



DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN FINANCIAL INCENTIVES PROGRAM

Background

Legislative Authority: Section 28(7) of the Planning Act

Town of Huntsville: Downtown Community Improvement Plan

Program Administration

A Community Improvement Grant Approvals Committee (CIPC) will be formed and will be responsible for the review of applications under the criteria and provisions of the CIP and will provide a recommendation to Council whether the application shall be approved or refused. The CIPC shall consist of applicable Town staff who will meet to evaluate CIP applications and provide recommendations.

Funding and Municipal Budget

Council will allocate funds in the budget annually for the CIP incentive programs.

In the event that funds remained unused after the year has ended, any remaining funds shall be placed into a reserve account designated for CIP Financial Incentive Programs. The purpose of the reserve is to hold funds available for the financial incentive programs under the CIP and can be used at the approval of Council.

Once this budget has been approved and funds have been allocated for the CIP, applications will begin to be accepted for that year on a first come first served basis up to the maximum funding available. In the event there are additional applications above the annual budgeted amount staff will recommend using funds from the designated reserve (if funds are available).

In the event that the applicant is unable to complete the approved work within the set time period and the applicant has not requested that the time period be extended or it has not been approved, there will be no funding made available to the applicant and the Municipality will not be liable for any costs due to the applicant's failure to obtain funding.

General Eligibility Requirements

The following General Eligibility Requirements are applicable to all incentive programs, and must be met in order for an application to be approved.

- a) All incentive program applications must include completed application forms and supporting materials such as detailed work plans, cost estimates and contracts, applicable reports, and any additional information as required by the CIPC
- b) Applicant 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.



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- c) All proposed projects must be within the designated Community Improvement Plan Area
- d) All proposed projects must also be consistent with the goals and objectives, principles and urban design guidelines, as outlined in the Huntsville Downtown CIP.
- e) All proposed projects must conform with the goals, objectives, and policies of the Official Plan.
- f) All proposed works must be in accordance with all other applicable legislation, by-laws, policies, procedures, standards, and guidelines in order to be approved, including but not limited to: AODA standards, the Ontario Building Code, the Zoning By-law.
- g) Existing and proposed land uses must be in conformity with the policies and standards provided by the Town's Official Plan, Zoning By-law, and all other planning documents.
- h) The property owner must not be in arrears in regard to tax payments and accounts receivable with the Town of Huntsville and must be in good standing on all other financial matters with the Town at the time of application and throughout the duration of the incentive benefit period.
- i) Should the undertaken or completed works not be consistent with the original project description, to the satisfaction of the Review Panel, the Review Panel may delay, reduce, or cancel the approved incentive program benefits, and may require repayment of any of the incentive program benefits.
- j) In most cases, the Financial Incentive Programs made available through the Huntsville Community Improvement Plan can be used individually or in combination with another CIP Financial Incentive Program (or any other existing Town incentive program)
- k) The total of all incentive benefits (including grants and refunds) provided to each applicant for each community improvement proposal must not exceed the project's costs related to the planning or re-planning, design or redesign, clearance, development or redevelopment and/or reconstruction and rehabilitation associated with an application.
- l) All financial incentive programs are subject to available Council approved funding.

Administration of Financial Incentive Programs and Budget

Pre-Consultation

Prior to submitting an application, an applicant will be required to schedule a pre-consultation meeting with Town staff in order to ensure that a project proposed by an applicant is able to meet all of the necessary application and eligibility requirements.

Submitting a Complete Application

After conducting a pre-consultation meeting, an applicant may then submit a complete application to the Town. Staff will review the application and ensure that there are no application components missing.



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Application Requirements

In order to be eligible for any of the programs offered within this CIP, applicants must submit an application that is deemed to be complete by Town staff.

1. A completed application form;
2. Supporting materials, including but not limited to:
 - a) Site plan, model and/or professional drawings of the proposed work;
 - b) A minimum of two cost estimates from licensed contractors of the work to be completed for the proposed improvements; the cost estimates must be exclusive of taxes.
 - c) Any planning, building, or work permits that are necessary for the work to be completed;
 - d) Applicable reports/studies, as deemed by the Township;
 - e) Photographs of the existing building and/or property (historical where appropriate);
 - f) Any additional information required by Town staff and/or CIPRP

CIP Application Review

Once the complete application has been received by the Town it is circulated to members of the CIP Grant Review Panel (CIPRP), as well as any other additional municipal staff or agencies as required, for review. The CIPRP will review the application and make a recommendation to Planning Committee whether the application should be granted or refused based upon the criteria and provisions within the community improvement plan, including available funding.

Council Decision

Upon the application being reviewed and evaluated, the application then proceeds to Planning Committee to make a decision whether to approve or refuse the application, which would then be ratified by Council. There is no appeal for an application for an incentive program for a community improvement plan. If the application is approved, the applicant shall then enter into an agreement with the Town regarding the conditions of the terms, duration, and any other provisions of the incentive program. This agreement may be registered on title of the subject property. The approval process for a CIP application may take up to 3 months.

Completion of Work

If the application is approved and an agreement is entered into, the applicant may proceed with having the work completed as per the application that has been submitted. The applicant will have 18 months to complete the work for Program 4 and six (6) months to complete work under Programs 1-3, as per the Agreement. If the approved work is not completed within this time period, the Agreement and application will be declared null and void, and there will be no monies provided. If an applicant is unable to complete the work before the time period expires, they may write a letter requesting that the time period be extended. This extension is subject to Council's approval.



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Approved Funding

Once the work is completed, submission of the final invoices for the completed work is required, indicating that payment has been made, and photographs of the completed work must be provided to the CIPC. If the CIPC is satisfied that the work has been completed as per the application and an inspection of the work has been completed by Town staff, the approved funds will be provided to the applicant. In the event that the actual costs of the project be greater than what was provided in the quote for the application, the Municipality is not obligated to increase the amount of funding in the grant that was originally approved by Council. In the event that the costs of the project are lower than what was provided in the quote for the application, the Municipality may lower the amount of funding provided to 50% of the actual cost of the project.



Financial Incentive Programs

Program 1 - Planning Application and Building Permit Fee Grant

Objective: To grant a portion of the fees required for planning applications or building permits in relation to an improvement project.

Grant Amount: A Planning Application and Building Permit Fee Grant may be provided on approved applications that covers 50% of the eligible cost to a maximum of \$10,000.

Program Details: Eligible costs include the following:

- 1) Municipal planning application fees, including minor variances, community planning permit applications, site plans, zoning by-law amendments or official plan amendments; and/or
- 2) Municipal building permit demolition fees, and inspection fees.

Program 2 - Façade and Signage Improvement Grant

Objective: To assist with improvements to a building's façade or signage.

Grant Amount: For a façade improvement project, a grant may cover 50% of the eligible cost of the façade improvement to a maximum of \$5,000.

The maximum value of the grant may increase to \$10,000 if the building has more than one street address and/or storefront, or if the building has more than one wall that is visible from a public street, or fronts onto a laneway or parking lot.

For a signage improvement project, a grant may cover 50% of the eligible cost of the signage improvement to a maximum of \$2,500. The maximum value of the grant may increase to \$5,000 if the building has more than one street address and/or storefront, or if the building has more than one wall that is visible from a public street, or fronts onto a laneway or parking lot.

Program Details

For façade improvement, all applications will be required to meet the Façade Guidelines as outlined in the Downtown CIP, and the following costs are eligible:

- 1) Restoration or replacement of exterior building treatments (such as brickwork/cladding/siding), cornices, eaves, parapets, windows, doors, and awnings;
- 2) Restoration or replacement of exterior lighting;
- 3) Exterior painting;
- 4) Chemical or façade cleaning;
- 5) Redesign of entrances including changes to improve accessibility; and/or,
- 6) Other similar improvements or repairs required to improve a building façade
- 7) Improvements to rear building entrances to meet AODA requirements;



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For a signage improvement project, improvements to the main storefront sign of buildings are eligible. Where a side and/or rear wall sign is visible from a public street or public space, or fronts onto a laneway or parking lot, improvements to these signs may also be eligible.

Program 3 – Landscape Improvement Grant

Objective: To assist with landscaping improvements to a property, to augment and enhance the streetscape, improve accessibility, incorporate shade trees and provide opportunity for improved stormwater management.

Grant Amount: For a landscape enhancement improvement project, a grant may cover 50% of the eligible cost of the improvements to a maximum of \$2,000. Improvements to both the front and rear yard of properties are eligible.

Program Details

Eligible costs include the following:

- a) Addition of landscaping features (plants/green space, including sod, trees, vegetation, etc.);
- b) Addition of permanent landscaping elements such as fencing, benches, planters, and lighting

Program 4 – Tax Increment Grant Program

Objective: To assist property owners where Municipal property tax has increased as a result of the development or redevelopment, construction, reconstruction and rehabilitation, within the CIPA.

Grant Amount: This program will encourage large scale property and building investment by effectively deferring all or a portion of the increase in taxation associated with the reassessment by MPAC through grants that are equivalent to all or a portion of the resulting property tax increase. Grants are equal to a percentage of the municipal tax increment for a maximum of 10 years. The amount of the grant provided would depend on the amount of the municipal portion of the property taxes that has increased as a result of the construction. This grant only applies to the lower tier (Huntsville) portion of the property taxes.

The grant to the approved applicant may equal up to a maximum of 100 percent of the lower tier municipal tax increment. The amount of the grant will be specified in a grant agreement between the applicant and the Town.

Program Details

- a) The current assessment will be determined prior to the commencement of the proposed project and the increase of the lower tier portion of the property taxes will be calculated. Upon completion of the project, the property will be re-assessed by MPAC to determine the post



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construction value. Upon successful completion of the project, a grant will be paid annually by the Town to the applicant following the payment of all property taxes on the applicable property.

- b) The grant shall be up to a maximum of 100% of the lower tier tax increment, however, may be less as approved by Council and outlined in the agreement with the property owner.
- c) The total value of the tax rebate provided under this program shall not exceed the total value or work done under eligible program costs.