

# **MUNICIPALITY OF GREY HIGHLANDS**

Community Improvement Plan 2022

Department of Economic and Community Development

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# Municipality of Grey Highlands

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## SUMMARY OF UPDATES TO THE 2022 COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

- Council established two annual intake dates, September 15 (for the following calendar year) and February 15 (for the remainder of the calendar year), with available funding for the second intake contingent on remaining budget allocation.
- The Economic Development Advisory Group will be given an opportunity to review a summary of the applications and the recommendations of the Municipal multidisciplinary team prior to final recommendations being presented to Council.
- Council implemented a cap of \$10,000 on the total financial incentives approved per property/business owner per property per year.
- Council limited the total number of approved applications per property/business owner per property to a maximum of three over a five-year period, up to a total combined maximum of \$20,000 in financial incentives.
- Council established limits on the types of applications approved for each property if multiple applications are received for the same location.
- Council has identified key priority areas for 2022, which align with the Municipal Strategic Plan and goals of Council:
  - Projects within downtown commercial areas
  - Façade, building and signage improvements
  - COVID-19 business retrofits
  - Startup space leasehold improvements
  - Conversion or expansion of vacant buildings
  - Accessibility improvements
- Council limited participation in this program to independently owned and operated businesses that are not part of any franchise.

A pre-application meeting with a multidisciplinary staff review team (includes representatives from Building, Economic Development, Finance, and Planning Departments) is required prior to the submission of an application. Email [ecdev@greyhighlands.ca](mailto:ecdev@greyhighlands.ca) for more information or to schedule a meeting.



## 1 | INTRODUCTION

The Municipality of Grey Highlands, the gateway to the Beaver Valley, is the 882 square kilometre region in the southeast corner of Grey County, with a growing population of 10,000 residents.

Situated in one of the most beautiful areas of Grey County, the area's natural landscape includes waterfalls, the Bruce Trail, the Osprey Bluffs, the Saugeen, Boyne and Beaver Rivers and Lake Eugenia, with the Niagara Escarpment World Biosphere running through the area. Agriculture still represents the industry with the largest number of businesses in the Municipality. Farms range from small family-owned to large and highly automated. Mennonite families from the Waterloo Region have migrated to Grey Highlands and contribute to the success and prosperity of the rural agricultural lifestyle. Manufacturing also plays an important part in the community. Chapman's, Canada's largest independent ice cream company is located in Markdale and is a stalwart community champion. Other top manufacturers include Ice River Springs Water Co. (Feversham); Medike Leather Products (Markdale); and Rossiter Boats (Markdale); all producing products from Grey Highlands that are shipped across North America.

Grey Highlands includes a number of towns, villages and hamlets that create the fabric of the Municipality, including: Badjeros, Ceylon, Eugenia, Feversham, Flesherton, Kimberley, Markdale, Maxwell, Priceville, Proton Station, Rocklyn and Singhampton.

### 1.1 | WHAT IS A COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN?

A Community Improvement Plan is a tool where municipal planners and economic developers can work hand in hand to develop policies and provide incentives targeting specific types of growth and investment. The Municipality of Grey Highlands has identified a need for a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) program to help promote and enable prioritized development across the Municipality and to support and complement Grey County's Official Plan.

A Community Improvement Plan for the Municipality of Grey Highlands 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 under-developed properties and to promote private investment in land and buildings.

### 1.2 | PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

Grey Highlands intends to realize its economic development vision of being 'Open for Business'; while ensuring Council's goal of being a vibrant and sustainable rural economy, and well-positioned for future generations. This CIP program is meant to enable and boost development momentum across the region. The intent of this program is to offer targeted incentives across Grey Highlands both within settlement areas as well as in our rural areas.

Along with facilitating the revitalization and improvement of the entire Municipality of Grey Highlands, the CIP program will provide a menu of incentives to promote and support the

following types of priority development and revitalization projects (in line with many of the priorities outlined at the County level):

- Increase attainable housing stock, including secondary suites, multi-unit housing, purpose built rental housing, rooming house developments and apartment dormitory style developments;
- Increased value-added agricultural uses, agri-tourism, and facility improvement projects;
- Promotion of the redevelopment and/or conversion of brownfield, vacant, and grey field properties;
- Support for downtown revitalization of store fronts, publicly used frontages, and streetscapes;
- Support the adaptive re-use of commercial, industrial and institutional buildings.

Revitalization and improvement refer, in a broad sense, to activities that contribute to the 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);
- Providing opportunities for affordable/attainable housing;
- Improvements 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 Municipality, the public, and various stakeholders. This Plan establishes a set of financial incentive programs 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 it is being calculated. 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 bylaw of the Municipality 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 Bylaw by passing another bylaw to replace it.

Generally, the purpose of this Plan is to promote the revitalization of the Municipality. Revitalization means different things to different neighbourhoods and areas of the community. In a downtown, revitalization will take place in the form of façade improvements, adaptive reuse of historic buildings, improvements to main levels and upper storeys,

brownfield remediation, streetscaping, parking, accessibility and other improvements. In commercial areas, revitalization may be better focused on improved landscaping, parking and redevelopment opportunities, as well as improvements to encourage walkability, for instance.

#### **1.4 | HOW TO USE THIS PLAN**

The Municipality of Grey Highlands' CIP enables the Municipality 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 Municipality's evolving community improvement needs.

Interested property owners and tenants are encouraged to review this Plan and contact the Municipality of Grey Highlands to confirm their eligibility, discuss their project, and to identify the types of financial incentives that could be applicable.

## 2 | THE PLANNING FRAMEWORK

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 Municipality of Grey Highlands.

### 2.1 | LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

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

Section 28 of the Ontario *Planning Act*, 1990, as amended, gives the Municipality of Grey Highlands 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 Municipality'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 Municipality 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*.

#### 2.1.1 | Community Improvement

Section 28(1) of the *Planning Act* defines community improvement as:

"...the planning or re-planning, design or redesign, subdivision, clearance, development or redevelopment, construction, reconstruction and rehabilitation, improvement of energy efficiency, or any of them, of a community improvement project area, and the provision of such residential, commercial, industrial, public, recreational, institutional, religious, charitable or other uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements or facilities, or spaces therefore, as may be appropriate or necessary" and includes the provision of affordable housing under Section 28(1.1).

#### 2.1.2 | Community Improvement Project Area

Section 28(2) permits municipalities, where the municipality has appropriate policy in the Official Plan, to pass a by-law designating a "community improvement project area" and to prepare a "[CIP]." Once the CIP has been adopted by the municipality and comes into effect, the municipality may exercise authority under section 28(6), (7), or (7.2) of the *Planning Act* or section 365.1 of the *Municipal Act*, 2001 in order that the exception provided in Section 106(3) of the *Municipal Act*, 2001 will apply.

#### 2.1.3 | 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."

#### 2.1.4 | Tools and Activities Under the *Planning Act*

The *Planning Act* allows municipalities when carrying out a [CIP] within a Community Improvement Project Area to:

- Acquire and hold land (Section 28[3]);

- Construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on the land acquired or held by the Municipality, or it may sell or dispose of land in conformity with the community improvement plan; (Section 28[6]);
- Make grants or loans to registered owners, assessed owners and tenants of lands and buildings within the community improvement project area for the purpose of rehabilitating such lands and buildings in conformity with the [CIP] (Section 28[7.1]); and
- Make grants or loans 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, structure, works, improvements or facilities (Section 28[8]).

### **2.1.5 | Transfer of Grants Between Upper and Lower-Tier Municipalities**

Section 28 (7.2) speaks to the allowance of upper-tier municipalities to participate in the funding for local CIP Programs. Section 28 (7.2) states:

"The council of an upper-tier municipality may make grants or loans to the council of a lower-tier municipality and the council of a lower-tier municipality may make grants or loans to the council of the upper-tier municipality, for the purposes of carrying out a [CIP] that has come into effect, on such terms as to security and otherwise as the council considers appropriate, but only if the official plan of the municipality making the grant or loan contains provisions relating to the making of such grants or loans."

### **2.1.6 | Other Relevant Sections**

Section 17 of the Planning Act outlines the statutory process for adopting the CIP, including the provision of at least one public meeting to be held a minimum of 20 days after making the CIP publicly available for review.

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

Section 69 of the Planning Act allows municipalities to reduce or waive the amount of a fee in respect of a planning application where it feels payment is unreasonable; many CIPs offer application fee refunds as a financial incentive.

### **2.1.7 | Municipal Act**

The *Ontario Municipal Act, S.O. 2001, C. 25* governs many procedures, tools, and powers of municipalities. The following sections of the *Municipal Act* are relevant to the implementation of [CIPs]:

Section 106(1) of the *Municipal Act* establishes that municipalities can neither directly or indirectly assist manufacturing businesses or other industrial or commercial enterprise through engaging in "bonusing"; however, municipalities applying a CIP program are exempt from this prohibition under Section 28 of the *Planning Act*.

Section 107 of the *Municipal Act* outlines the powers a municipality has to make grants, including the power to provide a grant in the form of a loan or by guaranteeing a loan, subject to criteria outlined in Section 106.

Section 365.1.2 of the *Municipal Act* provides the authority to allow municipalities to pass a by-law providing property tax assistance to an eligible property in the form of cancellation of all or part of the property taxes levied on the property for municipal and education purposes during the "rehabilitation period" and the "development period" of the property.

### **2.1.8 | Development Charges Act**

Section 5 of the *Development Charges Act* allows a Municipality to provide a full or partial development charge exemption for certain types of development, subject to the Development Charges bylaw.

## **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 | COUNTY OF GREY OFFICIAL PLAN**

### **2.3.1 | County of Grey Official Plan (2013)**

The Grey County Official Plan provides guidance on Local CIP Areas and Programs. Section 6.16 in Grey County's 2013 Official Plan provides comments regarding a Local Municipality's ability to develop a CIP. The plan states,

*"Identifying a Community Improvement Area shall be carried out through a bylaw designating the whole, or any part of the local municipality as a Community Improvement Area. The goal of any Community Improvement Area shall be to foster and co-ordinate the physical improvements and maintenance of older or dilapidated areas of a community for environmental, social or community economic reasons."*

*Community Improvement Areas are intended to achieve one or many of the following objectives:*

- *To encourage the efficient provision and maintenance of physical infrastructure, public services and utilities to serve present and future needs on a local and regional scale;*
- *To address issues which may be particular to one neighbourhood;*
- *To ensure the maintenance and renewal of older housing stock;*
- *To foster redevelopment, reuse and/or maintenance of existing brownfield sites and/or current industrial sites;*

- To enhance retail and downtown commercial areas within the municipalities;
- To encourage the preservation and adaptive re-use of built heritage;
- To promote energy efficiency and sound environmental design;
- To foster economic growth within designated areas;
- To promote intensification in targeted areas;
- To enhance the visual characteristics of neighbourhoods; and
- To encourage local participation in funding programs for local development which may also be eligible for Provincial or Federal funding.

### 2.3.2 | County of Grey Official Plan (2018)

The 2018 Grey County Official Plan, which was adopted by Grey County Council in October 2018 and received provincial approval in June 2019, also contains language that guides the development of future CIPs. The description of CIPs is identical to the 2013 Official Plan, except for the following objectives:

- To encourage the efficient provision and maintenance of physical infrastructure, public services and utilities to serve present and future needs on a local and regional scale;
- To address issues which may be particular to one neighbourhood or region;
- To ensure the maintenance and renewal of older housing stock;
- To promote the creation of affordable housing units;
- To foster redevelopment, reuse and/or maintenance of existing brownfield sites and/or current industrial sites;
- To enhance the visual appeal of downtown core areas and neighbourhoods;
- To promote on-farm business growth or farm innovation;
- To encourage the preservation and adaptive re-use of built heritage;
- To promote energy efficiency and sound environmental design;
- To foster economic growth within designated areas;
- To promote intensification in targeted areas;
- To encourage local participation in funding programs for local development which may also be eligible for Provincial or Federal funding.

The County may provide grants, loans or other assistance as County Council deems appropriate for the purposes of supporting the incentives identified in local municipal Community Improvement Plans.

## 2.4 | GREY HIGHLANDS OFFICIAL PLAN

Section 3.0 of the Municipality of Grey Highlands Official Plan provides development criteria that applies to all development conditions, in addition to the more specific criteria located within Section 4: Land Use Designations.

Subsection 3.4(d) of the Official Plan notes that:

*"Council may enact community improvement plans in consultation with landowners, retailers, and related community interests. Grey Highlands recognizes that the architectural heritage and economic value of these communities reflect the enduring values of "small-town Ontario".*

### 3 | APPROACH TO COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT

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.

#### 3.1 | GOALS and OBJECTIVES

The Plan is further guided by goals and objectives to ensure that community improvement activities are contributing to the vision for the "future-friendly" vision for Grey Highlands. Financial incentive programs should contribute toward achieving one or more of the following goals:

##### 3.1.1 | Residential

To increase attainable housing stock, including secondary suites, multi-unit housing, rooming house developments, purpose built rental housing, and apartment dormitory style developments.

- **Why:** limited stock of attainable housing to buy and rent; increasing need for mixed housing types which improve affordability and access.

##### 3.1.2 | Agricultural

To increase agricultural value-add, agri-tourism, and facility improvement projects

- **Why:** Increase diversified agricultural uses, increased agri-tourism.

##### 3.1.3 | Brownfield

To promote the redevelopment and/or conversion of brownfield and greyfield properties

- **Why:** improve assessment base; improvement of underutilized property and creation of industry or residential/commercial, depending on development type.

##### 3.1.4 | Downtown

Downtown revitalization of store fronts, publicly used frontages, and streetscapes; reduction of vacant storefronts and increased residential capacity

- **Why:** Creation of neighbourhood character, increased business and tourism

##### 3.1.5 | Residential and Commercial

Adaptive re-use of commercial, industrial and institutional buildings, support development of new commercial uses.

- **Why:** Increase assessment base, increase housing stock, increase marketable commercial rental units



### 3.2 | COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT AREA

All community improvement activities described in this Plan will only be undertaken within an area currently designated as a Community Improvement Project Area.

The Community Improvement Project Area is designated by bylaw, 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 bylaw. The entire Municipality of Grey Highlands has been designated as a Community Improvement Project Area.

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



### 3.3 | COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

The revitalization of the Municipality of Grey Highlands is best approached as a partnership between the Municipality, private stakeholders, such as property owners, business owners and tenants. The Municipality will not be able to successfully implement this Plan on its own. Along with working closely with Grey County to ensure alignment, collaboration, complementary and supportive approaches towards revitalization, the Municipality will also rely on other organizations, including community associations, the Chamber of Commerce, 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 Municipality 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 the Plan as made available by the Municipality.

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. It is not the intent of this Plan to require Council to fund or operate all the identified incentive programs throughout the life of this Plan. At Council's discretion, based on feedback from Municipal staff and input from the community and stakeholders, different programs may be implemented in any given year by adjusting funding to specific programs.

## 4 | FINANCIAL INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

The private sector needs to be engaged in community improvement to revitalize the Municipality. 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.

The following set of financial incentive programs are established by this Plan.

[4.1 | FAÇADE, BUILDING AND SIGNAGE IMPROVEMENT GRANT \(2022 Priority\)](#)

[4.2 | PROPERTY, LANDSCAPING AND PARKING AREA IMPROVEMENT GRANT \(2022 Priority\)](#)

[4.3 | ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENT GRANT \(2022 Priority\)](#)

[4.4 | PLANNING AND BUILDING PERMIT FEE GRANTS](#)

[4.5 | RESIDENTIAL MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT CHARGES REIMBURSEMENT GRANT \(Expired\)](#)

[4.6 | STARTUP SPACE LEASEHOLD IMPROVEMENT GRANT \(2022 Priority\)](#)

[4.7 | VACANT BUILDING CONVERSION/EXPANSION GRANT \(2022 Priority\)](#)

[4.8 | SECONDARY SUITE DEVELOPMENT CHARGE GRANT](#)

[4.9 | TAX INCREMENT FINANCING](#)

[4.10 | COVID-19 BUSINESS RECOVERY GRANT \(2022 Priority\)](#)

## 4.1 | FAÇADE, BUILDING AND SIGNAGE IMPROVEMENT GRANT *(2022 Priority)*

### 4.1.1 | Purpose

The façade, building and signage improvement grant is intended to encourage the rehabilitation, repair and/or improvement of buildings and facades 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 the 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 Municipality of Grey Highlands' character. These improvements will benefit the aesthetics of streetscapes, encourage better maintenance of private properties, enhanced the activity of the street, promote walkability and encourage conservation of historic properties.

### 4.1.2 | Eligible Costs

- Repair, replacement or restoration of façade masonry, brickwork, and/or architectural detailing, including historic/heritage woodwork and trim;
- Repair, replacement or installation of awnings and canopies;
- Repair, replacement, improvement or installation of signage on building facades including signage lighting;
- Painting, cleaning or other similar treatments to improve facades or enhance their durability over the long term, provided these activities are:
  - Part of a larger improvement project (i.e., association with other eligible costs listed in the program); and/or
  - Considered to be essential to the restoration of a building designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act* or listed by the Municipality of being of historical interest, in accordance with the *Ontario Heritage Act*.
- Painting or installation of murals or similar wall art (side and rear facades only);
- Costs association with professional architectural services in association with the design of the above eligible projects; or
- Any combination of the above.

### 4.1.3 | Program Details

- The maximum amount for a façade or building improvement is (\$7,500) or 50% of the eligible costs, whichever is less.
- The maximum grant for signage improvement is (\$2,500) or 50% of the eligible costs, whichever is less.
- The maximum grant for professional architectural services shall not exceed 15% of the grant that is calculated for eligible construction costs.
- The grant may be combined with other grant programs. The grant shall not be combined with the Tax Increment Financing program, which exists as a stand-alone incentive program.

### 4.1.4 | Payment of Grant

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

#### 4.1.5 | Eligibility Criteria

- All general eligibility criteria outlined in Section 9 apply. For clarity, this shall mean that the project must comply with all Municipal bylaws, policies, standards, guidelines and Official Plan and zoning, as well as any applicable Provincial, Federal or government agency requirements (e.g., conservation authority).
- Application submission shall be in accordance with the application submission requirements under Section 9. 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.
- Improvements shall comply with the design criteria outlined in Section 8, along with any and all design guidelines as may be implemented by the Municipality in the future.
- Where a property is designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act* or listed by the Municipality 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 Municipality may be able to supplement this information based on its own information and records.
- Only commercial, mixed-use, industrial or agricultural properties (as defined in Section 9) are eligible for this grant. For clarity, single detached dwellings and other residences are not eligible for this grant.

## **4.2 | PROPERTY, LANDSCAPING AND PARKING AREA IMPROVEMENT GRANT** *(2022 Priority)*

### **4.2.1 | Purpose**

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

### **4.2.2 | Eligible Costs**

- Professional landscaping and/or installation of alternative ground cover treatments, such as xeriscaping (native plants);
- Re-sodding, provided it is a component of a larger landscaping improvement project (i.e. associated with other eligible projects in this program);
- 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;
- Installation or improvement of a permanent sidewalk café or patio that is located at the edge of a 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);
- Installation or improvement of pedestrian walkways;
- Tree planting;
- Installation of benches or permanent planters;
- Services of a professional landscape architect to design the features noted above; or
- Any combination of the above.

### **4.2.3 | Program Details**

- The maximum amount of the grant is (\$3,500) or 50% of the eligible costs, whichever is less.
- The maximum grant for professional architectural services shall not exceed 15% of the grant that is calculated for eligible construction costs.
- The grant may be combined with other grant programs. The grant shall not be combined with the Tax Increment Financing program, which exists as a stand-alone incentive program.

### **4.2.4 | Payment of Grant**

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

### **4.2.5 | Eligibility Criteria**

- All general eligibility criteria outlined in Section 9 apply. For clarity, this shall mean that the project must comply with all Municipal bylaws, policies, standards, guidelines

and Official Plan and zoning, as well as any applicable Provincial, Federal or government agency requirements (e.g., conservation authority).

- Application submission shall be in accordance with the application submission requirements under Section 9. 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.
- Proposals shall comply with the design criteria outlined in Section 9, along with any and all design guidelines as may be implemented by the Municipality in the future.
- Where a property is designed under the *Ontario Heritage Act* or listed by the Municipality 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 Municipality may be able to supplement this information based on its own information and records.
- Only commercial, mixed-use, industrial or agricultural properties (as defined in Section 9) are eligible for this grant. For clarity, single detached dwellings and other residences are not eligible for this grant.

## **4.3 | ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENT GRANT *(2022 Priority)***

### **4.3.1 | Purpose**

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

### **4.3.2 | Eligible Costs**

- Installation of new automatic doors;
- Installation of new wheelchair access ramps;
- Widening of public entryways;
- Levelling or repairs to pathways/accesses and stairs; and
- Any combination of the above improvements.

### **4.3.3 | Program Details**

- The maximum amount of the grant is (\$7,500) or 50% of the eligible costs, whichever is less.
- The grant may be combined with other grant programs. The grant shall not be combined with the Tax Increment Financing program, which exists as a stand-alone incentive program.

### **4.3.4 | Payment of Grant**

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

### **4.3.5 | Eligibility Criteria**

- All general eligibility criteria outlined in Section 9 apply. For clarity, this shall mean that the project must comply with all Municipal bylaws, policies, standards, guidelines and Official Plan and zoning, as well as any applicable Provincial, Federal or government agency requirements (e.g., conservation authority).
- Application submission shall be in accordance with the application submission requirements under Section 9. 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.
- Improvements shall comply with the design criteria outlined in Section 9, along with any and all design guidelines as may be implemented by the Municipality in the future.
- Only commercial, mixed-use, industrial or agricultural properties (as defined in Section 9) are eligible for this grant. For clarity, single detached dwellings and other residences are not eligible for this grant.
- Accessibility improvements shall be above and beyond the requirements of the Ontario Building Code, as applicable to the property.



## 4.4 | PLANNING AND BUILDING PERMIT FEE GRANT

### 4.4.1 | Purpose

Application and permit fees imposed by the Municipality may present barriers to investment and redevelopment in the Municipality. 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.

### 4.4.2 | Eligible Costs

- Redevelopment of a property for commercial, industrial, office or a mix of uses;
- Major additions to a commercial, industrial or mixed-use property, involving an increase of at least 25% of the existing gross floor area;
- Infrastructure work including the improvement or reconstruction of existing on-site public infrastructure (water services, sanitary and storm sewers);
- Conversion of upper storey space in a mixed-use or commercial building to residential units;
- Professional services by an engineer, architect, or professional planner;
- Any combination of the above; and
- In general, any projects that 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.

### 4.4.3 | Program Details

- **Planning Fee Grant:** A grant to a maximum of \$2,500 is available to cover the cost of minor variance applications, zoning bylaw amendment applications or site plan applications. The grant may equal 100% of the Municipality's fees, provided it does not exceed \$2,500. Further, the grant cannot exceed 50% of the eligible costs listed above. Any planning applications may also be eligible for an equivalent grant to offset the County planning fee, subject to County Council approval.
- **Building Permit Fee Grant:** A grant to a maximum of \$2,500 is available to cover the cost of building permit fees or demolition permit fees. The grant may equal 100% of the Municipality's fees, provided it does not exceed \$2,500. Further, the grant cannot exceed 50% of the eligible costs listed above.

### 4.4.4 | Payment of Grant

- The grant is paid after the works are completed, to the satisfaction of the Plan Administrator. This includes full payment of any applicable planning and building permit fees to the maximum amount in the grant. The grant is intended to act as a rebate for these fees.
- For affordable housing developments, the grant will be paid based on the proportion of units that are affordable within the overall development. For example, if 50% of the proposed units are deemed to be affordable, then 50% of the grant will be provided.
- The planning fee and building permit fee grants may be combined with other grant programs. This grant shall not be combined with the Tax Increment Finance program, which exists as a stand-alone incentive program.

#### **4.4.5 | Eligibility Criteria**

- All general eligibility criteria outlined in Section 9 apply. For clarity, this shall mean that the project must comply with all Municipal bylaws, policies, standards, guidelines and Official Plan and zoning, as well as any applicable Provincial, Federal or government agency requirements (e.g., conservation authority).
- Application submission shall be in accordance with the application submission requirements under Section 9. 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.
- Proposals shall comply with the design criteria outlined in Section 8, along with any and all design guidelines as may be implemented by the Municipality in the future.

#### **4.5 I MUNICIPAL RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT CHARGES REIMBURSEMENT GRANT *(Expired)***

- Temporary grant component active during the period January 1 – December 31, 2020.
- Applications for this component are no longer being accepted.

## **4.6 I STARTUP SPACE LEASEHOLD IMPROVEMENT GRANT *(2022 Priority)***

### **4.6.1 I Purpose**

To assist new businesses and start-up companies set up shop by providing grants to property owners and tenants for the financing of non-temporary interior leasehold improvements or accessibility improvements for commercial space or live/workspace to increase the marketability of property and rental units.

### **4.6.2 I Eligible Costs**

- Installation, change, repair and/or restoration of partitions, rooms;
- Installation, repair, or re-installation of plumbing, heating, HVAC, electrical, fixtures, cable, telephone, fibre, and other service-specific installations;
- Change, repair, re-installation of flooring, ceiling, walls, fixed cabinets, and other structurally permanent elements;
- Painting, repainting, or re-facing of interior platforms, walls, and any surfaces;
- Install, repair, or restoration of masonry, brickwork or wood;
- Install, replace, repair, or restoration of other architectural features;
- Install, replacement or repair of windows;
- Entrance-way modifications that improve the appearance and/or access to the commercial unit(s);
- Redesign and reconstruction of the front of building;
- Machinery and equipment if bolted to the floor;
- Demolition or removal of fixtures, structural and non-conforming or hazardous materials;
- Installation of appropriate new interior signage or improvements to existing signage;
- Installation or repair of interior lighting;
- Restoration of historic features;
- Implementation of accessibility improvements, up to AODA standards Act.

### **4.6.3 I Program Details**

- The maximum amount of the grant is (\$7,500) or 50% of the eligible costs, whichever is less.
- This grant may be combined with other CIP elements, except for the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant, which exists as a stand-alone incentive.

### **4.6.4 I Payment of the Grant**

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

### **4.6.5 I Eligibility Criteria**

- All general eligibility criteria outlined in Section 9 apply. For clarity, this shall mean that the project must comply with all Municipal bylaws, policies, standards, guidelines and Official Plan and zoning, as well as any applicable Provincial, Federal or government agency requirements (e.g., conservation authority).

- Application submission shall be in accordance with the application submission requirements under Section 9. For clarity, this shall typically include a pre-application meeting with the multidisciplinary CIP review team, as well as submission of a site plan or drawings to demonstrate the intended improvements and modifications being proposed.
- Owners of commercial buildings and lessees are eligible to apply (proof of lease agreement must be provided).
- Applications must satisfy design policies where applicable.

## **4.7 | VACANT BUILDING CONVERSION/EXPANSION GRANT *(2022 Priority)***

### **4.7.1 | Purpose**

To assist in the small-scale conversion of existing vacant space into new commercial, secondary uses, agriculture-related uses, mixed-use, and other eligible uses.

### **4.7.2 | Eligible Costs**

- Conversion of vacant building space into new commercial, mixed-use, secondary uses, agriculture-related uses, and other eligible uses;
- Upper story space conversion into residential units;
- Conversion of existing ground floor commercial space to better suit new commercial use;
- Expansion of existing eligible uses to increase the gross floor area;
- Eligible costs include any services of a professional engineer, architect, or planner to design and implement the project;
- Conversion of an existing vacant floor space into a rental dwelling unit;
- Conversion of an existing unused barn into commercial space;
- Conversion of an existing storefront into a more suited commercial space - from retail to restaurant (must be proven to be more beneficial to the community).

### **4.7.3 | Program Details**

- The maximum amount of the grant is (\$7,500) or 50% of the eligible costs, whichever is less.
- This grant may be combined with other CIP elements, except for the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant, which exists as a stand-alone incentive.

### **4.7.4 | Payment of Grant**

- The grant will be paid as a single payment upon completion of the improvements, to the satisfaction of the Municipality.

### **4.7.5 | Eligibility Criteria**

- All general eligibility criteria outlined in Section 9 apply. For clarity, this shall mean that the project must comply with all Municipal bylaws, policies, standards, guidelines and Official Plan and zoning, as well as any applicable Provincial, Federal or government agency requirements (e.g., conservation authority).
- Application submission shall be in accordance with the application submission requirements under Section 9. For clarity, this shall typically include a pre-application meeting with the multidisciplinary CIP review team, as well as submission of a site plan or drawings to demonstrate the intended improvements and modifications being proposed.

## 4.8 | SECONDARY SUITE DEVELOPMENT CHARGE GRANT

### 4.8.1 | Purpose

To assist property owners with financing the cost of the development process by providing a grant in the amount of applicable local and County development charges to encourage secondary units across the Municipality.

### 4.8.2 | Eligible Costs

- Development of a portion of an existing residential, commercial, or agricultural property for use as a secondary suite;
- Development or redevelopment of an existing residential or agricultural outbuilding for use as a secondary suite;
- The unit(s) may be required to meet established affordability criteria to qualify for development charge grants;
- In general, any projects that 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.

### 4.8.3 | Program Details

- A grant to cover the development charges associated with the development of secondary suites. The grant may equal up to 100% of the Municipality's development fees.
- Grey County may also provide a grant and/or exception for County development charges, subject to the County's Development Charge bylaw.

### 4.8.4 | Payment of Grant

- The grant is paid after the works are completed, to the satisfaction of the Plan Administrator. This includes full payment of any applicable planning and building permit fees to the maximum amount in the grant. The grant is intended to act as a rebate for these fees.
- This grant shall not be combined with the Tax Increment Finance program, which exists as a stand-alone incentive program.

### 4.8.5 | Eligibility Criteria

- All general eligibility criteria outlined in Section 9 apply. For clarity, this shall mean that the project must comply with all Municipal bylaws, policies, standards, guidelines and Official Plan and zoning, as well as any applicable Provincial, Federal or government agency requirements (e.g., conservation authority).
- Application submission shall be in accordance with the application submission requirements under Section 9. 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.
- Proposals shall comply with the design criteria outlined in Section 9, along with any and all design guidelines as may be implemented by the Municipality in the future.

## 4.9 | TAX INCREMENT EQUIVALENT GRANT

### 4.9.1 | Purpose

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

### 4.9.2 | Eligible Costs

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

### 4.9.3 | Program Details

- The Tax Increment Equivalent Grant is offered to eligible property owners only where the property assessment increases as a result of redevelopment or major improvement, and there is a subsequent increase in municipal property taxes.
- The Tax Increment Equivalent Grant would provide a grant to pay a portion of the Municipal property taxes attributed to the increase in the property assessment over a 10-year period. This essentially would phase in property tax increases relating to re-assessments resulting from property improvements.
- Grants will be equal to a percentage of the municipal property tax increase resulting from the improvements and will be paid to the owner each year for a maximum of 10 years. The percentage of property tax increment grant the Municipality may cover in any one year is at the sole discretion of the Municipality, with the understanding that by year 10, the amount will be reduced until it reaches 0%. For instance, 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%, over a 10-year period (maximum).
- The total amount of all tax increment equivalent grants shall not exceed 50% of the total eligible costs of the improvements.
- Applications may also be eligible for tax assistance from the County to cover the County tax portion, subject to County Council approval.



#### 4.9.4 | Payment of Grant

- The Tax Increment Equivalent Grant is paid after the improvements are completed to the satisfaction of the Plan Administrator 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.
- The Tax Increment Equivalent Grant for each specific project shall not be combined with any other incentive outlined in this Plan. It is intended that this program be a stand-alone 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.

#### 4.9.5 | Eligibility Criteria

- All general eligibility criteria outlined in Section 9 apply. For clarity, this shall mean that the project must comply with all Municipal bylaws, policies, standards, guidelines and Official Plan and zoning, as well as any applicable Provincial, Federal or government agency requirements (e.g., conservation authority).
- Application submission shall be in accordance with the application submission requirements under Section 9. 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.
- Proposals shall comply with the design criteria outlined in Section 9, along with any and all design guidelines as may be implemented by the Municipality in the future.
- At its sole discretion, the Municipality may require the applicant to submit a business plan, prepared to the satisfaction of the Municipality, in relation to an application for the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant.
- To be eligible for the 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.
- In order to determine the suitability of the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant, prior to applying 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.
- If the total value of the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant is significantly less than the applicant's estimate value, at the sole discretion of the Municipality, the applicant may be given the opportunity to withdraw their application for Tax Increment Equivalent Grant program and apply for one or more of the other incentive programs in this Plan as may be applicable to the project.
- 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 payment, 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 Municipality.

## **4.10 I COVID-19 BUSINESS RETROFIT GRANT *(2022 Priority)***

### **4.10.1 I Purpose**

The COVID-19 Business Retrofit Grant is intended to assist consumer-facing businesses create a safer workspace through the installation of physical barriers, floor markings, and other physical enhancements. This grant is not meant to augment the purchase of personal protective equipment and other consumable products such as masks, hand sanitizer, and gloves.

### **4.10.2 I Eligible Costs**

- Installation of physical barriers;
- Semi-permanent floor distance markers;
- Hand washing and sanitation stations;
- Changes to interior layout to accommodate physical distancing;
- The creation of exterior spaces to accommodate waiting patrons;
- New or updated signage to reflect COVID-19 related changes in operations.

### **4.10.3 I Program Details**

- The maximum amount of the grant is \$500 or 75% of eligible costs, whichever is less.
- This grant is only available to commercial establishments (owners and lessees); home-based businesses are not eligible.
- This grant may be combined with other Community Improvement Plan commercial elements, except for the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant, which exists as a stand-alone incentive.

### **4.10.4 I Payment of the Grant**

- The grant will be paid as a single payment upon completion of the improvements, to the satisfaction of the Plan's Administrator.
- Successful applicants will be required to submit receipts for eligible costs incurred before payment is issued.

### **4.10.5 I Eligibility Criteria**

- All general eligibility criteria outlined in Section 9 apply. For clarity, this shall mean that the project must comply with all Municipal bylaws, policies, standards, guidelines and Official Plan and zoning, as well as any applicable Provincial, Federal or government agency requirements (e.g., conservation authority).
- Applications shall be submitted directly to the Department of Economic and Community Development, where they will be vetted for eligibility and then provided to Council for review on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Due to the unique nature of this grant component, applicants will not be subject to a pre-application meeting with members of the multi-disciplinary review team.
- Applicants may request financial assistance for projects retroactive to March 26, 2020.
- The maximum budget allocation for the COVID-19 Business Retrofit Grant is \$20,000.
- Applications will be received on a first-come, first-served basis.

## **5 | BROWNFIELD INCENTIVE PROGRAMS**

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 Municipality and remediation of these sites is desirable to improve the aesthetics of our community. Further, the brownfield remediation provides opportunities for intensification and offers environmental benefits.

The following brownfield incentive programs are established by this Plan.

### [5.1 | ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY GRANT](#)

### [5.2 | BROWNFIELD PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE PROGRAM](#)

## 5.1 | ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY GRANT PROGRAM

### 5.1.1 | 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 Municipality of Grey Highlands 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 Municipality.

### 5.1.2 | Eligible Costs

- Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (ESA);
- Phase III ESA;
- Remedial Work Plan; and/or
- Risk Assessment Plan

### 5.1.3 | Program Details

- Grants for the completion of 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.

### 5.1.4 | Payment of Grant

- Grants will be provided to the property owner following the submission and acceptance of the final completed study by the Municipality.
- Grants are provided on a one-time basis to each eligible applicant for each approved project.
- The environmental study grant may be combined with some other grant programs; however, this grant shall not be combined with the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant, which exists as a stand-alone incentive program.

### 5.1.5 | Eligibility Criteria

- All general eligibility criteria outlined in Section 9 apply. For clarity, this shall mean that the project must comply with all Municipal bylaws, policies, standards, guidelines and Official Plan and zoning, as well as any applicable Provincial, Federal or government agency requirements (e.g., conservation authority).
- Application submission shall be in accordance with the application submission requirements under Section 9. 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.

- To be eligible for the Environmental Study Grant Program, a Phase I ESA must be completed and submitted to the Municipality in order to demonstrate that site contamination is likely.
- All environmental studies must be completed by a "qualified person" as defined in Section 9.
- Any studies prepared with an Environmental Study Grant may become the property of the Municipality of Grey Highlands, at the discretion of the Municipality.

## 5.2 | BROWNFIELD PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

### 5.2.1 | Purpose

Offering property 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 Municipality may defer or cancel all or a portion of municipal property 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 Municipality 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.

### 5.2.2 | Eligible Costs

Eligible costs related 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:

- 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));
- 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*;
- Costs related to complying with any certificate of property use issued under Section 168.6 of the *Environmental Protection Act*;
- The costs of preparing a Record of Site Condition;
- Placing clean fill and related grading;
- Installing environmental and/or engineering controls or works. As specified in the Phase III ESA and/or Risk Assessment Plan;
- Monitoring, maintaining and operating environmental and engineering controls/works, as specified in the Phase III ESA and/or Risk Assessment Plan; and
- Environmental insurance premiums.

### 5.2.3 | Program Details

- **Municipal Property Tax Assistance:** The Municipality may pass bylaws to provide a deferral or cancellation of all or a part of the municipal property 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 property tax assistance will not exceed the total eligible costs, which are defined in the eligibility requirements above. The level and duration of the property tax assistance will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Prior to passing the bylaw approving the property tax assistance, the Municipality will be required to notify the Ministry of Finance. Within 30 days of passing the bylaw, the Municipality will also be required to notify the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Minister of Finance.
- **Provincial Tax Assistance:** The Municipality 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 Municipality must be offering municipal property tax assistance in order for the owner to be eligible for Provincial tax assistance.

- The brownfield property tax assistance program may be combined with some other grant programs; however, this grant shall not be combined with the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant, which exists as a stand-alone incentive program.
- Applications may also be eligible for tax assistance from the County to cover the County tax portion, subject to County Council approval.

#### 5.2.4 | Payment of Grant

**Municipal Property 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 bylaw, 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, and b) the date a Record of Site Condition is filed, or c) when the total amount of property tax assistance is equal to the eligible remediation costs (as defined above). The Development Period begins when the Rehabilitation Period ends and conclude on the earlier of a) the end date specified in the bylaw or b) when the property tax assistance is equal to the eligible remediation costs. The duration of property tax assistance may consist of both the Rehabilitation Period and the Development Period, subject to the limitations for each period as described above. The implementing bylaw is to specify whether the property tax assistance will occur during the Rehabilitation Period, the Development Period, or both.

**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 bylaw, 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.

#### 5.2.5 | Eligibility Criteria

- A property must have had a Phase II Environmental Assessment undertaken which concluded that action is required to remediate this site.
- All general eligibility criteria outlined in Section 9 apply. For clarity, this shall mean that the project must comply with all Municipal bylaws, policies, standards, guidelines and Official Plan and zoning, as well as any applicable Provincial, Federal or government agency requirements (e.g., conservation authority).
- Application submission shall be in accordance with the application submission requirements under Section 9. 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.

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



## **6 | SURPLUS LAND and BUILDINGS**

### **6.1 | Purpose**

Lands and buildings that are deemed to be surplus to the needs of the local Municipality will be offered through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process. The Municipality will identify lands and buildings that are surplus and determine the best use for these within the scope of the RFP process.

Surplus lands and/or buildings owned by the County may also be offered, from time to time, if approved by County Council.

### **6.2 | Eligible Costs**

- Affordable housing projects will be given top priority.
- Surplus lands and buildings will be offered through a Request for Proposal process.
- Land and buildings to be awarded at a reduced cost or possibly no cost.

### **6.3 | Program Details**

- Proposals submitted will be assessed based on the criteria identified in the Request for Proposal.
- The proposal that best meets or exceeds the criteria identified in the RFP will be awarded the land or building at a reduced rate or possibly at no cost.

### **6.4 | Payment of Grant**

- The land or building will be awarded based on the submissions received as part of the RFP process.

### **6.5 | Eligibility Criteria**

- All general eligibility criteria outlined in Section 9 apply. For clarity, this shall mean that the project must comply with all Municipal bylaws, policies, standards, guidelines and Official Plan and zoning, as well as any applicable Provincial, Federal or government agency requirements (e.g., conservation authority).

## 7 | SUMMARY OF PROGRAM INCENTIVES

<b>Incentive Type:</b>	<b>Description:</b>	<b>Support Available:</b>
Façade and Building Improvements	To encourage the rehabilitation, repair and/or improvement of buildings and facades.	Maximum \$7,500 or 50% of eligible costs (whichever is less)
Signage Improvements	To encourage the improvement of signage and the installation of pedestrian-scaled, attractive signage.	Maximum \$2,500 or 50% of eligible costs (whichever is less).
Parking, Landscaping and Parking Area Improvements	To encourage improvement of landscapes, parking areas, pedestrian connections, sidewalks cafes/patios.	Maximum \$3,500 or 50% of eligible costs (whichever is less).
Accessibility Improvements	To promote improvement to properties including access ramps, entryway widening, levelling or repairs to pathways and stairs.	Maximum \$7,500 or 50% of eligible costs (whichever is less).
Planning Fee Grant	To encourage sensitive, attractive and desirable infill development and redevelopment.	Maximum \$2,500 or 50% of eligible costs (whichever is less).
Building Permit Fee Grant	To encourage sensitive, attractive and desirable infill development and redevelopment.	Maximum \$2,500 or 50% of eligible costs (whichever is less).
Secondary Suite Development Charge Grant	To assist property owners with financing the cost of the development process, to encourage secondary suites in support of more affordable housing.	Equal to 100% of the Municipality's portion of the development charges.
Tax Increment Equivalent Grant	To encourage desirable and attractive infill development and redevelopment.	To cover a portion of the Municipal portion of the property tax as a result in the increase to the property assessment as a result of the improvements, over a 10-year period.
COVID-19 Business Recovery Grant	The assist consumer-facing businesses create a safer workspace through the installation of physical barriers, floor markings, and other physical enhancements.	The maximum amount of the grant is \$500 or 75% of eligible costs, whichever is less.
Environmental Study Grant	To encourage the completion of studies with respect to the environmental conditions of properties.	50% of the cost to complete the study to a maximum of \$5,000 per property.
Brownfield Property Tax Assistance	To encourage the cleanup and redevelopment of these properties.	The Municipality may defer or cancel all or a portion of Municipal property taxes during the period of site remediation.
Surplus Lands and Buildings	Lands and buildings that are deemed to be surplus to the needs of the local Municipality will be offered through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process.	Subject to the specific project.

## 8 | MONITORING and EVALUATION

This Community Improvement Plan 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 the discretion to determine funding for the financial incentive 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.

### 8.1 | PROCESS FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Immediately following adoption of the Community Improvement Plan, the Plan Administrator will begin to undertake the activities outlined in the following sections.

#### 8.1.1 | 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. As applications for financial incentives are received, they should be recorded in 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 property 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 Municipality, 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 period basis, such as:

- Utilization of the total financial incentives program budget;
- Utilization of the various incentive programs;
- Total dollars spent on other specific variables which indicate advancement of the program (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 Municipality, etc.).

### 8.1.2 | Determine Baseline Conditions

For the indicators identified in 8.1.1, the Plan Administrator should identify baseline conditions at the outset of the Plan implementation, so that variables may be compared from year-to-year, beginning with implementation of this Plan.

### 8.1.3 | 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.

### 8.1.4 | 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, 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 Plan area;
- Adjustments to the financial incentive programs including the addition or discontinuation of programs, where necessary;
- Any necessary changes to plan administration or processes.

The report should be made available on the Municipality'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.

### 8.1.5 | 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 programs may be required. Council may also choose to discontinue funding for one or more of the financial incentive programs and may do so without amending this Plan. However, the permanent/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.

## 9 | IMPLEMENTATION

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.

### 9.1 | 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 Municipal staff members assigned by Council, who are primarily responsible for ensuring that the responsibilities of the Plan Administrator, as set out herein, are fulfilled.

**Affordable/Attainable Housing** can be defined as housing which accounts for no more than 30% of a household's gross income. Affordable/Attainable housing is housing that gives a household the ability to enter the local housing market before graduating to successively higher levels of housing within the market. Implicit in this definition of attainability is the idea that a range of housing options (type, size, tenure, cost) exist in the local market, allowing households at various income levels to find and secure suitable housing as their needs or means change.

**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 of 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 under-developed 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 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*.

**Community Improvement Works** refer to the activities undertaken in accordance with the policies of this Plan, including activities that may be funded by the financial incentives.

**Council** means the Council of the Municipality of Grey Highlands.

**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 property tax assistance bylaw or b) when the property tax assistance is equal to the eligible remediation costs, as per section 365.1 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*.

**Eligible Applicant** means an applicant (as defined above) who meets all 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 an applicant is eligible for the financial incentive programs.

**Financial Incentive Program** means a program listed in Section 4 of this Plan.

**Financial Incentive Program Agreement** means an agreement executed between the Municipality 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.

**Greyfields** are underutilized properties that have been affected by development, but not to the extent required to be considered a brownfield site. Unlike brownfield sites, greyfield sites have not endured significant environmental damage. An example of a greyfield would be a property containing an abandoned restaurant.

**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 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.

**Municipality** means the Municipality of Grey Highlands.

**Plan** or **this Plan** means the Municipality of Grey Highlands Community Improvement Plan, unless otherwise specified.

**Qualified Person** is a person as defined by Section 168.1 of the *Environmental Protection Act*, Ontario Regulation 153/04 (as amended by Ontario Regulation 66/08) who meets the qualifications to be a qualified person for the purpose of:

- a) Conducting or supervising a Phase I environmental site assessment;
- b) Conducting or supervising a Phase II 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 and filed in accordance with Section 168.4 of the *Environmental Protection Act*.

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

**Vacant land** is land that does not contain any permanent structures and is not environmentally damaged.

## 9.2 | INTERPRETATION

### 9.2.1 | 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 Plan Administrator. In some cases, as provided herein, interpretation and discretion may rest with the Plan Administrator.

## 9.3 | IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD

### 9.3.1 | Implementation Period

It is anticipated that this Plan will be implemented over a 10-year period. Council may adjust this implementation period as it deems appropriate or necessary, subject to funding, as approved by Council.



### **9.3.2 | Dissolution of Community Improvement Plan**

Once Council is satisfied that the Plan has been carried out, Council may choose to dissolve the community improvement project by bylaw which renders the Plan inoperative.

## **9.4 | ADMINISTRATION OF PROGRAM**

### **9.4.1 | Designation of Plan Administrator**

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

### **9.4.2 | Designation of 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 bylaw 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.

### **9.4.3 | Administration of Financial Incentive Programs**

The financial incentive programs outlined in this document 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.

### **9.4.4 | Submission of Applications for Financial Incentives**

Applications for financial incentive programs will be submitted and processed in accordance with the steps outlined in this document. The Plan Administrator will be responsible for ensuring that this process is carried out in a timely manner.

### **9.4.5 | 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 Council consideration.

## **9.5 | BUDGETING FOR THE INCENTIVE PROGRAMS**

### **9.5.1 | 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 process outlined in this document and based on annual priorities.

### **9.5.2 | Changes to Funding Levels**

In accordance with the monitoring process outlined in this document, Council will determine changes in the funding and incentive levels are necessary or warranted to ensure that the

Community Improvement Plan functions properly considering the Municipality's financial circumstances. Any change to the funding for the financial incentive programs of this Community Improvement Plan will be made at the sole discretion of Council, without an amendment to this Plan.

### **9.5.3 | Funding Sources**

The Municipality shall identify, explore and pursue external funding sources 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.

## **9.6 | 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. General Eligibility Requirements include:

### **9.6.1 | Timing of Community Improvement Works**

In order to be eligible for any incentive program contained with the Municipality of Grey Highlands Community Improvement Plan, a financial incentive program application form must be submitted to the Municipality (accepted and processed by the Plan Administrator) prior to commencing any community improvement works.

### **9.6.2 | 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 prior to the approval of an application or while works are being undertaken, the tenant shall advise the Municipality and obtain the new owner's authorization.

### **9.6.3 | 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. This criterion was temporarily waived in 2020 as part of the Residential Municipal Development Charges Reimbursement Grant offering, which has now expired.

### **9.6.4 | No Outstanding Property Tax Arrears**

The property owner must not have outstanding tax property arrears and must be in good standing regarding taxation at the time of application and through the duration of the incentive benefit period, as identified within the Municipality of Grey Highlands Community Improvement Plan.

### **9.6.5 | Number of Applicants 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.

### **Updates to the 2022 Program**

- Council limited the total number of approved applications per property/business owner per property to a maximum of three over a five-year period, up to a total combined maximum of \$20,000 in financial incentives.
- Council established limits on the types of applications approved for each property if multiple applications are received for the same location.

#### **9.6.6 | 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 estimate(s) and contracts, applicable reports, and any additional information as required by the Municipality.

#### **9.6.7 | Project in Accordance with Municipal Bylaws, Etc.**

Community improvement works associated with an incentive program application must be in accordance with all Municipal bylaws policies procedures, standards, and guidelines in order to be approved.

#### **9.6.8 | Project in Conformity with the Official Plan and Zoning Bylaw**

Existing and proposed land uses must be in conformity with the policies and standards provided by the Municipality's Official Plan, and in accordance with applicable regulations, such as the Zoning Bylaw, and all other planning documents.

#### **9.6.9 | 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.

#### **9.6.10 | Conformity with Design Criteria**

The proposed exterior design of buildings, including signage associated with an incentive program application must be considered by the Municipality as consistent with the Municipality's desired goals for appearance/character of the Municipality, in relation to the design criteria outlined in this Plan, and any design guidelines adopted by the Municipality 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 Municipality as tools to characterize whether a project is considered desirable and meets the goals and objectives of this Plan.

### **9.6.11 | 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 Municipality 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 Municipality.

### **9.6.12 | Combination and Value of Incentives**

The incentive programs made available under the Municipality of Grey Highlands 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 reimbursements) provided to each applicant for each community improvement proposal for buildings or lands must not exceed the project's costs related to the planning, or re-planning, design or redesign, re-subdivision, clearance, development or redevelopment, and/or reconstruction and rehabilitation association with the application.

#### **Update to the 2022 Program**

- Council implemented a cap of \$10,000 on the total financial incentives approved per property/business owner per property per year.

### **9.6.13 | 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. Exceptions may be considered for original features of designated historic/heritage buildings.

### **9.6.14 | Grants to be a Maximum 50% of the Eligible Costs**

In no case shall the total amounts of all grants be greater than 50% of the calculated eligible costs of the project(s), with the exception of the COVID-19 Business Recovery Grant that can approve up to 75% of the calculated eligible costs (up to a maximum of \$500).

### **9.6.15 | 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 too high to be worth processing the grant.

### **9.6.16 | Franchises Are Not Eligible**

Participation in this program is limited to independently owned and operated businesses that are not part of any franchise.

## **9.7 | GENERAL PROCESS AND SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR 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 estimate(s) and contracts, applicable reports, and any additional information required by the Plan Administrator and/or Council or its designated approval authority.

General process and submission requirements include the following:

### **9.7.1 | Municipality Not Responsible for Applicant's Costs**

The Municipality 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 Municipality as part of a complete application.

### **9.7.2 | Application Prior to Commencement of Works**

An application must be submitted to the Municipality 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.

### **9.7.3 | Applicant to Declare Other Funding**

All sources of additional funding or incentives must be declared at the time of submission. The Plan Administrator is entitled to make recommendations for incentive reductions based upon any declared funding or incentive.

### **9.7.4 | 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 then make a decision on the applicant.

### **9.7.5 | 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.

### **9.7.6 | Additional Information May be Required**

Should the Plan Administrator, or 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.

### **9.7.7 | Project Audit at the Cost of the Applicant**

Upon approval and/or completion of community improvement works, the Municipality, 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.

### **9.7.8 | Inspection of Completed Project**

Upon approval and/or completion of community improvement works, the Municipality 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.

### **9.7.9 | Failure to Meet Requirements**

Should the applicant fall into default 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 Municipality, the Municipality, under the 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.

### **9.7.10 | Discontinuation of Funding**

The Municipality 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.

### **9.7.11 | 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 Municipality.

## **9.8 | APPLICATION PROCESS FOR INCENTIVE PROGRAMS**

### **9.8.1 | Application Process**

The Municipality may implement either a "first come, first served" or an "intake window(s)" process for receiving and making decisions on financial incentive applications. By default, this Plan is to be administered by 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. The general process types are outlined as follows:

**First Come, First Served:** In a first come, first served application process, the Municipality accepts grants 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 Municipality will close the application process until funding becomes available.

**Intake Window:** In an intake window application process, the Municipality may establish a set timeframe 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 authority will have the sole discretion to determine how the applications may be prioritized for funding (in consideration of the Plan Administrator's recommendations). In no order, applications may be prioritized on a basis of:

- Consultation with the applicants to determine if any applicants are accepting of application deferral until funding becomes available;
- Whether properties are designated or listed as being of historical interest;
- 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);
- Whether the project or property is considered to carry great importance and significance (e.g. highly visible corner lots); and/or
- Other criteria as may be determined by Council or its designated approval authority.

### **Update to the 2022 Program**

- Council established two annual intake dates, September 15 (for the following calendar year) and February 15 (for the remainder of the calendar year), with available funding for the second intake contingent on remaining budget allocation.

### **9.8.2 | Application Process Changes**

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 and in consideration of the recommendations provided by staff, the Review Panel and/or a Committee of Council.

### **9.8.3 | Pre-Application Consultation and Application Submission**

- 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.
- The applicant will be required to submit a completed application, which will include all 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:
  - Photographs of the existing building condition or property;
  - Historical photographs and/or drawings
  - A site plan and/or professional design study/architectural drawings;
  - Specification of the proposed works, including a work plan for the improvements and construction drawings; and/or
  - At least one cost estimate for eligible work, preferably provided by licensed contractors or consultants, as appropriate in the context of the financial incentive program. Multiple quotes are preferred, however if only one quote is



provided, it will be evaluated using construction industry reference tools to help validate the proposed costs are within reason for the project.

- Once all the required forms and supporting materials are received, the Plan Administrator will undertake a preliminary screening of the proposal and application.
  - Based on the application and proposal, 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.
  - If the application clearly does not meet the program requirements, the application will not be accepted.
  - 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.

#### **9.8.4 | Application Review and Evaluation**

- i. Once an application has been accepted by the Plan Administrator, information related to the applicant, application, and proposal information will be entered into the Municipality's database in order to track the application details, progress and results in according with the Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy. 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.
- ii. 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.
- iii. 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.
- iv. Once the financial incentive program agreement has been reviewed by all parties and returned to the Municipality, 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 Municipality does not guarantee program approval.

#### **9.8.5 | Application Approval**

- 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 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 (below).

- 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 (3.3). If the application is refused, the applicant may re-submit the application for reconsideration by Council provided the applicant has made consideration of Council's reasons for refusal.
- 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 agreements by Municipal officials. A copy of the signed and dated Financial Incentive Program Agreement will be provided to the applicant.

### **9.8.6 | Completion of Works and Payment**

- The applicant may commence improvement works once the Community Improvement Plan application has been submitted to the Municipality, however in doing so, explicitly understands and acknowledges (in writing) that the Municipality will not be held liable or responsible for any costs incurred if the project is not approved;
- Payment of the financial incentive, in accordance with the Financial Incentive Program Agreement, will be provided upon successful completion of the approved works as per Section 4.
- Prior to the 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:
  - Photographic evidence of the completed works satisfactory to the Municipality;
  - Other documentation proving completion of the project;
  - Invoices for all eligible work done, indicating the total amount paid for eligible works;
  - Proof of payment to contractors, in full; and
  - 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Payment of Grant: if all the program requirements and Financial Incentive Program Agreement requirements have been met to the Plan Administrator's 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 requirement, and the Financial Incentive Program Agreement.

## 9.9 | 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 applications for funding in consideration of the following timeline:

- The Plan Administrator should be available to meet with a potential applicant for a pre-consultation meeting within then (10) business days of being requested to meet by a potential applicant, or as soon as is reasonably possible.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- The execution of the Financial Incentive Program Agreement should occur within ten (10) business days of the application approval. Should the application be approved, payment of the grant should occur within thirty (30) business days of completion of the project. The applicant is responsible for notifying the Municipality of the completion of the project and may be required to provide proof of its completion.
- 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.

## 10 | 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 Municipality of Grey Highlands 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.

### 10.1 | FAÇADE AND BUILDING IMPROVEMENT CRITERIA

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 programs. Applications will be assessed for conformity and compatibility with the overall streetscape and adjacent properties.

Principle	Criteria
Maintain and restore historic or original building materials, architectural elements and features.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="634 930 1409 1161">1. Original colours, architectural detailing (such as original woodwork and decorative trims) 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 data-bbox="634 1167 1409 1272">2. The reconstruction of missing historic features of the façade is encouraged, based on historic documentation.</li> <li data-bbox="634 1283 1409 1388">3. Alterations should not remove, obscure, overwhelm or cover original historic materials and architectural elements.</li> <li data-bbox="634 1398 1409 1482">4. The use of economical materials such as aluminum cladding is strongly discouraged.</li> <li data-bbox="634 1488 1409 1755">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. The applicant will be required to supply samples of proposed paint colours in support of their application.</li> <li data-bbox="634 1766 1409 1873">6. Proposals must be in consideration of historical documentation about the original appearance of the façade, where such documentation is available.</li> </ol>

Maximize façade interest, detailing and differentiate the components of a façade (base, middle and top).

1. Principal building entrances should face the street/sidewalk. Secondary entrances may be provided from side yards or rear yards.
2. Doors should be articulated through recessed entryways and detailed framing.
3. Windows should be articulated with detailed framing and division of window panels. Large, undivided windowpanes should be avoided.
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.

Maximize barrier-free access.

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.
2. Automatic doors are encouraged even where they are not required by the Ontario Building Code.

Create an active, inviting façade using murals, awnings and patios/sidewalk cafes.

1. Murals are encouraged on side and rear facades. While traditional murals (painting directly onto a wall or building exterior) are acceptable, the program also encourages murals, paintings and photographs on weatherproof boards/materials that can be affixed directly to the exterior of the building/property.
2. Murals should generally relate to historic persons, places and events which reference and celebrate the Municipality of Grey Highlands' history. Reproductions of historic photographs and images are also encouraged.
3. 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.
4. In all cases, consideration should be made to incorporate awnings into a façade improvement. Permanent, fabric awnings and retractable awnings are encouraged.

5. Bubble-style awnings are discouraged.
6. Signage may be imprinted on an awning provided it is proportionally sized and scaled for pedestrians.
7. Informal sidewalk cafes are encouraged in the front yard. Where space permits, designated patio areas may be provided in the front or side yard.
8. Large outdoor seating areas (more than 12 seats) should be designated with decorative fencing.

## 10.2 | SIGNAGE CRITERIA

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 property tax increment equivalent grant program, the planning and building application fees program and the brownfields property tax assistance program).

### Principle

Signage should be scaled for pedestrians and not vehicular traffic.

### Criteria

1. Signage should be scaled according to the building height and oriented for slow traffic and pedestrians.
2. Only one principal sign should be used, and it should be located above the principal building entrance; and 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.
3. Hanging perpendicular signs are encouraged.
4. Back-lit and neon signs are strongly discouraged; and will not be supported by any of the CIP programs.
5. Front-lit signage is encouraged.
6. Embossed or engraved signage is encouraged.
7. Where provided, signage should be contained in the storefront cornice/sign board area of the façade.
8. Signage should not be used in the storefront windows, except a minimal number of painted signs. Storefront windows should be as transparent as possible.

## 10.3 | PROPERTY AND LANDSCAPING IMPROVEMENT CRITERIA

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 visual impact of parking area.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Parking areas should ideally 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 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 main arteries should be minimized. The width of driveways from main arteries 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> </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>

## 10.4 | BUILT FORM, SCALE AND MASSING CRITERIA

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

<b>Principle</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
<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 downtown cores, buildings should be located close to the sidewalk.</li> <li>2. New builds 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 Bylaw. 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 buildings 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> </ol>

6. New building facades and signage should be in accordance with the façade and building criteria and the signage criteria above.



## 11 | MARKETING THE PLAN

It is important that the Municipality'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. Grey County has also identified the importance of Community Improvement Plans across the County and will support and promote the opportunities presented in this Plan through their channels. To this end, marketing and promoting the incentive programs will be necessary to increase their uptake, and therefore help to implement the Plan.

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

**Collateral Material:** The Municipality may prepare educational newsletters and/or brochures or other printed collateral material that provide an overview of this Plan and the incentive programs that are available. Collateral material 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 Municipality at its municipal office and on the Municipal website.

**Web Page:** The Municipality 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 successful completed projects.

**Promotional Display:** The Municipality may prepare promotional displays that provide an overview of this Plan that can be used at events in which the Municipality is participating.

**Public Consultation Events:** The Municipality 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.

**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. The 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.

**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.

**Other Activities:** The Municipality 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 Municipality may undertake other marketing initiatives as deemed appropriate without requiring an amendment to this Plan.

## 12 | CONCLUSION

The Municipality of Grey Highlands' Community Improvement Plan sets forth a long-term strategy for improving, strengthening and revitalizing the Municipality. The Plan outlines opportunities for participation in community initiatives on the part of both the Municipality and the private sector.

This Plan outlines the types of projects and programs that will encourage desirable private property improvements and activities that the Municipality 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.