evolve, and as market forces, economic conditions, and financial resources change, the CIP will also need to evolve. Council or its designated authority will have discretion to determine funding for the financial incentive programs and to provide funding for municipal leadership programs. However, in order to inform decision-making about the implementation budget, and to ensure that the programs are working as they are intended, the Plan should be monitored, evaluated and, if necessary, revised, on a regular basis.

Immediately following adoption of the Community Improvement Plan, the Plan Administrator will begin to undertake the activities as outlined in the following sections. The process is illustrated in Figure 7.1.

## 7.1 Step 1: Establish the Monitoring Database

The Plan Administrator should initially develop a database upon which to monitor the number, types and success of financial incentive applications and municipal leadership programs. As applications for financial incentives are received, they should be recorded into the database. Additionally, the Administrator should record all pre-application consultations related to potential application submissions, even if the consultations do not result in an application being submitted.

Specific performance indicators will need to be identified and monitored. The selection of indicators will provide guidance about the success of the Plan and its individual programs. At this time, it is suggested that the Plan Administrator gather the following information from applicants (which should be incorporated into the application form for financial incentives):

- The approved/denied value of the grant and the total value of construction (the total public investment versus private investment);
- The effect of the incentives, such as the number of new residential units created and/or rehabilitated, the number and type of retail or businesses created, the number of trees being planted, etc.;
- The projected and actual increase in property assessments and taxes, as may be applicable; and
- “Indirect” indicators including economic indicators, qualitative indicators and other indicators which speak more generally to the success of the Town, and which may or may not be directly attributed to the influence and success of the Community Improvement Plan.

Other indicators should be identified and monitored on a periodic basis, such as:

- Utilization of the total financial incentives program budget;
- Utilization of the various incentive programs;

- Total dollars spent on municipal leadership programs, or other specific variables which indicate advancement of the programs (e.g., number of trees planted, number of metres of sidewalks improved, etc.);
- Other indirect indicators, such as economic indicators, as may be identified (e.g., number of overnight stays, number of new businesses established in the Town, etc.).

## **7.2 Step 2: Determine Baseline Conditions**

For the indicators identified in Step 1, the Plan Administrator should identify baseline conditions at the outset of Plan implementation, so that variables may be compared from year-to-year, beginning with implementation of this Plan.

## **7.3 Step 3: Collect Data**

Throughout the course of a one-year review period, the Plan Administrator should enter information from applications and pre-application consultation meetings into the database on an on-going basis. Additionally, municipal leadership programs which are related to the Community Improvement Plan should be recorded and monitored.

## **7.4 Step 4: Prepare Annual CIP Evaluation Report to Council**

Based on the information obtained the Plan Administrator will prepare an annual report to Council to evaluate the Community Improvement Plan and its individual programs, based on the changes to the baseline conditions established above, and based generally on the uptake of the programs and any new challenges that have emerged. The report will recommend adjustments to the Community Improvement Plan, including its terms, municipal leadership programs, financial incentive programs and eligibility criteria, in order to improve the programs offered through the Plan. The report will provide recommendations based on the results of monitoring. Recommendations may include:

- Budget adjustments or funding strategies;
- Potential revisions to the Community Improvement Project Area;
- Adjustments to the financial incentive programs, including the addition or discontinuation of programs, where necessary;
- Adjustments to the municipal leadership programs, including the scope of the programs or timing of the programs; and
- Any necessary changes to plan administration or processes.

The report should be made available on the Town's website each year for public review. The reporting of financial incentive program success should be accompanied by before and after photos of the projects completed to communicate the successes of the Plan.

Additionally, the annual report should include a review, summary and analysis of potential funding opportunities from the Province, County or other sources as may become available.

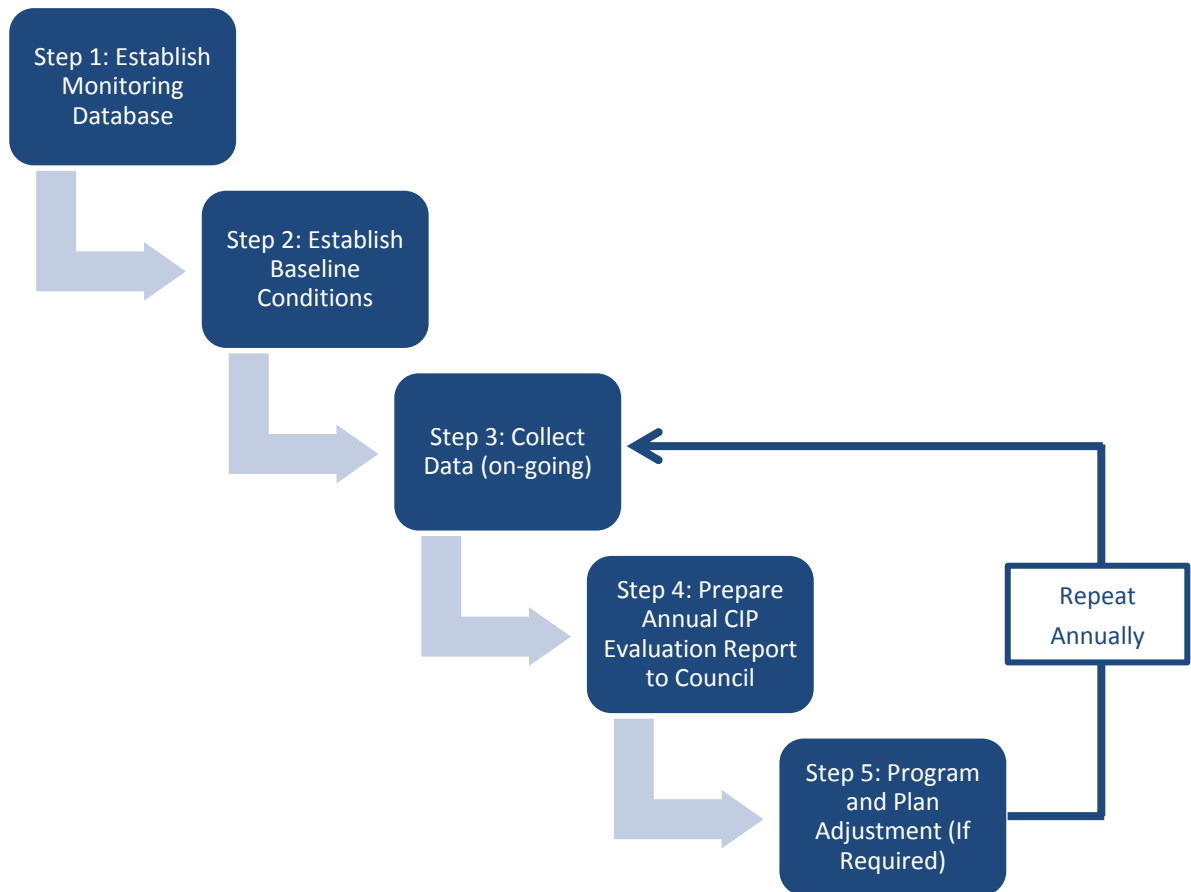
### 7.5 Step 5: Program and Plan Adjustment

Based on the annual review and report to Council, adjustments to this Plan may be required, including:

- **Adjustments to the Plan:** Based on the monitoring and evaluation process, changes to the terms of this Plan, the eligibility requirements, or the financial incentive or municipal leadership programs may be required. Council may also choose to discontinue funding or one or more of the financial incentive programs, and may do so without amending this Plan. However, the permanent addition/change/removal of a financial incentive program or the addition of eligibility criteria or eligible costs will require an amendment to this Plan in accordance with Section 28 of the *Planning Act*.
- **Adjustments to Program Funding:** It is recognized that Council or its designated authority may choose to cease, reduce or increase funding to one or more of the financial incentive programs, based on an evaluation of this Plan. Adjustments to program funding or the amount of the annual budget will not require an amendment to this Plan.

The activities above are intended to be repeated on an annual basis throughout the life of this Plan.

Figure 7.1 – Illustration of the Plan Monitoring and Evaluation Process



## 8 | IMPLEMENTATION

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Council or its designated approval authority will oversee the implementation of this Plan while day-to-day tasks associated with implementation will be coordinated by the Plan Administrator. This section outlines how the Plan is to be implemented and administered.

### 8.1 Definitions

To assist in the interpretation of this Plan, the following defines some of the terms used in this Plan:

**Administrator or Plan Administrator** means one or two Town staff members assigned by Council, who are primarily responsible for ensuring that the responsibilities of the Plan Administrator, as set out herein, are fulfilled.

**Applicant**, unless otherwise indicated, means a registered owner, assessed owner or tenant of lands and buildings within the community improvement project area who has a right to apply for one or more financial incentive(s) in accordance with the policies this Plan.

**Approval Authority** means the body responsible for approving or denying financial incentive applications. By default, the approval authority is Council. However, Council may designate an approval authority in accordance with the policies of this Plan.

**Brownfield** means a site that is undeveloped or was previously developed and may be contaminated. They are usually, but not exclusively, former industrial or commercial properties that may be underutilized, derelict or vacant.

**Certificate of Property Use** means a certificate of property use issued in accordance with Section 168.6 of the *Environmental Protection Act*. The Certificate of Property Use may outline actions or restrictions on use or construction in relation to managing adverse effects of contaminants, as outlined in a risk assessment.

**Community Improvement**, unless otherwise specified, is as defined in accordance with its definition under Section 28 of the *Planning Act*.

**Community Improvement Plan**, unless otherwise specified, is as defined in accordance with its meaning under Section 28 of the *Planning Act*.

**Community Improvement Project Area**, unless otherwise specified, is as defined in accordance with its meaning under Section 28 of the *Planning Act*. The community improvement project area for the Town of Renfrew Community Improvement Plan is defined separately and established by a by-law of Council. The reader should consult the Town for the most up-to-date community improvement project area by-law.

**Community Improvement Works** refers to the activities undertaken in accordance with the policies of this Plan, including activities that may be funded by the financial incentives (sections 5 and 6) or activities undertaken as part of the Municipal Leadership Strategy (Section 4).

**Council** means the Council of the Town of Renfrew.



**Development Period** means a period that begins when the Rehabilitation Period ends, and concludes on the earlier of a) the end date specified in the municipal tax assistance by-law or b) when the tax assistance is equal to the eligible remediation costs, as per section 365.1 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*.

**District** means a geographic area identified in the Community Improvement Project Area By-law, which may be subject to change from time to time. At the time of completing the CIP, there are five Districts, including: the Downtown District; the Downtown Periphery District; the Stewart Street Commercial District; the Veteran's Memorial Boulevard/O'Brien Road Commercial District; and the Town-Wide District. Within each district, different incentive programs may be available, as specified in Sections 5-6.

**Eligible Applicant** means an applicant (as defined above) who meets all of the general and program specific requirements of the financial incentive programs, and prepares and submits an application for a grant or loan that is in accordance with the specific requirements of the program, as outlined in this Plan. The Plan Administrator reserves the right to determine whether or not an applicant is eligible for the financial incentive programs.

**Financial Incentive Program** means a program listed under Sections 5 and 6 of this Plan.

**Financial Incentive Program Agreement** means an agreement executed between the Town and a successful applicant for a financial incentive program, as required by this Plan.

**Greenfield Property** means a vacant property that has no prior history of development, or an agricultural use that has not been developed or redeveloped for urban uses. In determining whether a property is considered a greenfield, the Approval Authority, in consultation with the Administrator of this Plan, shall have sole discretion.

**Gross Floor Area** means, for a dwelling, the total area of the storeys exclusive of basements, cellars, attic, garages, sunrooms, unenclosed verandas or porches; and for a building other than a dwelling, the total area of all the floors contained within the outside walls of the building. Only that floor area having a clear height to the ceiling of at least 2.25 metres may be used to calculate floor area.

**Heritage**, when used as an adjective, means historic and significant with respect to cultural heritage value or interest. Heritage, when used in designated heritage buildings, refers to buildings designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. Similarly, the term heritage, when used in reference to a Heritage Conservation District, refers to a Heritage Conservation District as designated in accordance with Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

**Mixed Use** means a combination of a mix of commercial uses (retail, restaurant, office) along with apartment dwellings located either in the upper storey(s) or the rear of the same building.

**Municipal Leadership Program** means a program listed under Section 4 of this Plan.

**Plan or this Plan** means the Town of Renfrew Community Improvement Plan, unless otherwise specified.

**Qualified Person** is a person defined by Section 168.1 of the *Environmental Protection Act*, Ontario Regulation 153/04 (as amended by Ontario Regulation 68/08) who meets the qualifications to be a qualified person for the purpose of:

- a) Conducting or supervising a phase one environmental site assessment;
- b) Conducting or supervising a phase two environmental site assessment; and

- c) Completing the certifications that must be completed by a qualified person in a record of site condition in respect of a property.

A qualified person is considered to meet the qualifications to be a qualified person if:

- a) The person holds a license, limited license or temporary license under the *Professional Engineers Act*, or
- b) The person holds a certificate of registration under the *Professional Geoscientists Act* and is a practicing member, temporary member or limited member of the Association of Professional Geoscientists of Ontario.

**Record of Site Condition** means the record of site condition prepared and filed in accordance with Section 168.4 of the *Environmental Protection Act*.

**Risk Assessment** means an assessment of risks prepared in accordance with the regulations by or under the supervision of a qualified person.

**Rehabilitation Period** means the period starting from the date a municipal tax assistance by-law is passed to the earlier of a) eighteen months, b) the date a Record of Site Condition is filed, or c) when the tax assistance is equal to the eligible remediation costs (as defined) under section 168.4 of the *Environmental Protection Act*.

**Town** means the Corporation of the Town of Renfrew.

## 8.2 Interpretation

1. **Read in Conjunction with Community Improvement Project Area By-law** - The Town of Renfrew Community Improvement Plan must be read and interpreted in its totality and in conjunction with the current Town of Renfrew Community Improvement Project Area By-law as passed by Council and administered separately from this Plan.
2. **Interpretation at Sole Discretion of Council** - Ultimately the Community Improvement Plan will be interpreted at the sole discretion of Council or the designated approval authority in consultation with the Plan Administrator. In some cases, as provided herein, interpretation and discretion may rest with the Plan Administrator.

## 8.3 Implementation Period

1. **Implementation Period** - It is anticipated that this Plan will be implemented over a 10-year period. Council may extend this implementation period as it deems appropriate or necessary, subject to funding, as approved by Council.
2. **Dissolution of Community Improvement Project Area** - Once Council is satisfied that the Plan has been carried out, Council may choose to dissolve the community improvement project area by by-law, which renders the Plan inoperative.

## 8.4 Administration of Programs

1. **Designation of Plan Administrator** - Upon implementation of this Plan, Council will designate a member of Town staff to be the Plan Administrator. An alternate Plan Administrator should also be designated in the event that the primary Plan Administrator becomes unavailable.

2. **Designation of an Approval Authority** - By default, Council will be the approval authority, making decisions on financial applications. Council may choose to delegate this authority to a committee of its choosing by by-law in consideration of recommendation by staff. The Plan Administrator may be included as a member of this committee or function as a coordinator for the committee.
3. **Administration of Municipal Leadership Programs** - Municipal leadership programs outlined in Section 4 of the Community Improvement Plan will be administered by the Plan Administrator under the direction of Council.
4. **Implementation of Municipal Leadership Programs** - Implementation of the municipal leadership programs will be dependent upon the commitment of the Town to generally contribute to, motivate, and assist in community improvement activities and undertakings, in addition to available budget, and Council approval of each activity. Where appropriate, Council will establish an annual budget related to the municipal leadership programs, where funding is required to support implementation. The activities will be carried out in accordance with the recommended timing of implementation, as described in Section 4, subject to available financial resources. The Town shall pursue potential Provincial and County funding resources where possible to support implementation of the municipal leadership programs.
5. **Administration of Financial Incentive Programs** - The financial incentive programs outlined in Sections 5 and 6 will be administered primarily by the Plan Administrator, and decisions about whether to approve financial incentive applications will be made by Council or its designated approval authority.
6. **Submission of Applications for Financial Incentives** - Applications for financial incentive programs will be submitted and processed in accordance with the steps outlined in Section 8.8. The Plan Administrator will be responsible for ensuring that this process is carried out in a timely manner, as indicated in Section 8.9.
7. **Approval of Applications for Financial Incentives** - Decisions on financial incentive applications and Financial Incentive Program Agreements will be made by Council. Should an application be refused, all applicants will be given an opportunity to request that Council reconsider its decision, as applicable. Where Council has designated approval authority to a committee, an applicant will be given an opportunity to appeal a refusal for consideration Council.

## 8.5 Budgeting for the Incentive Programs

1. **Annual Budget for Financial Incentive Programs** - Council will establish an annual overall budget for financial incentive programs, and may allocate all or a portion of the funds to individual programs based on the monitoring strategy outlined in Section 7, and based on annual priorities.
2. **Changes to Funding Levels** - In accordance with the monitoring strategy in Section 7, Council will determine if changes in the funding and incentive levels are necessary or warranted to ensure that the Community Improvement Plan functions properly in light of the Town's financial circumstances. Any change to the funding for the financial incentives programs of this Community Improvement Plan will be made at the sole discretion of Council, without an amendment to this Plan.
3. **Funding Resources** - The Town shall identify explore and pursue external funding resources where possible to support the incentive programs, including Provincial funding sources as may be made available from time to time, and Provincial or County participation in the financial incentives, where possible.

## 8.6 General Eligibility Requirements for Incentive Programs

The following General Eligibility Requirements are applicable to all incentive programs, and must be met in order for an applicant to be considered eligible for any of the financial incentive programs. The General Eligibility Requirements must be read by the applicant in association with program specific eligibility requirements and program details, as described in the incentive program details in Sections 5 and 6. General Eligibility Requirements include:

1. **Timing of Community Improvement Works** - In order to be eligible for any incentive program contained within the Town of Renfrew Community Improvement Plan, a financial incentive program application form must be submitted to the Town (accepted and processed by the Plan Administrator) prior to commencing any community improvement works. Complete applications must be submitted and approved prior to application for planning approval and/or building permit, as may be required, and prior to commencing community improvement works.
2. **Only Property Owners or Tenants with Consent** - Eligible applicants must be either the owner of the property, an agent for the owner of the property, or the tenant of a property to whom the owner has provided written consent for the application. Should ownership change hands during the course of making an application or undertaking works, the tenant shall advise the Town and obtain the new owner's authorization.
3. **Within the Community Improvement Project Area** - In order to be eligible for any incentive program, all proposed projects must be within the designated Community Improvement Project Area, as indicated in the Community Improvement Project Area By-law designated and administered separately from this Plan. As well, all proposed projects must help achieve the Community Improvement Plan's vision, goals and objectives for the revitalization of the Town, as presented in Section 3 of this Plan.
4. **Within the Applicable Community Improvement Project Area District** - The Community Improvement Project Area identifies five distinct districts. Only certain programs are made available in each district. The boundaries of the Districts are subject to change with changes to the Community Improvement Project Area. For convenience purposes, the types of programs applicable to each District is summarized in Table 8.6.1.
5. **Financial Incentives Not Available to Greenfield Properties** - In no case shall a greenfield property, as defined in this Plan, be eligible for financial incentive programs.

**Table 8.6.1 | Summary of Grant Programs Available in Community Improvement Project Area Districts**

Program	Downtown Core District	Downtown Periphery District	Stewart Street Commercial District	O'Brien Rd./ Veteran's Memorial Blvd. District	Town-Wide District
Façade and signage improvement grant	X				
Landscaping and property improvement grant	X	X	X	X	
Accessibility improvement grant	X	X	X	X	
Planning and building permit fee grant	X	X	X		
Tax increment equivalent grant	X	X	X		
Environmental study grant	X	X	X	X	X
Brownfield Property Tax Assistance Program	X	X	X	X	X

*Note: An "X" denotes that the specified grant (row) is available in the specified district (column).*

6. **No Outstanding Tax Arrears** - The property owner must not have outstanding tax arrears and must be in good standing with regard to taxation at the time of application and throughout the duration of the incentive benefit period, as identified within the Town of Renfrew Community Improvement Plan.
7. **Number of Applications Per Property** - There are no specific restrictions on the number of applications that may be submitted by a property owner or tenant in relation to a specific property. The intent of providing this flexibility is to allow applicants to phase in components of their projects over time, should it be necessary. However, the Review Panel may reject an application where it is of the opinion that the proposed works have already been undertaken as part of a previously approved application.
8. **Complete Financial Incentive Application and Supporting Materials** - In order to be eligible, all incentive program applications must include completed application forms and supporting materials such as detailed work plans, cost estimates and contracts, applicable reports, and any additional information as required by the Town.
9. **Project in Accordance with Town By-laws, etc.** - Community improvement works associated with an incentive program application must be in accordance with all Town by-laws, policies, procedures, standards, and guidelines in order to be approved.

10. **Project in Conformity with the Official Plan and Zoning By-law** - Existing and proposed land uses must be in conformity with the policies and standards provided by the Town's Official Plan, and in accordance with applicable regulations, such as the Zoning By-law, and all other planning documents.
11. **Project In Accordance with Planning Approvals and Building Permits** - Community improvement works associated with an incentive program application must be undertaken pursuant to application for planning approval and/or building permit, and any additional required permits, and in accordance with the Ontario Building Code and all applicable planning policies and standards.
12. **Conformity with Design Criteria** - The proposed exterior design of buildings, including signage, associated with an incentive program application must be considered by the Town as consistent with the Town's desired goals for appearance/character of the Town, in relation to the design criteria outlined in Section 9 of this Plan, and any design guidelines adopted by the Town in the future, as applicable. Council will consider details of exterior design proposed by each application when determining eligibility for incentive programs of the Community Improvement Plan. Council will use the design criteria as well as any future design guidelines adopted by the Town as tools to characterize whether a project is considered desirable and meets the goals and objectives of this Plan.
13. **Consistency with Vision, Goals and Objectives** - Community improvement works are to be generally consistent with the vision, goals and objectives outlined in Section 3 of this Plan.
14. **Completed Works to be Consistent with Approved Application** - Community improvement works undertaken and completed that are associated with an approved incentive program application must be consistent with the project description contained in the application form and supporting materials, and with the program agreement. Should the works not be consistent with the original project description, to the satisfaction of the Plan Administrator, the Town may delay, reduce, or cancel the approved incentive program benefits, and may require repayment of any of the incentive program benefits, at the discretion of the Town.
15. **Combination and Value of Incentives** - The incentive programs made available under the Town of Renfrew Community Improvement Plan may be used individually or may be combined, subject to the exceptions outlined within the specific program details and eligibility criteria in the Community Improvement Plan. The total of all incentive benefits (including grants and refunds) provided to each applicant for each community improvement proposal for a building or lands within the Community Improvement Project Area must not exceed the project's costs related to the planning, or replanning, design or redesign, resubdivision, clearance, development or redevelopment, and/or reconstruction and rehabilitation associated with the application.
16. **Not Maintenance or Life Cycle Replacements** - Eligible projects are generally only considered to include improvements over existing features. The incentive programs are not intended to cover life cycle replacements or maintenance activities.
17. **Grants to be a Maximum 50% of the Eligible Costs** - In no case shall the total amount of all grants be greater than 50% of the calculated eligible costs of the project(s).
18. **Minimum Grant of \$500** - Should a grant have a value of less than \$500, the approval authority has the sole discretion to reject the application on the basis that the project is too minor and the administrative costs are too high to be worth processing the grant.

## 8.7 General Process and Submission Requirements for the Incentive Programs

In order to be eligible for any of the incentive programs, applicants must submit a complete application in accordance with the General Process and Submission Requirements outlined below. A complete application will include:

1. Completed application forms; and
2. Supporting materials such as plans, cost estimates and contracts, applicable reports, and any additional information required by Plan Administrator and/or Council or its designated approval authority.

General Process and Submission Requirements include:

1. **Town Not Responsible for Applicant's Costs** - The Town is not responsible for any costs incurred by the Applicant during the application process, including costs associated with preparing the materials which are required by the Town as part of a complete application.
2. **Application Prior to Commencement of Works** - An application must be submitted to the Town prior to commencing any community improvement works. Should an application be submitted following the commencement of community improvement works, the application will be rejected upon receipt.
3. **Applicant to Declare Other Funding** - All sources of additional funding or incentives must be declared at the time of application submission. The Plan Administrator is entitled to make recommendations for incentive reductions based upon any declared funding or incentive.
4. **Administrator's Application Review** - The Plan Administrator will initially evaluate all applications and supporting materials and offer a recommendation to Council or its designated approval authority who will make a decision on the application.
5. **Financial Incentive Program Agreement** - Should the application be approved by Council or its designated approval authority, a Financial Incentive Program Agreement will be required, which will outline the terms, duration, default, and any other provisions of the incentive program. This agreement will also be subject to approval by Council.
6. **Additional Information May be Required** - Should the Plan Administrator, Council or its designated approval authority require additional information, plans, studies, or any additional works related to the proposed project and incentive program application, the requested information and/or works must be adequately provided and/or undertaken prior to approval of the application.
7. **Project Audit at the Cost of the Applicant** - Upon approval and/or completion of community improvement works, the Town, under direction of the Plan Administrator, reserves the right to audit the costs associated with any of the works described by the approved application for financial incentive(s). Audits will be undertaken at the expense of the applicant.
8. **Inspection of Completed Project** - Upon approval and/or completion of community improvement works, the Town reserves the right to inspect any properties/buildings that are associated with an incentive program application offered within this Plan. Inspections would be carried out by the Plan Administrator.
9. **Failure to Meet Requirements** - Should the applicant fall into default of any of the General Eligibility Requirements, or fail to meet the detailed requirements of each of the incentive programs, the financial incentive program agreement, or any other requirements of the Town, the Town, under direction of the



Plan Administrator, may delay, reduce, or cancel the approved incentive program benefits, and may require repayment of any of the incentive program benefits, at the discretion of the Plan Administrator in consultation with Council or its designated approval authority.

10. **Discontinuation of Funding** - The Town may discontinue funding any of the incentive programs at any time; however, all applicants with approved incentive program benefits will continue to receive the benefits in accordance with the terms outlined in this Plan, subject to fulfilling any requirements and agreements and subject to available funding as approved by Council or its designated approval authority.
11. **Cancellation of Grant due to Failure to Initiate the Project** - Any program commitments may be cancelled if work does not commence within six months of the approval of an application, or in accordance with an agreement with the Town.

## 8.8 Application Process for the Incentive Programs

### General

1. **Application Process** - The Town may implement either a “first come, first served” or an “intake window” process for receiving and making decisions on financial incentive applications. By default, this Plan is to be administered under a first come, first served process. However, Council may choose to change the process in consideration of a recommendation of staff and/or a Committee of Council. Council has the discretion to modify the approval process for applications at any time under Section 8.8.2. The general process types are outlined as follows:
  - a. **“First Come, First Served”**: In a first come, first served application process, the Town accepts grant applications throughout the year, provided funding is still available. Applications are processed and decided upon in the order in which they are received. When funding is exhausted, the Town will close the application process until funding becomes available.
  - b. **“Intake Window”**: In an intake window application process, the Town may establish a set timeframe (e.g., a 30 day or 60 day window) in which it will accept applications. All applications will be reviewed and decided upon at a meeting of Council or the delegated approval authority. During this process, funding may become exhausted. Accordingly, there may be a need to prioritize which approved applications will receive funding. Council or the designated approval authority will have sole discretion to determine how the applications may be prioritized for funding (in consideration of the Plan Administrator’s recommendations). In no particular order, applications may be prioritized on the basis of:
    - i. Consultation with the applicants to determine if any applicants are accepting of application deferral until funding becomes available;
    - ii. Whether properties are designated or listed as being of historical interest;
    - iii. The value of the grant being sought (i.e., a large application may be deferred to permit many smaller improvements to benefit a larger number of property owners);
    - iv. Whether the project or property is considered to carry great importance and significance (e.g., highly visible corner lots); and/or
    - v. Other criteria as may be determined by Council or its designated approval authority.

2. **Application Process Changes at Council's Discretion**– Council may direct changes to the application process without amending this Plan. Changes should be considered as part of the annual monitoring and evaluation of the Plan (Section 7) and in consideration of the recommendations provided by staff, the Review Panel and/or a Committee of Council.

### Step 1: Pre-Application Consultation and Application Submission

1. **Pre-application Consultation Meeting** - Applicants are required to arrange and participate in a pre-application consultation meeting with the Plan Administrator, in order to discuss and confirm application requirements, program eligibility, proposed scope of work, project timing, supporting documentation requirements, etc.
2. **Submission of Complete Application** - The applicant will be required to submit a completed application, which will include all of the required application forms, in addition to any supporting documentation, as required by the Plan Administrator or by Council or its designated approval authority. Supporting documentation may include, but is not limited to, the following materials:
  - a. photographs of the existing building condition or property;
  - b. historical photographs and/or drawings;
  - c. a site plan and/or professional design study/architectural drawings;
  - d. specification of the proposed works, including a work plan for the improvements and construction drawings; and/or
  - e. at least two cost estimates for eligible work provided by licensed contractors or consultants, as appropriate in the context of the financial incentive program.
3. **Screening of Application** - Once all of the required forms and supporting materials are received, the Plan Administrator will undertake a preliminary screening of the proposal and application.
  - a. Based on the application and proposal, and the results of the preliminary screening, the Plan Administrator may perform an initial site visit and inspection of the building/property, as necessary. The Plan Administrator will inform the applicant of the approximate time for the site visit and inspection. The applicant will accompany the inspector during the inspection if possible, and will inform the inspector of any potential safety hazards on the site.
  - b. If the application clearly does not meet the program requirements, the application will not be accepted.
  - c. If the application meets the program requirements, the application will be accepted. By accepting an application for any of the financial incentive programs, the Plan Administrator does not guarantee program approval.

### Step 2: Application Review and Evaluation

1. **Enter into Plan Monitoring Database** - Once an application has been accepted by the Plan Administrator, information related to the applicant, application, and proposal information will be entered into the Town's database in order to track the application details, progress and results in accordance with the Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy (refer to Section 7). This will be an on-going task throughout the

remainder of the application process as this information will need to be updated as the application is processed.

2. **Recommendation Report** - Applications and supporting documentation will be considered by the Plan Administrator against the incentive program eligibility requirements (including both general and specific requirements). Based on the proposal, application, and fulfillment of eligibility requirements, the Plan Administrator will determine if the proposal and application will be considered eligible. Based on eligibility, a recommendation report will be prepared by the Plan Administrator. The report may recommend approval of the application or refusal of the application.
3. **Preparation of Financial Incentive Program Agreement Form** - Should the Plan Administrator recommend approval of the application, a financial incentive program agreement will be prepared by the Plan Administrator. If applicable, the financial incentive program agreement will be forwarded to the applicant to be dated and signed.
4. **Forward Application to Approval Authority** - Once the financial incentive program agreement has been reviewed by all parties and returned to the Town, the application, recommendation report, and agreement will be forwarded to Council or its designated approval authority to initiate the approval process. Should the application be approved, the Plan Administrator will ensure that all parties sign the agreement prior to the commencement of any approved works. If the agreement is not signed by all parties, the Town does not guarantee program approval.

### Step 3: Application Approval

1. **If Recommended for Refusal by Approval Authority** - If the Plan Administrator has recommended that the application be refused, the Recommendation Report will be provided to Council or its designated approval authority for a decision. Where a designated approval authority has refused the application, the applicant may re-submit the application for reconsideration by Council, provided that the applicant has made consideration of the designated approval authority's reasons for refusal. If Council or its designated approval authority determines that the application should be approved, the process continues from Step 3.3.
2. **If Recommended for Approval by Approval Authority** - Alternatively, if the Plan Administrator has recommended that the application be approved, the Recommendation Report and signed agreement will be forwarded to Council or the designated approval authority for consideration. If the application is approved, the process continues with the next step. If the application is refused, the applicant may re-submit the application for reconsideration by Council, provided that the applicant has made consideration of Council's reasons for refusal.
3. **Execution of Financial Incentive Program Agreement** - If Council or its designated approval authority approves the application and Financial Incentive Program Agreement, the Agreement will be executed by the signing and dating of the agreement by Town officials. A copy of the signed and dated Financial Incentive Program Agreement will be provided to the applicant.

### Step 4: Completion of Works and Payment

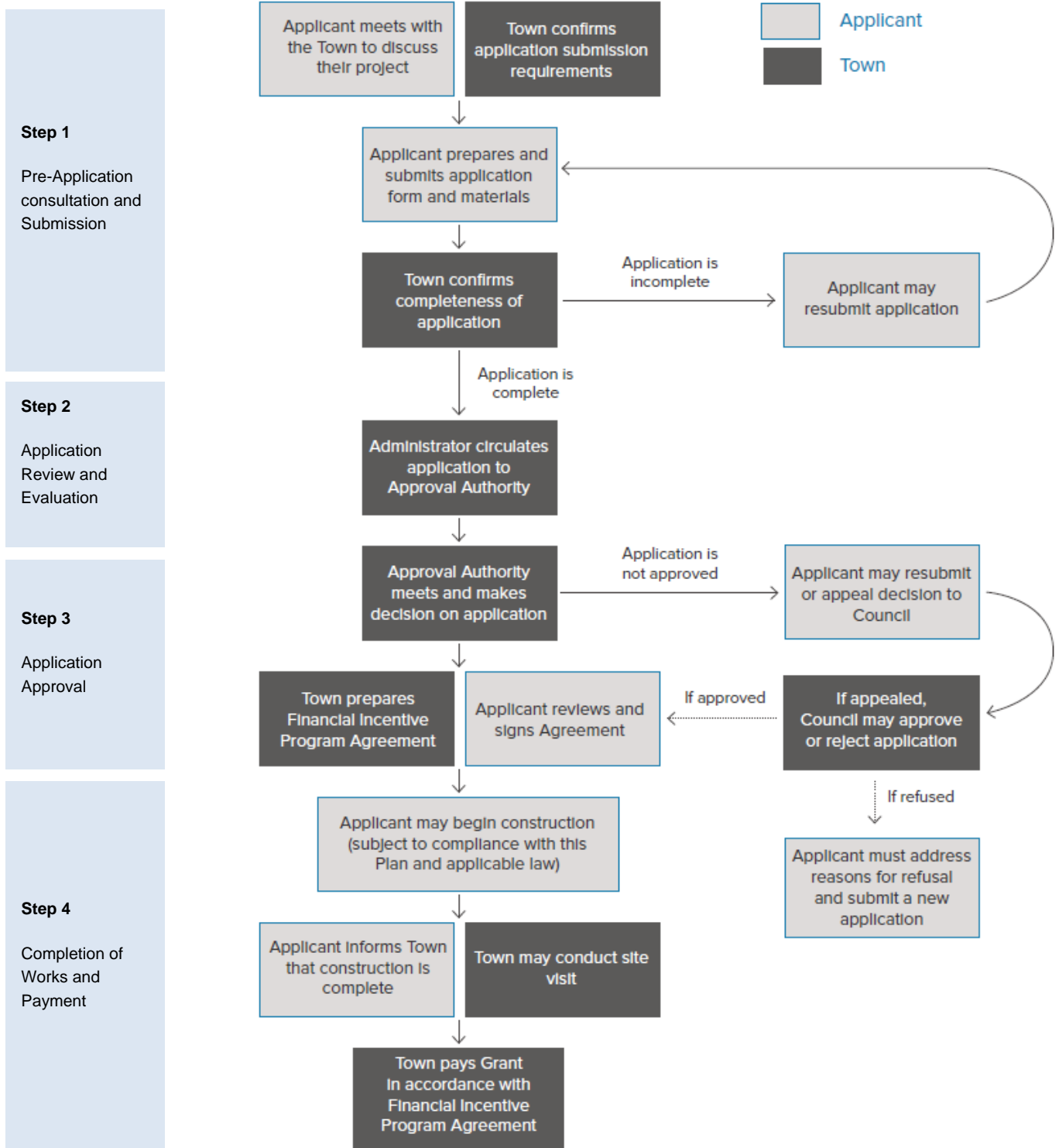
1. **Commencement of Works** - Once an application has been approved by Council or its designated approval authority, and the agreement signed and dated, and once all of the required approvals and permits for the work are secured, the applicant may commence community improvement works.

2. **Timing of Payment** - Payment of the financial incentive, in accordance with the Financial Incentive Program Agreement, will be provided upon successful completion of the approved works.
3. **Final Supporting Documentation (if required)** - Prior to issuance of the financial incentive, the applicant may be required to provide the Plan Administrator with final supporting documentation, which may include but is not limited to:
  - a. photographic evidence of the completed works satisfactory to the Town;
  - b. other documentation proving completion of the project;
  - c. invoices for all eligible work done, indicating the total amount paid for eligible works;
  - d. proof of payment to contractors in full; and
  - e. presentation of the terms of a loan and/or proof of approval of a loan provided by a financial institution, as it may be applicable in relation to the interest rebate programs contained in this Plan.
4. **Final Site Inspection (if required)** - The Plan Administrator may perform a final site visit and inspection of the building/property (as necessary) in order to ensure that the project has been completed in accordance with the financial incentive program agreement.
5. **Assurance of Conformity to the Program Requirements and Financial Incentive Program Agreement** - Prior to issuance of the financial incentive payment, the Plan Administrator will ensure that all program requirements and details of the financial incentive program agreement have been met.
6. **If Applicant has Defaulted on the Agreement** - The Plan Administrator will take appropriate remedies as specified in the agreement if the applicant defaults on the financial incentive program agreement.
7. **Payment of Grant** - If all program requirements and financial incentive program agreement requirements have been met to the Plan Administrator satisfaction in accordance with the decision of Council or its designated approval authority, the Plan Administrator will issue payment of the approved grant in accordance with the general and specific program eligibility requirements, and the financial incentive program agreement.

### Illustration of Grant Application Process

1. The grant application process is generally illustrated in Figure 8.1. The illustration is provided for convenience purposes only.

Figure 8.1 – Illustration of Grant Application Process



## 8.9 Timeline for Application Review and Decision

This Plan recognizes that the success and uptake of the financial incentive programs will depend in part on the expedience of the application and review process. As a guide, and subject to the availability of staff resources, the Plan Administrator will accept and review all applications for funding in consideration of the following timeline:

1. The Plan Administrator should be available to meet with a potential applicant for a pre-consultation meeting within ten (10) business days of being requested to meet by a potential applicant, or as soon as is reasonably possible.
2. The Plan Administrator should review an application for financial incentives and notify the applicant of its completeness within ten (10) business days of receiving the application, or sooner, if possible.
3. Upon receipt of the application, the Plan Administrator should prepare a recommendation report to Council or its designated approval authority and, if applicable based on the recommendations contained within the recommendation report, prepare a financial incentive program agreement and forward it to the applicant within twenty-five (25) business days of receiving the application.
4. The application for funding should be considered for approval at the next meeting of Council if Council is the approval authority or the next planned meeting of the designated approval authority.
5. The total time between receipt of a complete application for funding and the meeting to consider the application should not exceed thirty-five (35) business days.
6. The execution of the financial incentive program agreement should occur within ten (10) business days of application approval. Should the application be approved, the payment of the grant should occur within thirty (30) business days of completion of the project. The applicant is responsible for notifying the Town of the completion of the project, and may be required to provide proof of its completion.
7. The timelines identified above are for guideline purposes only and are not intended to be construed as deadlines. Timelines will vary depending on the availability of staff and resources and the nature of the application received.

## 9 | URBAN DESIGN CRITERIA

The implementation of this Plan depends in part upon the establishment and application of design-related eligibility criteria. Urban design criteria are intended to establish an aesthetic standard for improvements made under this Plan. It is recognized that not all urban design criteria outlined in this section will be applicable in all cases due to the context of the financial incentive application. The interpretation and application of these criteria will ultimately rest with Council or the designated approval authority. The criteria are supported by photographs of useful precedents in the Town of Renfrew or other communities, to help illustrate the intent of the criteria. However, the wording takes precedence over the images, which are provided for illustrative purposes only.

### 9.1 Façade and Building Improvement Criteria

**Applicability:** These criteria are applicable to the façade and building signage improvement grant program. Additionally, these criteria should also be considered as part of the development of new buildings under the tax increment equivalent grant program, the planning and building application fees program and the brownfields property tax assistance program.

Principle	Criteria
Maintain and restore historic or original building materials, architectural elements and features.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Original colours, architectural detailing and original materials should be maintained and restored where possible. If original materials or detailing must be replaced, similar materials should be used as much as possible.</li> <li>2. The reconstruction of missing historic features of the façade is encouraged, based on historic documentation.</li> <li>3. Alterations should not remove, obscure, overwhelm or cover original historic materials and architectural elements.</li> <li>4. The use of economical materials such as aluminum cladding is strongly discouraged.</li> <li>5. Where original colours are not known even in consideration of historic documentation of a property, the use of a palette of heritage colours, as may be offered through many paint supply stores, is encouraged for exterior painting.</li> <li>6. Proposals must be in consideration of historical documentation about the original appearance of the façade, where such documentation is available.</li> </ol>

Principle	Criteria
<p>Maximize façade interest, detailing and differentiate the components of a façade (base, middle and top).</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Principal building entrances should face the street/sidewalk. Secondary entrances may be provided from side yards or rear yards.</li> <li>2. Doors should be articulated through recessed entryways and detailed framing.</li> <li>3. Windows should be articulated with detailed framing and division of window panes. Large, undivided window panes should be avoided.</li> <li>4. Detailing and design of the façade should be differentiated using different materials, colours or the application of architectural elements. There should be a base, a middle and a cornice. Repeating elements along the façade are encouraged (e.g., repeating architectural elements or windows). A storefront cornice and signboard should be provided.</li> </ol>
<p>Maximize barrier-free access.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Entryways should be barrier-free in accordance with the Ontario Building Code's standards. Building entrances should not have steps. Where this cannot be avoided, the installation of an accessibility ramp or an alternate entrance is encouraged even where it is not required by the Ontario Building Code.</li> <li>2. Automatic doors are encouraged even where they are not required by the Ontario Building Code.</li> </ol>
<p>Create an active, inviting façade using murals, awnings and patios/sidewalk cafés.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Murals are encouraged on side and rear façades.</li> <li>2. Murals should generally relate to historic persons, places and events which reference and celebrate the Town of Renfrew's history. Awnings are encouraged; where provided, awnings should be designed to be proportional to the façade and use colours that are complementary to the façade colours.</li> <li>3. In all cases, consideration should be made to incorporate awnings into a façade improvement. Permanent, fabric awnings and retractable awnings are encouraged.</li> <li>4. Bubble-style awnings are discouraged.</li> <li>5. Signage may be imprinted on an awning provided it is proportionally sized and scaled for pedestrians.</li> <li>6. Informal sidewalk cafés are encouraged in the front yard. Where space permits, designated patio areas may be provided in the front or side yard.</li> <li>7. Larger outdoor seating areas (more than 12 seats) should be designated with decorative fencing.</li> </ol>



**Figure 9.1 – Illustration of Façade and Building Improvement Criteria**



The retention and restoration of original building materials is encouraged.



Façade articulation should be maximized.



Example of a recent façade renovation with articulation of windows, repeating elements and architectural differentiation (example from Inglewood, Ontario).



Murals should relate to the community's history (example from Arnprior, Ontario).



Awnings should be retractable, fabric and be suitable to provide shelter from the elements for pedestrians.



Patios/sidewalk cafes are encouraged to bring activity to the street.

## 9.2 Signage Criteria

**Applicability:** These criteria are particularly applicable to any applications made for a signage improvement grant. However, these criteria should also be considered under any other program where the applicant is proposing new signage as part of their project (e.g., as part of a new building being constructed with the tax increment equivalent grant program, the planning and building application fees program and the brownfields property tax assistance program).

Principle	Criteria
Signage should be scaled for pedestrians and not vehicular traffic.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Signage should be scaled according to the building height and oriented for slow traffic and pedestrians.</li> <li>2. Only one principal sign should be used, and it should be located above the principal building entrance. No more than two small signs should be used, and only if they are used to enhance the appearance of the storefront. For clarity, large signs and cluttered signs are to be avoided.</li> <li>3. Hanging perpendicular signs are encouraged.</li> </ol>
Signage should be well-articulated, attractive and exude a high quality appearance.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Back-lit and neon signs are strongly discouraged.</li> <li>2. Front-lit signage is encouraged.</li> <li>3. Embossed or engraved signage is encouraged.</li> <li>4. Where provided, signage should be contained in the storefront cornice/sign board area of the façade.</li> <li>5. Signage should not be used in the storefront windows, except a minimal amount of painted signs. Storefront windows should be as transparent as possible.</li> </ol>



Figure 9.2 – Illustration of Signage Criteria



Hanging, perpendicular signs are encouraged.



Front lit signs are encouraged.



Embossed lettering and pedestrian-scaled signage is encouraged (example from Perth, Ontario).



Signage should be incorporated into the storefront cornice or signboard where possible (example from Arnprior, Ontario).

### 9.3 Property and Landscaping Improvement Criteria

**Applicability:** These criteria are particularly applicable to any applications made for a property and landscaping improvement grant. However, these criteria should also be considered under any other program where the applicant is proposing landscaping, parking and similar property improvements.

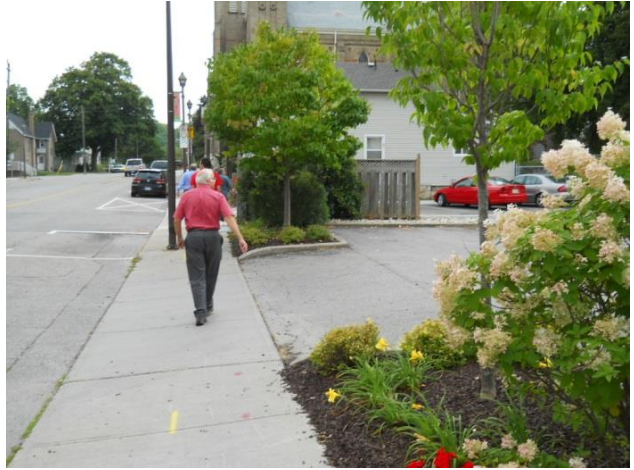
Principle	Criteria
Minimize the visual impact of parking areas on Raglan Street South.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Parking areas should be located in the rear of buildings. Only existing side yard parking areas will be considered for a grant.</li> <li>2. Rear yard parking areas should have a clear access or entrance to the building. Rear building entrances are encouraged; where they cannot be provided, signage is encouraged to direct visitors to the main entrance.</li> <li>3. Driveways from Raglan Street South should be minimized. The width of driveways from Raglan Street South should generally be minimized (two one-way driveways are preferred over one large, two-way driveways).</li> <li>4. Parking areas should be buffered from the sidewalk/street. A planting strip including vertical elements (decorative fencing, trees, plantings) is encouraged.</li> <li>5. The use of permeable paving surfaces is encouraged.</li> <li>6. Parking areas should not restrict pedestrian access to building entrances. Clearly designated walkways and pathways should be provided within parking areas to enable persons to walk from the parking area and into the building or onto the sidewalk.</li> <li>7. Large parking areas should be broken up with decorative landscaping and tree planting.</li> <li>8. Only one principal sign should be used, and it should be located above the principal building entrance. No more than two small signs should be used, and only if they are used to enhance the appearance of the storefront. For clarity, large signs and cluttered signs are to be avoided.</li> <li>9. Hanging perpendicular signs are encouraged.</li> </ol>
Maximize landscaping and planting to create visual interest.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Generally, business owners and residents are encouraged to implement and maintain temporary plantings, such as hanging window planters.</li> <li>2. Landscaping and planting strips are encouraged in accordance with the criteria noted above for minimizing the visual impact of parking areas.</li> <li>3. Permanent planting should be completed in accordance with the Core Area Design Study as may be prepared by the Town.</li> </ol>
Encourage sustainable planting and paving materials.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The use of permeable paving surfaces is encouraged.</li> <li>2. The use of native plantings as part of landscaping is encouraged to minimize watering needs and maintenance costs.</li> </ol>



Figure 9.3 – Illustration of Property and Landscape Improvement Criteria



"Informal" planters are encouraged.



Parking areas should be landscaped and buffered from the sidewalk (example from Paris, Ontario).



Parking areas should be buffered with trees to minimize their impact (example from Perth, Ontario).



One-way driveways are preferred (example from Paris, Ontario).



Landscaping and planters create interest and colour in the façade (example from Paris, Ontario).



Patios/sidewalk cafés are encouraged to bring activity to the street.

## 9.4 Built Form, Scale and Massing Criteria

**Applicability:** These criteria will be applicable to the development of new buildings or any additions made to buildings as may be part of the tax increment equivalent grant program, the planning and building application fees program or the brownfields property tax assistance program.

Principle	Criteria
<p>Additions should be sensitive to the existing context and have a minimal impact on the existing building, particularly historic buildings.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. For buildings considered to be historic, additions should not be located closer to the front lot line than the original building face.</li> <li>2. The height of building additions should be consistent with the original building height.</li> <li>3. The roof should correspond with the original roof (e.g., flat or sloping).</li> <li>4. The design of building additions should be in accordance with the criteria for façade improvements.</li> </ol>
<p>New buildings should be compatible with the existing urban fabric and be designed to be pedestrian-oriented.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. New buildings should be located similarly to adjacent buildings. In the downtown core, buildings should be located close to the sidewalk.</li> <li>2. New buildings should not be less than two storeys in height, providing for active uses at the ground floor (retail, restaurants, personal service shops, etc.) and other uses in the upper storey(s) (residential, office space, etc.). New buildings should not exceed three storeys unless in accordance with the Official Plan and Zoning By-law. Buildings over three storeys should be subject to step-backs and/or angular plane requirements to minimize the visual impact of tall buildings.</li> <li>3. The height of the proposed building should be similar to the height of adjacent buildings, with the aim of creating a harmonious roofline, minimizing large variations in building height and creating transitions in building height.</li> <li>4. Principal building entrances should face the street/sidewalk. Secondary entrances may be provided from side yards or rear yards.</li> <li>5. Parking areas and landscaping should be in accordance with the property and landscaping improvement criteria above.</li> <li>6. New building façades and signage should be in accordance with the façade and building criteria and the signage criteria above.</li> </ol>

Figure 9.4 – Illustration of Built Form, Scale and Massing Criteria



New buildings and additions should respect the downtown core's "main street" character, with buildings located at the sidewalk and compatible heights.



In the Town, generally 2-3 storey buildings are encouraged to provide for active uses on the ground floor and residential or office uses in the upper storeys.



# 10 | MARKETING THE PLAN

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It is important that the Town's residents and other stakeholders are kept aware of the programs offered by the Community Improvement Plan, and of opportunities to participate in the process. To this end, marketing and promoting the incentive programs will be necessary to increase their uptake, and therefore help to implement the Plan. In addition, communicating the importance of the Municipal Leadership Strategy to other Town departments and stakeholders will help to build support for the programs and encourage their completion.

At its discretion, the Town will complete the following activities on an on-going basis, to market and promote the Plan:

1. **Municipal Leadership Strategy:** The Town may advertise any of the programs and projects recommended through the Municipal Leadership Strategy as a project associated with this Community Improvement Plan.
2. **Newsletters and Brochures:** The Town may prepare educational newsletters and/or brochures that provide an overview of this Plan and the incentive programs that are available. Brochures and newsletters may be delivered to all property owners, tenants, and other interested parties within the designated Community Improvement Project Area. Brochures and newsletters may also be displayed and provided by the Town at its municipal office and on the Town's website.
3. **Webpage:** The Town may create a link on its website to provide general information about the Plan, as well as details for each of the financial incentive programs, along with eligibility criteria, and how to apply. It may also be informative to provide profiles of successfully completed projects.
4. **Promotional Display:** The Town may prepare promotional displays that provide an overview of this Plan that can be used at events in which the town is participating.
5. **Public Consultation Events:** The Town may hold informational seminars, workshops or open houses upon adoption of the Plan and on an annual basis during the Plan's implementation to educate property owners, tenants, and other interested parties about the Plan, allow them to ask questions, and to communicate any changes to stakeholders.
6. **Responsiveness to Public Inquiries:** The Plan Administrator will be available on an on-going basis to answer questions from potential applicants with respect to the Plan and its programs. Plan Administrator will also participate in pre-application consultation meetings as well as site visits to discuss the merits of a potential application with the applicant.
7. **Communication of the Monitoring and Evaluation Program:** Information obtained as a result of the monitoring and evaluation program may also be made available through newsletters and information sheets to promote the achievements of this Plan and to highlight case studies.
8. **Other Activities:** The Town may organize and participate in other appropriate activities to encourage participation by property owners, tenants, and other interested parties in this Plan's programs. The Town may undertake other marketing initiatives as deemed appropriate without requiring an amendment to this Plan.



# 11 | CONCLUSION

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The Town of Renfrew's Community Improvement Plan sets forth a long-term strategy for improving, strengthening and revitalizing the Town, with a focus on improving the downtown core along with the primary gateways into the downtown, in order to foster the Town's identity as a beautiful, complete and historic community. The Plan outlines opportunities for participation in community improvement initiatives on the part of both the Town and the private sector.

This Plan outlines the types of projects and programs that will encourage desirable private property improvements and activities that the Town may initiate to improve the public realm. Additionally, the Plan outlines a strategy for monitoring and evaluating its performance, to ensure that the vision, goals and objectives for the community are being achieved, and that the community is evolving in a positive and desirable way.