



THE TOWNSHIP OF CENTRE WELLINGTON
REPORT TO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

TO: Mayor Kelly Linton and Members of Council

DATE: April 20, 2015

SUBJECT: Community Improvement Plan Implementation Report

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Council of the Township of Centre Wellington adopts the Community Improvement Plan Implementation Report, COR2015-20 as written, and directs staff to proceed with the implementation, as presented at the Committee of the Whole on April 20, 2015; and

THAT Council authorizes the use of all Level One (1) Financial incentives for 2015; and

THAT Council delegates the approval for Level One (1) incentives to the Managing Director of Planning and Development or designate in consultation with the Community Improvement Implementation Committee; and

THAT Council delegate the signing authority for Level One (1) incentive financial agreements to the Managing Director of Corporate Services, and

THAT staff reports back on the Final Township of Centre Wellington Urban Design Guidelines following the public comment period.

SUMMARY:

On March 30th, 2015, Council adopted the final Community Improvement Plan Report, PLN2015-11. An implementation process is outlined under Section 4.0 of the plan, setting out the roles and responsibilities and providing direction with regard to how the program elements should be delivered. This report addresses those requirements and lays out a process for delivering the programs in the Plan and for providing public comment on the Urban Design Guidelines.

REPORT:

Incentives Programs in 2015

Staff are recommending that all of the Level One (1) Financial Incentives be available for use in 2015. These incentives are only available within the designated areas and include the following:

Façade, Building and Property Improvement Grant/Loan

- May provide up to 50% of the eligible costs by providing an interest free loan and/or grant to a maximum Township contribution of \$10,000. If both loans and grants are provided, they will be equally apportioned, meaning the maximum Township contribution for the façade improvement would be a \$5,000 interest free loan and a \$5,000 grant.

Housing Rehabilitation and Conversion Grant/Loan

- May provide up to 50% of the eligible construction costs, to a maximum of \$4,000 per unit. If both loans and grants are provided, they will be equally apportioned, meaning the maximum Township contribution for the rehabilitation or conversion project would be a \$2,000 interest free loan and/or a \$2,000 grant. Maximum of 2 units are eligible.

Contaminated Assessment Study Grant

- May provide up to 50% of the cost of to complete one or more eligible contamination assessment studies, to a maximum of \$10,000 per property.

It is anticipated that the Façade, Building and Property Improvement Grant/loan incentive will be of most interest to property owners and has already received some significant inquiries.

Urban Design Guidelines

The Urban Design Guidelines (UDG) will be a key implementation instrument for the CIP. They will provide a framework of principles and guidelines that will provide design direction for the development, redevelopment and enhancement of buildings, facades, streetscapes, public open spaces and natural areas. The UDGs will be used as a tool against which to assess and evaluate Level 1 and Level 2 incentive programs, where applicable.

The Draft Urban Design Guidelines, prepared by Golder Associates Limited will be released by the end of April and provided on the Township's website for the public to comment. Staff are exploring options for broader public consultation and expect to report back on the input received prior to adoption of the final document in the late summer or early fall.

Administration of the Community Improvement Plan:

Section 4.2 determines that Council is responsible for the overall administration of the Community Improvement Plan by determining:

- the makeup of the Community Improvement Plan Implementation Committee,

- endorsing which of the Financial Incentives and Municipal Strategies will be offered in any particular year, and
- determining a budget for the Financial Incentives through the annual budget process, and
- Identifies the Priority Sites, and
- Makes final decisions on applications for the Financial Incentives, unless otherwise delegated.

Staff are recommending that the approval for Level One (1) Financial Incentives be delegated to the Managing Director of Planning and Development, in consultation with the Community Improvement Implementation Committee as per Section 4.2.3 of the Community Improvement Plan. Rejected applications can be appealed to Council.

Community Improvement Implementation Committee and Administrator

Staff recommend that the following representatives or their designate comprise the Community Improvement Implementation Committee (CIIC):

- Managing Director of Planning and Development
- Planner
- Chief Building Official
- Economic Development Officer
- Managing Director of Corporate Services
- Engineering Services Co-ordinator

And that the committee reserves the right to consult with Business Improvement Area representatives or any other experts as required to assist with applications.

The committee will be responsible for:

- Reviewing and evaluating applications for Financial Incentives
- Evaluating and making a recommendation on whether an application should be approved or refused
- Executing Municipal Strategies, with assistance from Township staff and under the direction of Council;
- Marketing the Urban Centre Community Improvement Plan;
- Monitoring the Urban Centre Community Improvement Plan, and providing at an open public Council meeting, an annual report to Council and citizens with respect to the costs and benefits of the CIP.
- Making recommendations to Council with respect to:
 - Financial Incentive Programs to be put into effect in any given year;
 - Identifying an annual community improvement budget for Financial Incentives; and
 - Identifying Priority Sites.

The Township Economic Development Officer will be the Community Improvement Plan Administrator. The Administrator will meet with potential applicants, receive applications and prepare the annual monitoring report to Council.

Application forms, guideline information and the financial agreement are being prepared and will be placed on the Township website upon the end of the appeal period and with the launch of the Program in May.

Level Two Priority Sites

The Community Improvement Implementation Committee will develop a list of Level Two Priority Sites as per the criteria provided in Section 3.4.2.2 being:

- The site has frontage along the Grand River;
- The site is a known brownfield property;
- A building on the site has significant heritage value;
- The site is vacant or underutilized and has potential for significant development/redevelopment; and/or
- The site is subject to a proposal that will:
 - Help achieve targets and policies of the Provincial Growth Plan;
 - Accommodate significant job growth;
 - Achieve exceptional design standards, resulting in increased building costs; and/or
 - Help achieve any other local economic development goal or priority, as identified by Township Council.

Recommendations of the Community Improvement Implementation Committee for Level Two Priority Sites will be considered by the Economic Development Task Force or its equivalent prior to adoption by Council. It is anticipated that an initial listing of Priority Sites will come to Council for approval along with the recommendation on Level Two Incentives in late spring or early summer.

BUDGET/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Council, in the 2015 Budget, allocated \$60,000 to implement financial incentives for 2015 under the Community Improvement Plan. This is direct funding that will be given out in the form of grants. There is a second funding component that will allow for the equivalent in the form of interest-free loans which could amount to an additional \$60,000.

Additional funds are also available from the Fergus Business Improvement Area for properties located within the Fergus BIA catchment area.

The maximum budget for the Community Improvement Plan in 2015, with all grants and loans available will be \$120,000. A limit on the total amount of loans outstanding will be determined in the 2016 CIP Monitoring Report depending on the success of the 2015 program.

CONSULTATION:

The Township's internal CIP Project Team included the CAO, the Managing Director of Corporate Services, Managing Director of Infrastructure Services, Managing Director of Planning and Development, Economic Development Officer, and Planner.

The Economic Development Task Force also provided comments on the Plan.

ATTACHMENTS:

NA

PREPARED BY: *Patricia Rutter, Economic Development Officer*

APPROVED BY: *Andrew Goldie, Chief Administrative Officer*