

Elgincentives

County-wide Vision and Implementation Document

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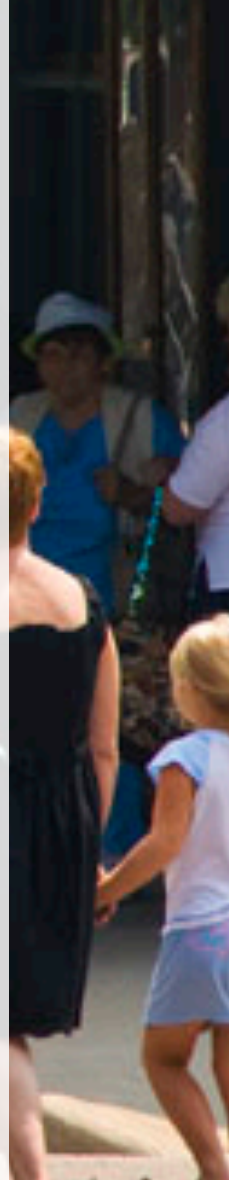
Appendix A - Elgincentives CIP Template

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Introduction and Vision



1.0

Introduction and Vision

As part of its progressive approach to economic development, Elgin County has developed a leading-edge and strategic County-wide framework for community improvement planning, with the keystone of this framework being the ‘**Elgincentives Community Improvement Plan (CIP)**’. The Elgincentives CIP is a planning document, legislated under the Ontario Planning Act, which sets out tools and strategies for improving the County’s economic, built, and social environment. It will serve as a long-term instrument for diversifying the economic base of Elgin’s seven distinctive and unique municipalities, which consist of:

1. Town of Aylmer;
2. Municipality of Bayham;
3. Municipality of Central Elgin;
4. Municipality of Dutton/Dunwich;
5. Municipality of West Elgin;
6. Township of Malahide; and
7. Township of Southwold.

In developing the Elgincentives CIP, the intent has been to align community improvement tools with the County’s economic goals and priorities. The CIP recognizes the importance of the creative rural economy and aims to support private sector investment in the following key areas (where they occur locally):

- Agriculture;
- Tourism; and
- Downtown/Mainstreet Areas.

Since the County is an upper-tier municipality with a coordinating role over the local municipalities, it has the ability to participate in CIP programs that are adopted locally. To ensure that community improvement efforts across Elgin are undertaken in a coordinated manner, the County has taken a leading role in the preparation of the Elgincentives CIP (with input from local municipal representatives as well as community stakeholders). In accordance with the Planning Act, each local Council would adopt the Elgincentives CIP and local municipal staff would assist the County with administration over the 10-year life of the plan.

In addition to preparing the Elgincentives CIP, Elgin County has also prepared this document (the ‘**Elgincentives Vision and Implementation Guidelines**’), which establishes guidelines for administration of the CIP. This document is not a statutory component of the County-wide framework; however it is an important companion document that conveys the

County's overall Vision and intention for how the CIP will be implemented.

On the basis of the above, the County's overall Vision for the Elgincentives community improvement framework is as follows:

Through the Elgincentives CIP, Elgin County will provide leadership in community improvement planning by offering incentives to eligible owners and tenants of lands and buildings in key sectors/areas of economic activity, County-wide.

Over the next 10 years, the Elgincentives CIP will advance the County's economic goals and priorities; assist with improvements to the built and social environment; and support diversification of the local economic base.

With respect to the County's guidelines for implementation, this document sets out the following:

- 1) The County's intentions for administering the Elgincentives CIP, in partnership with the local municipalities; and
- 2) The County's intentions for providing funding for the financial incentive programs outlined in the Elgincentives CIP.

A template for the Elgincentives CIP (i.e., the statutory document), which is to be adopted by each local municipality (with modifications based on the local context), is provided in Appendix A.



Background

2.0 Background

In October 2014, Elgin County initiated the process to develop the County-wide framework for community improvement planning. The goal of the project was to prepare a CIP that would be:

- a) Strongly aligned with the County's economic development goals;
- b) Endorsed by County Council and supported by Elgin's seven local municipalities; and
- c) Administered by senior staff at the County, in partnership with the local municipalities.

During Phase One of the work program, background research and additional analysis was completed in order to determine the needs, goals, and opportunities for a County-wide framework for community improvement planning. Specifically, the following tasks were undertaken:

- 1) A review of County and local municipal planning and economic development background materials;
- 2) Additional independent research with respect to the legislative framework for upper and lower-tier municipal community improvement planning and relevant best practices;
- 3) Consultation with the local municipalities and community stakeholders, including multiple needs assessment workshops, and a community survey;
- 4) On-going meetings with the Elgin Economic Development Advisory Group; and
- 5) Consultation with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing in order to obtain input on the County's overall approach to the CIP.

A full discussion of the findings of the background research and analysis was documented in a '*Community Improvement Background and Options Memo*' dated December 2014 and revised in January 2015, which was circulated to each of the seven local municipalities for review and comment. This memo is an important basis for the Elgincentives CIP and is provided as Appendix B to this document, for reference.

The Framework



3.0 The Framework

The Elgincentives County-wide framework for community improvement planning consists of the following key documents:

- The **‘Elgincentives Vision and Implementation Guidelines’** (i.e., this document), which is a non-statutory component of the CIP that conveys the County’s overall Vision and intention for how the CIP will be implemented; and
- The **‘Elgincentives Community Improvement Plan’**, which is the statutory planning document (legislated under the Ontario Planning Act) that enables municipalities to implement financial incentive programs in order to improving the economic, built, and social environment.

As shown in Figure 1 (below), the **‘Elgincentives Vision and Implementation Guidelines’** represents an overarching guidance document that will relate to the Elgincentives CIP, as adopted locally. This document has been prepared by Elgin County and establishes the County’s intentions for:

- 1) Administering the Elgincentives CIP, in partnership with the local municipalities; and
- 2) Providing funding for the financial incentive programs outlined in the Elgincentives CIP.

Figure 1 also shows that the **‘Elgincentives Community Improvement Plan’** is to be adopted by the Councils of Elgin’s seven local municipalities, in accordance with the Planning Act. A template for the Elgincentives CIP has also been prepared by Elgin County (in consultation with local municipalities and community stakeholders). This template meets the statutory requirements for a CIP and is provided in Appendix A, for reference. Specifically, the Elgincentives CIP establishes:

- Goals and objectives for community improvement;
- A Community Improvement Project Area for each of the local municipalities;
- A set of financial incentives that may be made available within each of the local Community Improvement Project Areas during the term; and
- A marketing plan and monitoring plan.

To demonstrate how the Elgincentives CIP applies throughout the County, a map showing the overall County-wide framework is also provided, in Figure 2 (below). In accordance with the Planning Act, this map is implemented through the designation of Community Improvement Project Areas by each locally adopted CIP. The Elgincentives CIP provides a discussion of Sub-Areas and Priority Areas, as identified on Figure 2.

Figure 1: Components of the Elgincentives County-wide Framework for Community Improvement Planning

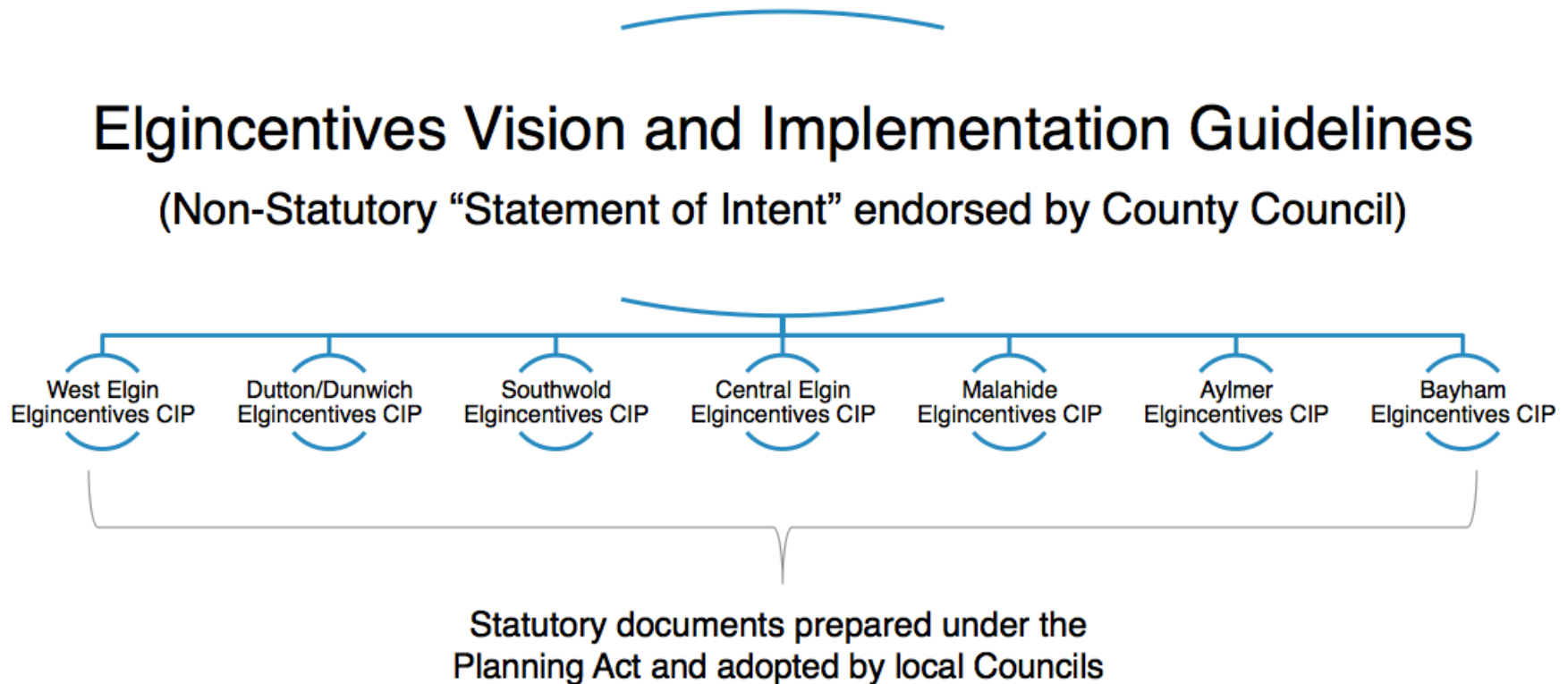
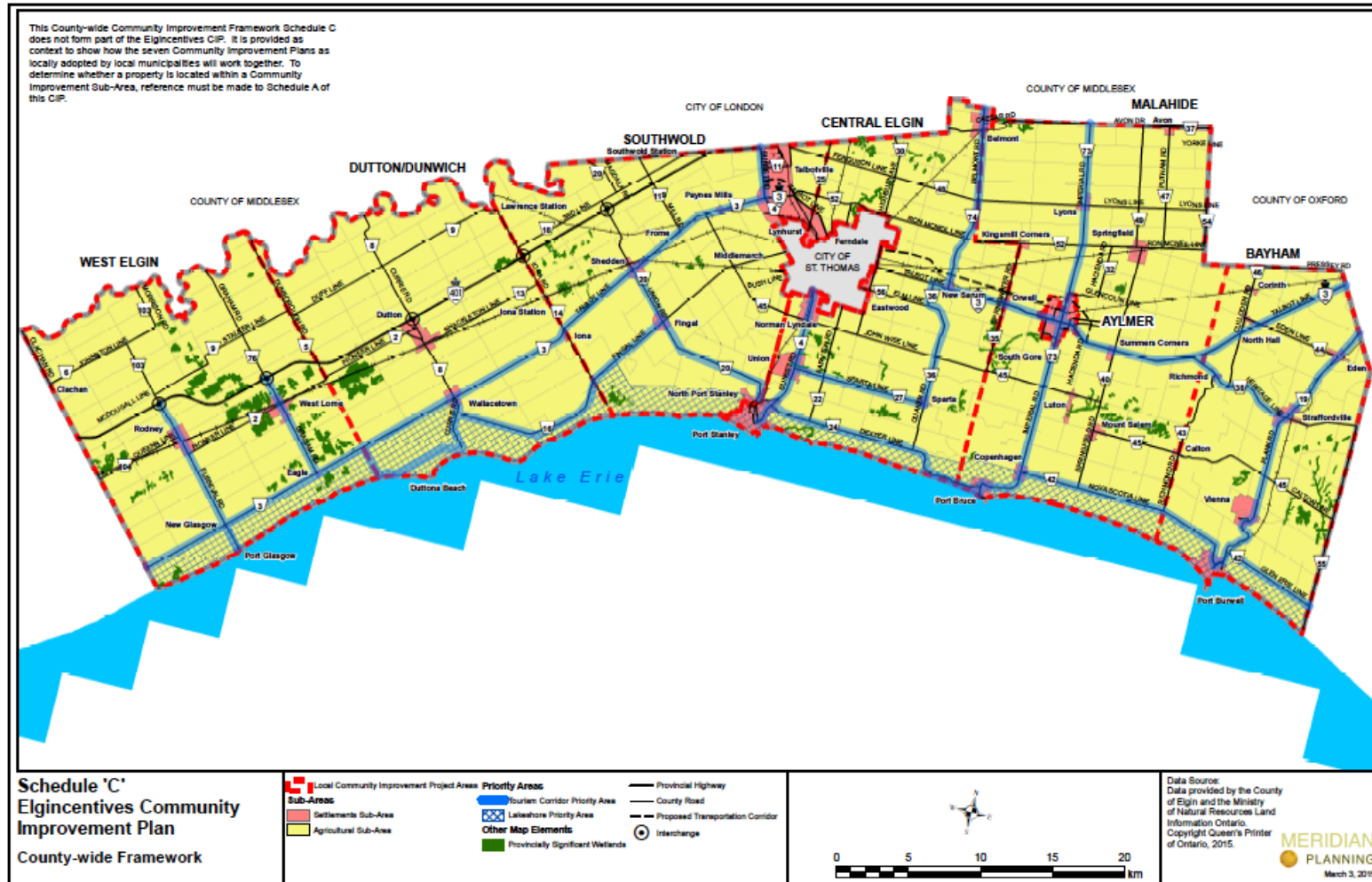


Figure 2: Lands Subject to the Elgincentives County-wide Framework for Community Improvement Planning



Incentive Programs

4.0 Incentive Programs

Normally, under Section 106 of the Municipal Act, municipalities are prohibited from directly or indirectly assisting local businesses by giving or lending money. However, having a CIP in place allows the municipality to assist financially with improvements to private properties. Specifically, grants or loans may be provided to eligible owners and tenants of land and buildings within the community improvement project area.

Therefore, Elgin has developed the following set of financial incentives programs that may be provided by the County, through the Elgincentives CIP, in order to stimulate private sector investment in land and buildings:

1. **A Tax Increment Equivalent Grant (for Major Projects)**, which is intended to stimulate major investment by deferring part of the increase in property taxation as a result of a redevelopment or rehabilitation project.
2. **A Façade, Signage, and Property Improvement Grant**, which is intended to assist with improvements to a building's façade or signage, or other improvements to private property (i.e., parking and landscaping).
3. **A Building Improvement/Restoration Grant**, which is intended to assist with maintenance and physical improvement of existing buildings.
4. **A Building Conversion/Expansion Grant**, which is intended to assist in the small-scale conversion of existing vacant space into new commercial, mixed-use and other eligible uses.
5. **An Energy Efficiency Retrofit Grant**, which is intended to assist with retrofits that improve the overall energy efficiency of a building.
6. **An Outdoor Art Grant**, which is intended to assist with the permanent installation of outdoor artwork/sculptures.
7. **A Feasibility, Design, and Study Grant**, which is intended to assist with the completion of studies and plans that will investigate the potential of or support a new business or development project.
8. **An Application and Permit Fees Grant**, which is intended to reduce costs for planning applications or building permits in relation to an improvement project.
9. **A Multiple Property Owners Supplemental Grant**, which provides a supplemental grant where multiple owners or tenants implement a coordinated approach to projects.
10. **A Savour Elgin/Elgin Arts Trail Supplemental Grant**, provides a supplemental grant where the establishment of a new eligible use that will also meet the criteria of the 'Savour Elgin' and 'Elgin Arts Trail' programs.

The Elgincentives CIP provides detailed information about each of the financial incentive programs listed above, including:

- a) Where and when the programs may be made available;
- b) General eligibility criteria that must be met in order for owners and tenants of land and buildings to be eligible for any financial programs;
- c) A description of the types of properties and uses that may be eligible for incentive programs;
- d) A detailed description of the financial programs, including the value of grants;
- e) A set of program-specific eligibility criteria that must also be met (in addition to the general criteria noted above); and
- f) Financial incentive application requirements.

With respect to the financial management of incentive programs, Elgin County has determined that the following guidelines will apply:

1. Any number of the financial incentives identified above may be put into effect during the term of the CIP, subject to the availability of funds and other resources.

Annually, an implementation committee that is responsible for the administration of the CIP will make recommendations to local and County Councils with respect to financial Incentives that will be in effect and offered to owners and tenants within the Community Improvement Project Area for that year.

2. It is anticipated that Elgin County will provide all funding for grants that are put into effect in effect in any given year.

The only exception to this is in regard to the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant (for Major Projects) and the Application and Permit Fees Grant, both of which specifically identify a 'municipal portion' of the grant value, which will not be funded by the County.

Where it has been determined by local Council that these programs will be put into effect in any given year, the local municipality will provide funding for the 'municipal portion'.

3. Notwithstanding the County's intention to fund 100% of the grants offered in any given year, the Elgincentives CIP includes provisions for the local municipalities to provide a portion of the funding for grants, should it be determined that there are resources available to do so in any given year.

In this case, a local Council will identify the extent to which it will participate in financial Incentive programs that have been put into effect during the annual budgeting exercise.

4. As part of the annual budgeting exercise, County Council will identify a budget for the County-funded portion of financial Incentives that have been put into effect for that year, if any.

The provision of funding for any incentives shall be to the limit of the available funding for that year. The annual budget for Financial Incentives will not fund the County portion of tax assistance programs, since these are not "out of pocket" expenses. Funding for these incentives will be provided as reimbursements in the year following payment to Elgin County and therefore do not require funding.

Additional information about the administration of incentive programs is provided in Section 5.0 of this document and in Section 6.0 of the Elgincentives CIP.

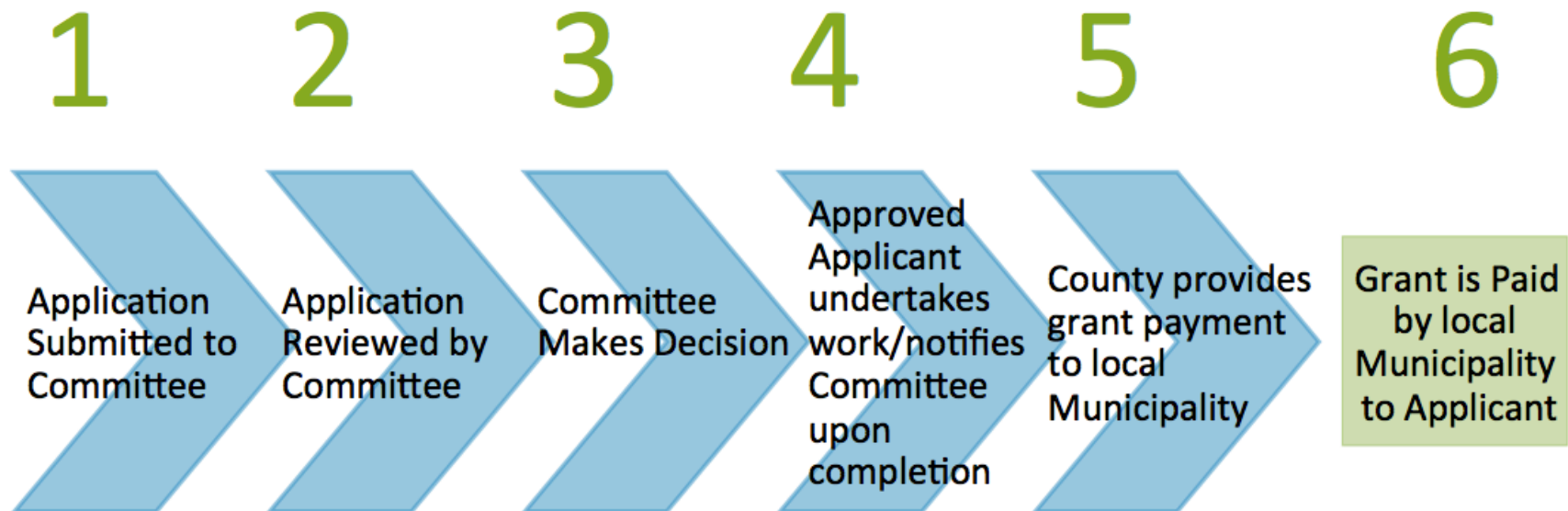


5.0 Administration

The Elgincentives CIP will be administered by Elgin County in partnership with the local municipalities in accordance with the following guidelines (as shown in Figure 3):

- a) An **‘Elgincentives Implementation Committee’** will be appointed by County Council and will be given the responsibility of administering the CIP, including financial incentive programs.
- b) Specifically, the Committee will:
 - i) Receive/review all applications for incentives; and
 - ii) Make a decision on whether an application should be approved or refused.
- c) The ‘Elgincentives Implementation Committee’ will consist of senior staff from Elgin County who will have primary responsibility for all administrative tasks.
- d) In addition, staff from the local municipalities will have representation on the Committee and will be responsible for reviewing incentive applications from owners/tenants of land/buildings from their respective municipality. Local representatives will be required to sit on the committee on a case-by-case basis, only in response to applications from their respective municipalities.
- e) Applications must be submitted to Elgin County (i.e., the ‘Elgincentives Implementation Committee’) in accordance with the requirements outlined in the CIP.
- f) Applications will be regarded on a first come, first served basis, and evaluated based on criteria set out by the ‘Elgincentives Implementation Committee’.
- g) Actual payment of tax assistance and grants (both the local and County funded portions) to an approved applicant will be the responsibility of the local municipality. Funding from Elgin County will be provided to the local municipality and not directly to an approved applicant.
- h) The ‘Elgincentives Implementation Committee’ will also be responsible for:
 - i) Marketing the Elgincentives CIP in accordance with the Marketing Strategy outlined in the CIP (with the County’s Economic Development Department playing a leading role); and
 - ii) Monitoring the results of the Elgincentives CIP, and specifically the financial incentive programs, in accordance with the Monitoring Strategy outlined in the CIP.

Figure 3: Process Summary for the Review, Approval, and Payment of Incentives offered through the Elgincentives CIP



Next Steps/Implementation



6.0 Next Steps/ Implementation

In order to implement the Elgincentives County-wide framework for community improvement planning, Elgin County has identified the following key undertakings as 'next steps':

- 1) **Council Endorsement:** The 'Elgincentives Vision and Implementation Guidelines' (i.e., this document) and the 'Elgincentives Community Improvement Plan' (i.e., the template provided in Appendix A) will be brought forward to County Council for endorsement.
- 2) **Local Implementation:** Following endorsement by County Council the County-wide framework would be adopted at the local level.

With respect to the specific tasks required as part of the local implementation phase, the following will be required:

- A. The Elgincentives CIP template, which is provided as Appendix A to this document, will be modified/developed into seven individual CIPs – one for each local municipality.

- B. Local official plan amendments will be required (in most cases) in order to allow for the identification of community improvement project areas, as identified in the Elgincentives CIP template. This is because, as discussed in the background memo provided in Appendix B to this document, while most municipal local official plans include criteria for designating a community improvement project area within a downtown or commercial area, most do not have criteria that would allow for designating one within an agricultural area. Also, in most case, the local municipal official plan policies do not have goals and objectives relating to community improvement activities that would broadly address local economic development issues.

In order to assist the local municipalities with this task, some preliminary recommendations with respect to local official plan amendments have been identified for each local municipality and are provided as Appendix C to this document.

- C. Once the local municipal CIP and proposed official plan amendments (where required) are finalized, each local municipality will have to initiate the local adoption process in accordance with Section 17 of the Planning Act, which will specifically involve:

- i) Circulating background material and the proposed Elgincentives Community Improvement Plan to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for consultation;
- ii) Providing notice of a statutory public meeting;
- iii) Making background material as well as the proposed official plan amendment and Elgincentives Community Improvement Plan available for public review and comment 20 days prior to the public meeting;
- iv) Holding a statutory public meeting for the proposed official plan amendment and proposed community improvement plan;
- v) Bringing forward the following to local Council:
 - A by-law to adopt the proposed official plan amendment¹;
 - A by-law to adopt the community improvement project area; and

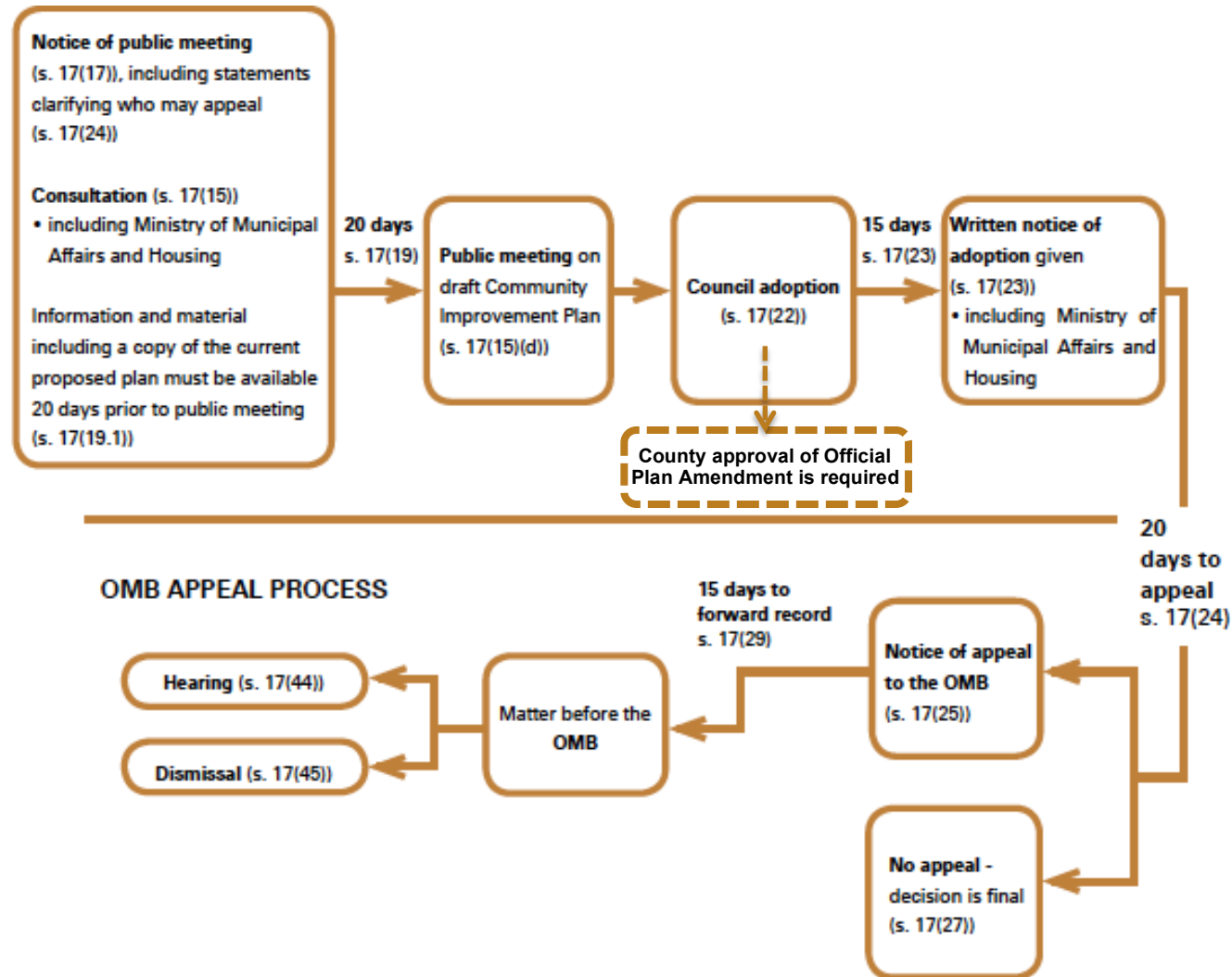
- A by-law to adopt the community improvement plan.

- vi) Providing written notice of adoption to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

A flow-chart illustrating these key implementation requirements/next steps is provided by Figure 4 on the following page.

¹ Official plan amendments will require approval from Elgin County.

Figure 4: Notice Process for the Adoption of CIPs (Source: 2008 MMAH Community Improvement Handbook)



APPENDIX A: The Elgincentives Community Improvement Plan Template



Elgincentives

MUNICIPALITY OF [TO BE INSERTED] Elgincentives Community Improvement Plan



SEPTEMBER 2015



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Glossary

Schedule A - Elgincentives CIPA and Sub-Areas

Schedule B - Elgincentives CIPA and Priority Area

Appendix 1 - Map of the Elgincentives County-
Wide Framework



Introduction to the CIP

1

1.0 Introduction to the CIP

The following is an introduction to the [TO BE INSERTED] Elgincentives CIP. This CIP is part of a larger framework for community improvement that is being implemented by local municipalities across Elgin County.

1.1 Purpose

The Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] has adopted this Community Improvement Plan (CIP) as a component of a progressive and strategic County-wide framework for community improvement planning that is to be administered and funded in partnership with Elgin County. The County-wide Vision and Implementation Document can be found online at www.Elgincentives.ca.

Since Elgin County is an Upper-tier Municipality with a coordinating role over its seven distinctive and unique lower-tier municipalities, the intent of a County-wide framework for community improvement is to advance local economic goals and priorities in key areas of economic activity, where the local municipalities and the County have determined the need is the greatest, and where there will be significant County-wide benefits. As discussed further in Section 2.0 of this CIP, this includes the following key areas (where they occur in each local Municipality):

- a) Downtowns/main street areas;
- b) The agricultural areas;
- c) The ports/lakeshore areas; and,
- d) Other key tourist and outdoor recreational areas.

To assist in supporting economic growth in these key areas, each of the seven CIPs, which make up the County-wide framework, contain a set of financial incentive programs that may be implemented during the life of this CIP. The Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] will work with the County (as described in Section 6.0 of this CIP) to determine which programs will be put into effect annually based on local priorities. Elgin County will participate in the financial incentive program in accordance with the Planning Act and Section F6.2 of the Elgin Official Plan.

1.2 What is a Community Improvement Plan?

A CIP is a municipal planning tool established by the Ontario Planning Act. Many municipalities across Ontario have prepared CIPs in order to achieve important community goals, such as:

- Facilitating and coordinating the transition of neighbourhoods and areas;
- Stimulating economic growth and development;
- Assisting businesses/ property owners with repair, rehabilitation, and redevelopment projects; and,
- Raising awareness of local needs and priorities.

Simply put, a CIP is a planning document that sets out tools and strategies for improving the built, economic, and social environment in designated areas of a municipality.

Under Section 106 of the Municipal Act, municipalities are prohibited from directly or indirectly assisting local businesses by giving or lending money. However, having a CIP in place allows the municipality to assist financially with improvements to private properties. Therefore, this CIP identifies a set of ten financial incentive programs that may be available to owners and tenants of lands and buildings within the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED].

1.3 Authority

The Planning Act is the primary piece of legislation that provides for the preparation of CIPs. Specifically, Section 28 of the Planning Act sets out the following:

1. **Types of projects/activities/works that are considered ‘community improvement’**, which can include the redevelopment, rehabilitation, or other improvements to residential, commercial, industrial, and public buildings, structures, or facilities.
2. **A community improvement planning process** whereby a municipality must first identify and adopt by by-law a designated ‘community improvement project area’, after which a ‘community improvement plan’ may be prepared and adopted by a municipal Council. However, this may only be done where there are community improvement policies in the municipality’s Official Plan (which is the case in the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED], as discussed in Section 2.0 of this CIP).
3. **Tools that can be implemented** once a ‘community improvement plan’ is adopted by a municipal Council, which include grants or loans to owners and tenants (with consent of the owner) of land and buildings within the community improvement project area.
4. **Eligible costs** for which a municipality can provide such grants or loans, which may include costs related

to development/ redevelopment or construction/ reconstruction projects **for rehabilitation purposes** or for the provision of energy efficient improvements.

In addition to the above, the Planning Act states that upper-tier municipalities in Ontario (including Elgin County) have the ability to participate in (i.e., contribute financially) CIP programs adopted by local municipalities. This is permitted only where there are Official Plan policies in place relating to the making of grants or loans. As discussed in Section 2.2 of this CIP, since there are such policies in place in the upper-tier Official Plan, Elgin County may participate in the programs established by this CIP.

1.1 Contents

The contents of this CIP are as follows:

- A brief overview of the background and basis for this CIP is provided in Section 2.0;
- Goals and Objectives for County-wide Community Improvement are provided in Section 3.0;
- The Community Improvement Project Area is identified in Section 4.0 (with maps provided as schedules to this CIP);
- Information about financial incentive programs (or 'Elgincentives') is provided in Section 5.0;
- Administrative details about how this CIP will be implemented, marketed, and monitored are set out in Sections 6.0, 7.0, and 8.0; and
- A Glossary is intended to assist in the interpretation of this CIP.



Basis for the CIP

2

2.0

Basis for the CIP

The [TO BE INSERTED] Elgincentives CIP has been prepared based on a number of County and local Municipal planning documents and information sources, as summarized in this Section.

2.1 County-wide Economic Development Goals/Priorities

As stated in the introduction to this CIP, the intent of a County-wide framework for community improvement is to implement Planning Act tools consistently in each of Elgin's seven local municipalities as a part of a coordinated strategy to advance local economic goals and priorities. Prior to the development of this CIP, a review of the County's Economic Development Strategy and Official Plan was completed to identify key goals and priorities that can be supported in order to provide an overall public benefit to the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED]

and Elgin County as a whole. The following is a summary of the findings.

Elgin County Economic Development Strategy

In 2011, the County implemented an Economic Development Strategy (EDS), with the primary objective being to foster or create an environment that supports the growth of the economy and prosperity for local residents. The EDS emphasizes the importance of the creative rural economy in order to create an enabling environment for the following key areas:

- Agriculture;
- Tourism; and
- Downtowns/Mainstreets.

In reviewing the goals of the County's Economic Development Strategy, it has been determined that this CIP has the potential to:

- Assist businesses and property owners with repair, rehabilitation, and redevelopment projects, in order to help enhance civic pride and ownership throughout the County.
- Promote secondary uses on agricultural land, which are now permitted through the County's Official Plan.
- Support enterprise development through the use of financial incentive programs.

- Send a clear message to the business and development community on behalf of the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] and Elgin County that there is a commitment by both levels of government to stimulating economic growth and attracting/retaining businesses.
- Create positive stories about revitalization and business development within the community.

Elgin County Official Plan

The 2012 County Official Plan has a clearly articulated set of long-term goals for Elgin, which emphasize the importance of agriculture, downtown areas, and the 'ports'. For example, the following Official Plan goals are set out for Elgin's economic prosperity, which will be supported by this CIP:

- *To reinforce the function of the downtown areas in settlement areas as cultural, administrative, entertainment, retail and social focal points of the community.*
- *To support the role of the 'ports' in the County as the primary locations for tourism and related economic activity.*
- *To provide opportunities for a wide range of appropriately scaled agriculture-related and secondary uses in the Agricultural Area.*

In addition, the County's Official Plan establishes policies that will support the goals, actions and strategies of the Economic

Development Strategy. For example, the Official Plan states that it is a policy of the County to:

- *Support the efforts of existing Business Improvement Areas and Chambers of Commerce to promote retail and façade improvements of buildings.*
- *Support the creation of interesting and accessible public places to generate activity and vitality and attract people and business to Elgin County communities.*
- *Promote the growth of tourism throughout the County with particular emphasis in areas where there is an existing tourism base including the ports/waterfront areas, downtown/main street areas, recreational areas and agricultural/rural areas.*
- *Enhance the profile of the County, its communities, ports and tourism attractions and destinations.*
- *Maintain agriculture as the principal economic activity in the rural areas of the County.*
- *Support opportunities for farmers to protect, diversify and expand their operations.*

This CIP is in support of these County-wide policies, where they apply in the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED].

2.2 County-Wide Policies for Community Improvement

Section F6 of Elgin County's 2012 Official Plan sets out policies related to community improvement planning by an upper-tier municipality, as required by the Planning

Act. Section F6.1 provides a number of objectives for community improvement in the County, which are broad and address a wide range of needs and opportunities.

Specifically, the following objectives from the County's Official Plan will be supported by this CIP, which is intended to diversify the economic base and improve the built environment of [TO BE INSERTED], with a focus on agricultural areas, downtown areas, and the 'ports':

- e) *Enhance retail and downtown commercial areas within the municipalities;*
- g) *Promote energy efficiency and sound environmental design;*
- h) *Foster economic growth within designated areas;*
- j) *Enhance the visual characteristics of neighbourhoods; and,*
- k) *Encourage local participation in funding programs.*

It is also important to note that there are policies in the County's Official Plan dealing with upper-tier participation in a lower-tier CIP. As mentioned earlier, the Planning Act states that an upper-tier municipality may participate in the financial incentive programs contained in a lower-tier CIP, or make grants to the lower-tier related to the implementation of these programs, provided the appropriate policies are included in the Upper-tier Official Plan. Accordingly, Section F6.2 of the County's Official Plan states:

County Council may make grants or loans to the council of a lower tier municipality for the purpose of carrying out a community improvement plan that has come into effect, on such terms as to security and otherwise as the council considers appropriate.

On the basis of the above, Elgin County may participate in the financial incentive programs contained in this CIP.

2.3 [TO BE INSERTED] Policies for Community Improvement

Enabling Official Plan Policies

As required by the Planning Act, Section 7 of the Official Plan of the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] contains provisions for the development of a CIP. Specifically, the policies set out community improvement goals, objectives, and implementation policies. The following is a discussion of the key policies that generally address local economic development and beautification and are therefore in support of this CIP.

[TO BE PREPARED FOR EACH LOCAL MUNICIPALITY]

2.4 Community Improvement Background and Options Memo

A full discussion of the findings of the background work undertaken in support of the development of this CIP (i.e., the review of County economic development priorities/policies, a local policy review, and consultation events) was documented in a '*Community Improvement Background and Options Memo*' dated December 2014 (and revised in January 2015), which was circulated to each of the seven local municipalities for review and comment. This memo is an important basis for the [TO BE INSERTED] Elgincentives CIP and can be reviewed for additional background information. The memo can be obtained from www.elgincentives.ca.



Goals and Objectives

3

3.0 Goals and Objectives

This Section introduces the goals and objectives of the [TO BE INSERTED] Elgincentives CIP and articulates the intended outcomes of the community improvement programs.

3.1 Purpose of the Goals and Objectives

A series of goals have been developed based on the findings of the background work and consultation activities described in Section 2.0 of this Plan. The goals are established for the purpose of articulating how the Elgincentives CIP is intended to provide an overall public benefit to the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED]. The goals represent the overall intended result of this Plan.

Objectives have also been identified, which represent the tangible actions and outcomes that the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED], in cooperation with Elgin County, aim to achieve through the implementation of this Plan.

Importantly, as set out in Section 5.2, in order to be eligible for any of the financial incentives programs offered through this CIP, a proposed project must contribute to the goals and objectives set out below.

For each of the goals and objectives, a set of targets has also been established for the purpose of monitoring the effectiveness of this CIP. The targets are presented as part of a monitoring strategy in Section 8.0 of this Plan.

3.2 Goals

The goals of the Elgincentives CIP are shown in Figure 1 below, which also demonstrates how each of the goals will support and reinforce each other.

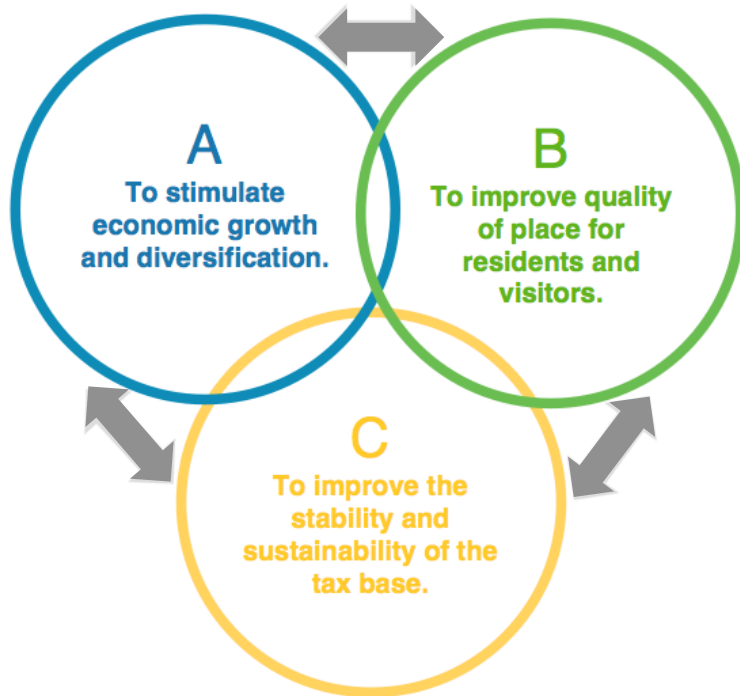


Figure 1: Goals of the Elgincentives CIP

3.3 Objectives

For each of the goals shown in Figure 1, a number of specific and measurable objectives have also been identified, as shown in the tables below.

Goal	Objectives
A To stimulate economic growth and diversification.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To encourage the expansion of the agribusiness sector through new and expanded value-added/agricultural related enterprises. 2. To encourage the expansion of business activity for existing commercial businesses in the downtown areas/mainstreets of settlement areas. 3. To increase the number of business start-ups. 4. To increase tourism. 5. To increase the number of tourist accommodation establishments. 6. To increase the number of creative economy businesses. 7. To increase employment opportunities for local residents.

Goal	Objectives
B To improve the quality of place for residents and visitors.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To improve the appearance of major entry points and tourism corridors.2. To improve the appearance and utilization of the lakeshore.3. To improve the appearance of the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] and foster civic pride through improvements to private properties.

Goal	Objectives
C To improve the stability and sustainability of the tax base.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To reduce the number of vacant commercial building spaces in the downtown areas/mainstreets of settlement areas.2. To increase the assessment base of properties in the downtown areas/mainstreets of settlement areas, and the agricultural area.



Community Improvement Project Area

4

4.0 Community Improvement Project Area

In accordance with the Planning Act, the following Section identifies the Community Improvement Project Area that has been designated for the purpose of this Plan.

4.1 Community Improvement Project Area

In order to achieve the broad, economic development-focused goals and objectives of this CIP, all lands located within the Municipal boundary of [TO BE INSERTED] are included within the Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA). These

lands have been designated (by by-law) as such by Council, and are shown on Schedule A of this CIP.

To demonstrate how this CIP will work with other local Elgincentives CIPs adopted throughout Elgin County, a map showing the overall County-wide Framework is also provided as Appendix 1. However, since this CIP applies to the geographic boundaries of the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] only, the map of the County-wide framework is provided as context and does not constitute a part of this CIP.

Financial Incentive Programs may be available to registered owners, assessed owners, and tenants (with consent of the owner) of lands and buildings located within the CIPA, subject to a number of eligibility criteria, as described in Section 5.0 of this CIP.

In addition, the type of improvement projects that may be funded by incentive programs is subject to the Community Improvement 'Sub-Area' in which lands/buildings are located. These 'Sub-Areas' are introduced in Section 4.2.

4.2 'Sub-Areas'

Prior to the development of County-wide framework for community improvement, it was determined that there are a number of key areas of local economic activity in Elgin County as a whole where the need for improvement is the greatest and where investment will result in significant economic development benefits. The local Council of [TO BE

INSERTED] has supported the identification of these areas, which include:

- a) Downtowns/main street areas;
- b) The agricultural areas;
- c) The ports/lakeshore areas; and,
- d) Other key tourist and private outdoor recreational areas.

Therefore, in addition to designating the entire Municipality as a CIPA, the following ‘Sub-Areas’ have also been identified throughout the County, which are shown on Schedule A of this CIP:

1. **The Settlements Sub-Area** (which includes the downtowns/main street areas and ports of [TO BE INSERTED] as identified in the local Official Plan); and
2. **The Agricultural Sub-Area** (which generally include lands that are designated Agriculture by the County Official Plan).

Collectively, these two ‘Sub-Areas’ make up the entire geographic area of the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED], which is why the Municipality as a whole has been designated as a CIPA. However, the ‘Sub-Areas’ are important to the overall implementation of this CIP since it is recognized that there are different types of properties and uses in each of the areas of economic activity that should be eligible for incentive programs. Therefore, Section 5.2 provides a description of the types of properties and uses within each of the ‘Sub-Areas’

and indicates whether or not they are eligible for the incentive programs contained in this CIP.

4.3 ‘Priority Areas’

In addition to designating a CIPA and ‘Sub-Areas’, it has also been determined that there are certain key areas within [TO BE INSERTED] (and other parts of the County) where local investment will have the greatest economic benefit/impact. Therefore, these areas have been identified as ‘Priority Areas’ recognizing that they should be prioritized with respect to improvement projects and the provision of financial incentives. ‘Priority Areas’ in the [TO BE INSERTED] include the following:

1. **Tourism Corridors** (which include corridors as identified on Schedule B of the County’s Official Plan, in addition to other locally identified corridors); and
2. **The Lakeshore Area** (INSERT RATIONALE FROM LOCAL OFFICIAL PLAN).

As discussed in Section 5.0 of this CIP, for some of the incentive programs in this CIP, the value of financial incentives will be greater for registered owners, assessed owners, and tenants (with consent of the owner) of lands and buildings that are located in ‘Priority Areas’.



Financial Incentive Programs 51

5.0 Financial Incentive Programs

A set of financial incentive programs is introduced in this Section, which may be available to eligible owners/tenants in the CIPA. The programs are intended to stimulate private sector investment in land and buildings.

5.1 The Programs

The Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] may provide funding for, and Elgin County may participate in, any of the following incentive programs during the term of this CIP, subject to the availability of Municipal and County resources:

1. **A Tax Increment Equivalent Grant for Major Projects;**
2. **A Façade, Signage, and Property Improvement Grant;**
3. **A Building Improvement/Restoration Grant;**
4. **A Building Conversion/Expansion Grant;**
5. **An Energy Efficiency Retrofit Grant;**
6. **An Outdoor Art Grant;**
7. **A Feasibility, Design, and Study Grant;**
8. **An Application and Permit Fees Grant;**
9. **A Multiple Property Owners Supplemental Grant; and**
10. **A Savour Elgin/Elgin Arts Trail Supplemental Grant.**

Section 5.2 of this CIP identifies a set of criteria that must be met in order to be eligible for any of these programs. Detailed information about how each of the incentive programs works is provided in Section 5.3 to 5.12.

5.2 Eligibility

General Eligibility Criteria

In order to be eligible for any of the financial incentive programs that may be offered under this CIP, the following general eligibility criteria must be met:

1. The lands and buildings subject to an application must be located the CIPA designated by by-law for the purpose of this CIP.
2. The type of property or use subject to an application must be identified as eligible within the applicable 'Sub-Area', (as identified on the table on the following page).
3. All proposed projects must result in some level of improvement or rehabilitation over the existing conditions and will not simply represent a life cycle replacement.
4. All projects must contribute to achieving one or more community improvement goals (as identified Section 3.0 of this CIP).
5. Unless otherwise specified, registered owners, assessed owners, and tenants (with consent of the owner) of private land or buildings may be eligible for financial incentives.
6. The total value of all grants provided to an owner/tenant shall not exceed the total value of eligible costs for a project.
7. A property is eligible for the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant for Major Projects once during the term of this CIP.
8. For all other incentive programs, a property may be eligible for multiple grants and may submit multiple applications during the term of this CIP; however, the total combined value of grants approved in any given year shall not exceed \$15,000 per property or the total value of eligible costs, whichever is less.
9. Financial incentives will not be applied retroactively to works started prior to approval of applications and any application for costs incurred prior to the adoption of this CIP will not be considered eligible.
10. The property owner must have no outstanding property tax arrears, or any other outstanding Municipal/County accounts receivable on the subject property at the time of application.
11. Applicants will be required to disclose all other funding sources, including governmental, private, or not-for-profit funding to support the project. These shall be taken into consideration in the review of applications and the value of incentives may be reduced as a result. Applicants who receive funding for projects via the [TO BE INSERTED] Elgincentives CIP may not be eligible for funding for the same project under any other CIP that has been adopted by Municipal Council.
12. The proposed works will conform with all Municipal policies, standards, and procedures, including the Official Plan, Zoning By-law, Design Guidelines (if applicable) and heritage matters, in addition to being subject to a review and the issuance of necessary planning and development approvals and building permits pursuant to the Ontario Building Code.

In addition to these general eligibility criteria, a set of program-specific eligibility criteria must also be met, which are outlined in the description of financial incentives (Sections 5.3 to 5.12 of this CIP). A summary table that provides an overview of the details for each of the financial incentive programs is also provided in Section 5.13.

Eligible Properties and Uses

As noted, not all properties and uses located in the 'Sub-Areas' will be eligible for financial incentive programs offered in this CIP. The table below generally describes the types of privately-owned properties and uses within each of the 'Sub-Areas' that are the focus of this CIP and therefore eligible for incentive programs.

Eligible Properties and Uses in the Sub-Areas Table

Sub-Area	Eligible Properties	Eligible Uses
Settlements Sub-Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Properties designated Commercial by the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] Official Plan, which are located within or in proximity to an established downtown or mainstreet area. Properties designated by the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] Official Plan to permit tourism and tourist designation-oriented uses and private recreational uses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial and mixed-uses. <i>Industrial uses are not eligible.</i> Tourism and tourist destination-oriented uses and private recreation uses.
Agricultural Sub-Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Properties designated Agricultural Area by the County Official Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secondary and agriculture-related uses related to existing farm operations. Tourism and tourist destination-oriented uses and private recreation uses (where permitted by the local Official Plan).

5.3 Tax Increment Equivalent Grant for Major Projects

Purpose and Anticipated Benefits

The Tax Increment Equivalent Grant for Major Projects is intended to stimulate investment by effectively deferring part of the increase in property taxation as a result of the major development, redevelopment, reconstruction, or rehabilitation of a lands or building. Grants that are equivalent to a percentage of the resulting **Municipal and/or County portion** of the property tax increment are provided to a property owner following the reassessment of the property.

Value of Grant

Applicants should refer to the definition for Tax Increment provided in the Glossary of this CIP, or contact Economic Development staff at Elgin County, in order to further understand how grant values will be calculated.

Where a proposed project satisfies the eligibility requirements, a Tax Increment Equivalent Grant for Major Projects may be provided on approved applications as follows:

- Following reassessment, a grant that is equivalent to 100% of the **Municipal and/or County portion of the tax increment** will be provided to a property owner. Grants will be provided for a period of 5 years. Following year one,

and for or each year thereafter, the value of the grant will decrease as follows:

- In year two, the grant will be equivalent to 90% of the Municipal and/or County portion of the tax increase;
 - In year three, the grant will be equivalent to 80% of the Municipal and/or County portion of the tax increase;
 - In year four, the grant will be equivalent to 70% of the Municipal and/or County portion of the tax increment; and
 - In year five, the grant will be equivalent to 60% of the Municipal and/or County portion of the tax increase.
- The maximum value of an annual grant will increase where the property is located within a 'Priority Area' (as discussed in Section 4.3 of this CIP). In this case, a grant that is to equivalent to 100% of the **Municipal and/or County portion of the tax increase** will be provided to a property owner for a period of five years.
 - At the County's sole discretion, where a property is not located within a 'Priority Area', annual rebates of up to 100% of the County's portion of the property tax increase may be negotiated between the applicant and the County where:
 - it is demonstrated that the incentive is integral to the financial success of the initiative, or
 - the development incorporates exemplary design standards.

- Upon reassessment of the property by MPAC, should the total value of the grant be significantly less than the estimated value, the applicant may then have the opportunity to withdraw their application for the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant for Major Projects, and apply for one or more of the additional programs offered through this Plan – which may result in a more significant grant value.

Program-specific Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant for Major Projects, the following criteria must be met (in addition to the general eligibility criteria set out in Section 5.2 of this CIP):

- a) The applicant must be a registered owner/assessed owner of private property located within a 'Sub-Area'. Tenants are not eligible for this program.
- b) Properties and uses must be eligible in accordance with the Table on page 5-3 of this CIP.
- c) The proposed project must be 'major', meaning that only those projects that are anticipated to generate a tax increment as a result of property reassessment will be eligible to apply.
- d) A property is eligible for the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant for Major Projects once during the term of this CIP.
- e) The property owner is responsible for the entire cost of the major project.

Eligible Projects and Costs

The Tax Increment Equivalent Grant for Major Projects may be provided for the following types of major projects on eligible properties:

- a) The redevelopment of a property for the purpose of a new eligible uses;
- b) The restoration or improvement of an existing building to accommodate an eligible use;
- c) The conversion of an existing building to accommodate an eligible use;
- d) The expansion of a building that results in an increase to the gross floor area of an eligible use;
- e) Infrastructure work including the improvement or reconstruction of existing on-site public infrastructure (water services, sanitary and storm sewer); and
- f) The services of a professional engineer, architect or planner to design and implement the project.

Other types of projects may also be considered eligible, at the discretion of Council.

Payment

The total value of grants shall not exceed the total eligible costs of an approved project as invested by the applicant, or shall not be paid to the applicant for a period more than five years, whichever is the lesser amount.

Grants may require a financial pro-forma (at the expense of the applicant), an independent third party financial review (at the expense of the applicant), and a signed agreement (specifying terms, conditions, performance expectation and duration of the grant).

Examples of Projects that may be eligible for the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant for Major Projects:

- Development of a new 2 storey mixed-use building on a commercial property in a downtown area.
- Major conversion of the upper floor of an existing commercial building to new residential units.
- Major redevelopment of an existing commercial property in a Settlement Area for a commercial use.
- Major conversion of an existing agricultural building to accommodate a bed and breakfast establishment with up to 6 rooms.
- Major expansion of an existing agricultural storage and processing facility.

If a participating property is sold, in whole or in part, before the grant period elapses, the applicant and/or the subsequent landowner is not entitled to outstanding grant payments (on either the portion sold or retained by the applicant.). The Municipality may, entirely at its own discretion, enter into a new agreement with any subsequent owners of the property to receive outstanding grant payments under this program.

Applicants receiving the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant for Major Projects will not be eligible for any additional incentive programs offered through this Plan in any given year during the term of the CIP. The Tax Increment Equivalent Grant for Major Projects may not be combined with any other financial incentive programs offered by this CIP.

5.4 Façade, Signage, and Property Improvement Grant

Purpose and Anticipated Benefits

The Façade, Signage, and Property Improvement Grant may be available to eligible property owners and tenants (with consent of the owner) to assist with the financing of improvements to a building's façade or signage, or to assist with other eligible improvements to private property (i.e., parking and landscaping), which may otherwise be considered cost prohibitive.

Value of Grant

Where a proposed project satisfies the eligibility requirements, a Façade, Signage, and Property Improvement Grant may be provided on approved applications as follows:

- For a **façade improvement** project, a grant may cover 50% of the eligible cost of the façade improvement to a maximum of \$5,000 (or the total value of eligible costs related to the project, whichever is less).
 - The maximum value of the grant may increase to \$7,500 (or the total value of eligible costs related to the project, whichever is less) 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 (or the total value of eligible costs related to the project, whichever is less).
 - The maximum value of the grant may increase to \$5,000 (or the total value of eligible costs related to the project, whichever is less) 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.
 - The maximum value of the grant may increase to \$7,500 (or the total value of eligible costs related to the project, whichever is less) where the property is located within a 'Priority Area' (as discussed in Section 4.3 of this CIP).
- For a **property improvement** project, a grant may cover 50% of the eligible cost of the property improvement to a maximum of \$2,500 (or the total value of eligible costs related to the project, whichever is less).
 - The maximum value of the grant may increase to \$5,000 (or the total value of eligible costs related to the project, whichever is less) where the property is

located within a 'Priority Area' (as discussed in Section 4.3 of this CIP).

- For an application that involves a combination of one or more of the above improvement projects, applicants will be eligible to apply for multiple Façade, Signage, and Property Improvement Grants

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible, the general eligibility criteria set out in Section 5.2 of this CIP apply. Properties and uses must be eligible in accordance with the table on page 5-3 of this CIP.

Eligible Projects and Costs

The Façade, Signage, and Property Improvement Grant may be provided for the following costs related to projects on eligible properties and uses:

- For a **façade improvement** project, improvements to the main façade of buildings are eligible. Where a side and/or rear wall is visible from a public street or public space, or fronts onto a laneway or parking lot, improvements to these walls may also be eligible. Eligible costs include the following:
 - a) Restoration or replacement of exterior building treatments, such as brickwork/cladding/siding;
 - b) Restoration or replacement of cornices, eaves, and parapets;
 - c) Restoration or replacement of windows, doors and awnings;
 - d) Restoration or replacement of exterior lighting;
 - e) Exterior painting;
 - f) Chemical or other façade cleaning;
 - g) Redesign of storefront or entrance modifications, including provisions to improve accessibility for the disabled; and
 - h) Such other similar improvements and repairs that may be necessary to improve the appearance of a building façade exterior.
- 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.
- For a **property** Improvement project, improvements to the front yard of properties are eligible. 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;
 - c) Addition of new parking/existing parking area upgrades for cars, motorcycles, and bicycles;

- d) Improvements to rear building entrances and rear parking areas;
 - e) Addition of walkways; and
 - f) Such other similar improvements and repairs that may be necessary to improve a property.
- For all types of improvement projects, the services of a professional engineer, architect or planner to design and implement the project will also be considered eligible costs.

Payment

The grant will be provided upon successful completion of the approved project.

Subject to the availability of resources, the County of Elgin may provide a grant to the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] for up to 100% of the cost of implementing the financial incentives identified by this CIP for this program.

Applicants receiving the Façade, Signage, and Property Improvement Grant may be eligible for additional incentive programs offered through this Plan (with the exception of the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant for Major Projects); however, the total combined value of grants in any given year shall not exceed \$15,000 per property or the total value of eligible costs related to the project, whichever is less.

Examples of Projects that may be eligible for the Façade, Signage, and Property Improvement Grant:

- Removal of cladding/restoration of original brick and stone on a building in the downtown area.
- Installation of new signage on a Marina in the Lakeshore Recreation area.
- Improvements to the parking area of an estate winery, including the addition of bicycle and motorcycle parking.
- Replacement of windows, doors and awnings on a café and bakery located on the mainstreet of a Settlement Area.

5.5 Building Improvement/ Restoration Grant

Purpose and Anticipated Benefits

The Building Improvement/Restoration Grant may be available to eligible property owners and tenants (with consent of the owner) to assist with maintenance and physical improvement of existing buildings that may otherwise be considered cost prohibitive. Projects may be undertaken in order to meet the current Building Code, improve aesthetic quality, and to provide for safe and usable eligible uses.

Value of Grant

Where a proposed project satisfies the eligibility requirements, a Building Improvement/Restoration Grant may be provided on approved applications that covers 50% of the eligible cost of the improvements to a maximum of \$8,000, or the total value of eligible costs related to the project, whichever is less.

The maximum value of the grant may increase to \$10,000, or the total value of eligible costs related to the project, whichever is less, where the property is located within a 'Priority Area' (as discussed in Section 4.3 of this CIP).

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible, the general eligibility criteria set out in Section 5.2 of this CIP apply. Properties and uses must be eligible in accordance with the table on page 5-3 of this CIP.

Eligible Projects and Costs

The Building Improvement/Restoration Grant may be provided for the following costs related to projects on eligible properties and uses:

- a) Structural repairs to walls, ceilings, floors, and foundations;
- b) Interior restoration and design;
- c) Repair/replacement/installation of building infrastructure, such as roofing, windows, and doors;
- d) Repair/replacement/installation of plumbing, electrical, HVAC, and fire protection systems;
- e) Weatherproofing;
- f) Improvements to accessibility for people with disabilities;
- g) Any other improvements that may bring a building up to code, or address health, safety, or risk management issues; and
- h) The services of a professional engineer, architect or planner to design and implement the project.

Payment

The grant will be provided upon successful completion of the approved project.

Subject to the availability of resources, the County of Elgin may provide a grant to the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] for up to 100% of the cost of implementing the financial incentives identified by this CIP for this program.

Applicants receiving the Building Improvement/Restoration Grant may be eligible for additional incentive programs offered through this Plan (with the exception of the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant for Major Projects); however, the total combined value of grants in any given year shall not exceed \$15,000 per property, or the total value of eligible costs related to the project, whichever is less.

Examples of Projects that may be eligible for the Building Improvement/Maintenance Grant:

- Entrance modifications to a downtown restaurant to provide barrier-free accessibility.
- Interior restoration and design of 2 upper-floor rental housing units that were previously unoccupied on a Settlement Area mainstreet.
- Structural repairs and improvements to an agricultural outbuilding that is currently being used commercially to sell cheese that was processed on-site.

5.6 Building Conversion/Expansion Grant

Purpose and Anticipated Benefits

The Building Conversion/Expansion Grant may be available to eligible property owners and tenants (with consent of the owner) to assist in the small-scale conversion of existing vacant space into new commercial, mixed-use and other eligible uses. Additionally, this program will assist with the minor expansion of existing eligible uses to support growing businesses thereby increasing non-residential assessments.

Value of Grant

Where a proposed project satisfies the eligibility requirements, a Building Conversion/Expansion Grant may be provided on approved applications that on the basis of \$15 per square foot of converted or expanded floor space, to a maximum of \$8,000, or the total value of eligible costs related to the project, whichever is less.

The maximum value of the grant may increase to \$10,000, (or the total value of eligible costs related to the project, whichever is less) where the property is located within a 'Priority Area' (as discussed in Section 4.3 of this CIP).

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible, the general eligibility criteria set out in Section 5.2 of this CIP apply. Properties and uses must be eligible in accordance with the table on page 5-3 of this CIP.

Eligible Projects and Costs

The Building Conversion/Expansion Grant may be provided for the construction and renovation costs related to the following types of projects on eligible properties and uses:

Conversion of non-commercial or vacant building space into new commercial, mixed-use, secondary uses, and agriculture-related uses, and other eligible uses;

- a) Conversion of upper storey space (whether vacant, office, commercial or other non-residential use) into new residential units;
- b) Conversion of a building or a unit in a building into a hotel, inn or bed and breakfast;
- c) Conversion of existing ground floor commercial space to better suit a new commercial use (e.g., retail to restaurant); and
- d) Expansion of existing eligible uses to increase the gross floor area.

For all types of improvement projects, the services of a professional engineer, architect or planner to design and implement the project will also be considered eligible costs.

Examples of Projects that may be eligible for the Building Conversion/Expansion Grant:

- Conversion of existing vacant upper-floor space in a downtown commercial building into an upper-floor rental housing unit.
- Conversion of an existing unused barn on an agricultural property into a petting zoo and rental space for children's events.
- Expansion of an existing farm vacation home to include new accommodation space.

Payment

The grant will be provided upon successful completion of the approved project.

Subject to the availability of resources, up to 100% of the grant values identified above may be funded by Elgin County.

Applicants receiving the Building Conversion/Expansion Grant may be eligible for additional incentive programs offered through this Plan (with the exception of the Tax Increase Equivalent Grant for Major Projects); however, the total combined value of grants in any given year shall not exceed \$15,000 per property.

5.7 Energy Efficiency Retrofit Grant

Purpose and Anticipated Benefits

The Energy Efficiency Retrofit Grant Program maybe available to eligible property owners and tenants (with consent of the owner) for retrofits that improve the overall energy efficiency of buildings. The program will improve the energy efficiency of buildings on eligible properties and uses as well as support the community's overall environmental sustainability.

Value of Grant

For an Energy Efficiency Retrofit project, a grant may cover up to 25% of the retrofit costs to a maximum of \$7,500, or the total value of eligible costs related to the project, whichever is less.

The maximum amount of a grant for renovations that result in third-party certification or compliance with third party energy efficiency standards shall be \$10,000, or the total value of eligible costs related to the project, whichever is less.

The maximum amount of a grant for the services of a professional architect or engineer shall not exceed 15% of the grant that is calculated for eligible costs.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible, the general eligibility criteria set out in Section 5.2 of this CIP apply. Properties and uses must be eligible in accordance with the table on page 5-3 of this CIP. In addition, the applicant may be required to have a professional energy audit completed in order to determine and demonstrate the need for energy efficiency upgrades.

Eligible Projects and Costs

For an Energy Efficiency Retrofit project, eligible costs include the following:

Examples of Projects that may be eligible for the Energy Efficiency Retrofit Grant:

- Addition of a green roof to an existing downtown commercial building.
- Installation of ENERGY STAR certified doors and windows on an existing restaurant on the mainstreet of a Port area.
- Installation of energy efficient lighting controls in an on-farm boutique selling hand-crafted products made on and off the farm.

- a) Interior or exterior renovations that result in a third party certification or meet a third party energy efficiency standard which exceeds the requirements of the Ontario Building Code and demonstrably increases energy efficiency including:
 - i. Interior or exterior renovations that result in any level of LEED certification as determined by the Canada Green Building Council inclusive of certification through LEED for Commercial Interiors LEED for New Construction as it related to major renovations LEED for Core and Shell Renovations and LEED for Existing Buildings.
 - ii. Interior or exterior renovations that result in compliance with ASHRAE SNAE Standard 90.1.1999 or newer energy performance standards for buildings except low rise residential buildings as certified by a professional engineer or professional architect.
- b) Addition of a green roof to an existing building;
- c) Installation of appropriate on site thermal renewable energy projects such as solar hot water geothermal air source heat pumps or solar wall;
- d) Installation of energy STAR certified heating cooling ventilation products and features including:
 - i. Central Air Conditioner
 - ii. Heat pumps
 - iii. Gas furnaces and gas boilers
 - iv. Ventilation fans and

v. Doors and Windows

But not including home appliances and small appliances such as refrigerators clothes washers dryers televisions ceiling fans, etc.;

- e) Installation of energy efficient lighting controls such as automatic timers, photocells or motion sensors;
- f) Fees of a professional architect or engineer for the design of services related to the above noted eligible projects; and
- g) Any combination of the above.

Payment

The grant will be provided upon successful completion of the approved project.

Subject to the availability of resources, the County of Elgin may provide a grant to the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] for up to 100% of the cost of implementing the financial incentives identified by this CIP for this program.

Applicants receiving the Energy Efficiency Retrofit Grant may be eligible for additional incentive programs offered through this Plan (with the exception of the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant for Major Projects); however, the total combined value of grants in any given year shall not exceed \$15,000 per property.

5.8 Outdoor Art Grant

Purpose and Anticipated Benefits

The Outdoor Artwork Grant program may be available to eligible property owners and tenants (with consent of the owner) for the permanent installation of outdoor artwork/sculptures on eligible properties within the CIP 'sub-areas'. The program will help to promote local art and improve the visual aesthetics of the lakeshore and tourist corridors.

Value of Grant

Where a proposed project satisfies the eligibility requirements, An Outdoor Art Grant may be provided on approved applications for 50% of the eligible cost of the improvements to a maximum of \$3,000, or the total value of eligible costs related to the project, whichever is less.

Program-specific Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible, the following criteria must be met (in addition to the general eligibility criteria set out in Section 5.2 of this CIP):

- a) The eligible property must be located within a 'Priority Area' (as discussed in Section 4.3 of this CIP);
- b) Properties and uses must be eligible in accordance with the table on page 5-3 of this CIP; and,
- c) Eligible projects must be visible from a public street or sidewalk.

Eligible Projects and Costs

For an Outdoor Art Work Grant, the following types of **permanent** art are considered eligible:

- a) Murals;
- b) Sculptures;
- c) Paintings;
- d) Local heritage based art pieces and displays;
- e) Interactive art pieces and displays; and,
- f) Any other art piece or display as approved Council.

The following types of costs are considered eligible:

- a) Materials;
- b) Fees for the services of an artist;
- c) Installation; and,
- d) Lighting and landscaping that highlights the public art.

Payment

The grant will be provided upon successful completion of the approved project.

Subject to the availability of resources, the County of Elgin may provide a grant to the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] for up to 100% of the cost of implementing the financial incentives identified by this CIP for this program.

Applicants receiving the Outdoor Art Grant may be eligible for additional incentive programs offered through this Plan (with the exception of the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant for Major Projects); however, the total value of all grants will not exceed the total eligible costs of an approved project as invested by the applicant, or \$15,000, whichever is the lesser amount, or the total value of eligible costs related to the project, whichever is less.

Examples of Projects that may be eligible for the Outdoor Art Grant:

- Installation of a tile mosaic on a cement walkway to a commercial building in a Settlement Area.
- Installation of outdoor sculptures surrounding the parking area of an art gallery in the downtown area.
- Creation of barn murals at a pick-your-own facility in the agricultural area.

5.9 Feasibility, Design, and Study Grant

Purpose and Anticipated Benefits

The Feasibility, Design, and Study Grant may be available to eligible property owners and tenants (with consent of the owner) for the completion of a range of studies and plans that will investigate the potential of or support a new business or development project. This program may help with the establishment of new and innovative development projects and businesses ventures on eligible properties.

Value of Grant

Where a proposed project satisfies the eligibility requirements, a Feasibility, Design, and Study Grant may be provided on approved applications for 50% of the eligible cost of the improvements to a maximum of \$2,000, or the total value of eligible costs related to the project, whichever is less.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible, the general eligibility criteria set out in Section 5.2 of this CIP apply. Properties and uses must be eligible in accordance with the table on page 5-3 of this CIP.

Eligible Projects and Costs

The following types of plans or studies will be eligible for the feasibility, design and study grant:

- Concept plans
- Site plan drawings;
- Feasibility studies;
- Environmental studies;
- Structural analyses;
- Evaluation of existing and proposed mechanical, electrical and other building systems;
- Traffic Impact Assessments;
- Market analyses;
- Business plans; and
- Any other study or plan as approved.

The plan or study must provide new information about the feasibility and costing of an eligible use, or provide details in support of a new business or development.

Payment

The grant will be provided upon successful completion of the approved project, study, or design.

Subject to the availability of resources, the County of Elgin may provide a grant to the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] for up to 100% of the cost of implementing the financial incentives identified by this CIP for this program.

Applicants receiving the Feasibility, Design and Study Grant may be eligible for additional incentive programs offered through this Plan (with the exception of the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant for Major Projects); however, the total combined value of grants in any given year shall not exceed \$15,000 per property, or the total value of eligible costs related to the project, whichever is less.

5.10 Planning Application and Building Permit Fee Grant

Purpose and Anticipated Benefits

The Planning Application and Building Permit Fee Grant may be available to eligible property areas and tenants (with consent from the owner) to provide a grant equal to a portion of the fees required for planning applications or building permits in relation to an improvement project. This program is intended to reduce the costs of making improvements to properties by assisting with the planning and building permit fees that may be incurred in association with an improvement.

Value of Rebate

Where a proposed project satisfies the eligibility requirements, a Planning Application and Building Permit Fee Grant may be provided on approved applications that covers 50% of the Municipal and/or County portion of the eligible cost to a maximum of \$2,000, or the total value of eligible costs related to the project, whichever is less.

Program-specific Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for the Planning Application and Building Permit Fee Grant, the following criteria must be met (in addition to the general eligibility criteria set out in Section 5.2 of this CIP):

- a) A property owner or tenant of an eligible property or a property owner or tenant of a residential property that is proposed to be rezoned for eligible uses; and,
- b) Properties and uses must be eligible in accordance with the table on page 5-3 of this CIP.

Eligible Projects and Costs

Eligible costs include the following:

- a) Municipal and County planning application fees, including minor variances, site plans, zoning by-law amendments or official plan amendments; and/or
- b) Municipal building permit fees or change of use permits.

Payment

The grant will be provided upon successful completion of the approved project.

Applicants receiving the Planning Application and Building Permit Fee Rebate may be eligible for additional incentive programs offered through this Plan (with the exception of the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant for Major Projects); however, the total combined value of grants in any given year shall not exceed \$15,000 per property, or the total value of eligible costs related to the project, whichever is less.

5.11 Multiple Properties Supplemental Grant

Purpose and Anticipated Benefits

The Multiple Properties Supplemental Grant is designed to encourage a 'community' approach to improvement projects. Where multiple owners or tenants (with consent of the owner) of eligible properties and uses implement a coordinated approach to improvement projects and capital investments that are eligible under the financial incentive programs of this CIP, each owner or tenant will be eligible for a 'Supplemental Grant'. The 'Supplemental Grant' is offered in addition to the grant(s) that have been approved for a project.

Examples of Projects that may be eligible for the Supplemental Grant:

- Neighbouring property owners coordinate improvements to shared landscaping/parking areas. In addition to the \$2,500 that each owner is granted through the Façade, Signage, and Property Improvement Grant, a supplemental grant is also provided to each owner.

Value of Grant

Where a proposed project satisfies the eligibility requirements, a Multiple Properties Supplemental Grant may be provided on approved applications to each owner or tenant involved in an eligible improvement project, ***in addition to the sum of the grant applied for***. The value of the Supplemental Grant will be equal to 15% of the total value of the grant provided to each owner or tenant, to a maximum of \$1,000 per owner or tenant.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible, the general eligibility criteria set out in Section 5.2 of this CIP apply, as well as any Program-specific Eligibility Criteria that apply to the incentives programs for which the applicant is applying. Properties and uses must be eligible in accordance with the table on page 5-3 of this CIP.

Program-specific Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible, the following criteria must be met:

- a) Owners or tenants (with consent of the owner) of properties that are located in proximity to each other must prepare and submit applications for financial incentives at the same time, indicating that the proposed projects are being coordinated.

b) Applicants who are approved for at least one of the following financial incentives programs will be eligible for the Supplemental Grant:

- Façade, Signage, and Property Improvement Grant;
- Building Improvement/Restoration Grant;
- Building Conversion/Expansion Grant;
- Energy Efficiency Retrofit Grant; and
- Outdoor Art Grant.

Eligible Projects and Costs

Eligible costs include those costs identified under the specific incentive program for which owners and tenants are applying.

Payment

The supplemental grant will be provided upon successful completion of the approved project.

Subject to the availability of resources, the County of Elgin may provide a grant to the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] for up to 100% of the cost of implementing the financial incentives identified by this CIP for this program.

This ‘Supplemental Grant’ may not be combined with the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant for Major Projects.

5.12 Savour Elgin/Elgin Arts Trail Supplemental Grant

Purpose and Anticipated Benefits

The Savour Elgin/Elgin Arts Trail Supplemental Grant is designed to support the growth of the ‘Savour Elgin’ and ‘Elgin Arts Trail’ programs, which promote and enhance culinary tourism and visual arts attractions in Elgin County. Where owners or tenants (with consent of the owner) of eligible properties undertake an improvement project that involves an eligible use that will also meet the criteria of the ‘Savour Elgin’ and ‘Elgin Arts Trail’ programs, the owner or tenant will be eligible for a Supplemental Grant. The Supplemental Grant is offered in addition to any of the grant(s) that have been approved for a project.

Value of Grant

Where a proposed project satisfies the eligibility requirements, a Savour Elgin/Elgin Arts Trail Supplemental Grant may be provided ***in addition to the sum of the grant applied for.*** The value of the Supplemental Grant will be equal to 15% of the total value of the grant provided, to a maximum of \$2,000.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible, the general eligibility criteria set out in Section 5.2 of this CIP apply, as well as any Program-specific Eligibility Criteria that apply to the incentives programs for which the applicant is applying. Properties and uses must be eligible in accordance with the table on page 5-3 of this CIP.

Program-specific Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for the Savour Elgin/Elgin Arts Trail Supplemental Grant, the following criteria must be met:

- a) Owners or tenants (with consent of the owner) must prepare and submit an applications, indicating that the proposed improvement projects involves the establishment of a new eligible use that will also meet the criteria of the 'Savour Elgin' and 'Elgin Arts Trail' programs.
- b) Owners or tenants (with consent of the owner) must also meet the criteria of the 'Savour Elgin' and 'Elgin Arts Trail' programs and be confirmed as a member to these programs.

Eligible Projects and Costs

Eligible costs include those costs identified under the specific incentive program for which owners and tenants are applying.

Examples of Projects that may be eligible for the Supplemental Grant:

- A building tenant converts existing space into a gastro pub. The building is located in a downtown area, along a Tourism Corridor Priority Area. Following project completion, the tenant meets the criteria of the Savour Elgin program and becomes a member. In addition to the \$10,000 that is granted through the Building Conversion/ Expansion Grant, a supplemental grant is provided.

Payment

The supplemental grant will be provided upon successful completion of the approved project and upon successfully becoming 'Savour Elgin' and 'Elgin Arts Trail' programs partners/members.

Subject to the availability of resources, the County of Elgin may provide a grant to the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] for up to 100% of the cost of implementing the financial incentives identified by this CIP for this program.

This 'Supplemental Grant' may not be combined with the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant for Major Projects.

5.13 Financial Incentives Summary Table

A summary table that offers an overview of the details for each of the financial incentive programs is provided on the following page.

[TO BE INSERTED] Elgincentives Community Improvement Plan

September 2015

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Financial Incentive Program	Available in Settlements Sub-Area	Eligible Uses	Available in Agricultural Sub-Area	Eligible Uses	Value of Grant in a Sub-Area	Value of Grant in a Priority Area	May be combined with other incentives
Tax Increment Equivalent Grant for Major Projects	Y	C,M,T,O	Y	A,O	100% of the municipal and/or County portion of the tax increase decreasing by 10% for a period of 5 years.	100% of the municipal and/or County portion of the tax increase for a period of 5 years.	N
Façade, Signage and Property Improvement Grant	Y	C,M,T,O	Y	A,O	Façade: 50% of eligible costs to a max. of \$5,000 (may increase to \$7,500 if criteria are met) Signage: 50% of eligible costs to a max. of \$2,500 (may increase to \$5,000 if criteria are met) Property: 50% of eligible costs to a max. of \$2,500	Façade: 50% of eligible costs to a max. of \$10,000 Signage: 50% of eligible costs to a max. of \$7,500 Property: 50% of eligible costs to a max. of \$5,000	Y *
Building Improvement/Restoration Grant	Y	C,M,T,O	Y	A,O	50% of eligible costs to a max. of \$8,000	50% of eligible costs to a max. of \$10,000	Y *
Building Conversion/Expansion Grant	Y	C,M,T,O	Y	A,O	\$15 per square foot of converted or expanded floor space, to a maximum of \$8,000	Maximum value of the grant may increase to \$10,000	Y *
Energy Efficiency Retrofit Grant	Y	C,M,T,O	Y	A,O	25% of the retrofit costs to a maximum of \$7,500	Maximum value of the grant may increase to \$10,000	Y *
Outdoor Art Grant	Y – Must also be in Priority Area	C,M,T,O	Y	A,O	N/A	50% of the eligible cost of the improvements to a maximum of \$3,000	Y *
Feasibility, Design, and Study Grant	Y	C,M,T,O	Y	A,O	50% of the eligible cost of the improvements to a maximum of \$2,000	Same	Y *
Application and Permit Fee Grant	Y	C,M,T,O	Y	A,O	50% of the municipal and/or County portion of the eligible cost to a maximum of \$2,000	Same	Y *
Multiple Property Owner Supplemental Grant	Y	C,M,T,O	Y	A,O	Provided in addition to grants identified above, if criteria are met. 15% of the total value of the grant provided to each owner or tenant, to a maximum of \$1,000 per owner or tenant.		Y *
Savour Elgin/Elgin Arts Trails Supplemental Grant	Y	C,M,T,O	Y	A,O	Provided in addition to grants identified above, if criteria are met. 15% of the total value of the grant provided to each owner or tenant, to a maximum of \$2,000 per owner or tenant.		Y *

Y – Yes

N – No

C – Commercial Uses

M – Mixed Uses

T – Tourism-oriented commercial/service

O – Outdoor recreation

A – Secondary and agriculture-related uses related to existing farm operations

N/A – Not available

* - Total value of all grants may not equal more than \$15,000



Administration 6

6.0 Administration

The Elgincentives CIP will be administered by the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] in partnership with Elgin County. The following Section provides a framework for administering financial incentive programs.

6.1 Term of the CIP

It is anticipated that the Elgincentives CIP will be implemented over a 10-year period ending December 31, 2025. Should it be determined that the term is to be extended or reduced, an amendment to this CIP will be required.

6.2 Administrative Body

The Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] will administer this CIP via a County Committee. Specifically, an '**Elgincentives Implementation Committee**' has been established to:

- a) Receive and review all applications for financial incentives; and
- b) Make a decision on whether an application should be approved or refused, based on the criteria outlined in this Plan.

The 'Elgincentives Implementation Committee' will consist of senior staff from the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED], in addition to staff from Elgin County.

Applications will be regarded on a first-come, first-served basis, and evaluated based on criteria set out by the 'Elgincentives Implementation Committee'.

Actual payment of financial incentives (both the local and County funded portions) to an approved applicant will be the responsibility of the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED]. Funding from Elgin County will be provided to the Municipality and not directly to an approved applicant.

The 'Elgincentives Implementation Committee' will also be responsible for:

- c) Marketing the Elgincentives CIP in accordance with the Marketing Strategy outlined in Section 7.0 of this CIP; and
- d) Monitoring the results of the Elgincentives CIP, and specifically the financial incentive programs, in accordance with the Monitoring Strategy outlined in Section 8.0 of this CIP.

6.3 Funding of Financial Incentives

Any number of the financial incentives identified in this Plan may be put into effect during the term of the CIP, subject to the availability of funds and other resources. Annually, the 'Elgincentives Implementation Committee' will report to the local Council of [TO BE INSERTED] and Elgin County Council with respect to financial incentives that will be in effect within the Community Improvement Project Area for that year.

The incentive programs will be funded by the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] in partnership with Elgin County. As part of the annual budgeting exercise, both the local Council of the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] and Elgin County Council will identify a community improvement budget for financial incentives that is to be put into effect by each level of government for that year, if any.

During the annual budgeting exercise, the Councils of [TO BE INSERTED] and Elgin County will also identify the extent to which they will participate in the various financial incentives

that have been put into effect for that year, if any. Subject to the availability of resources, up to 100% of the grant programs may be funded by Elgin County, with the exception of the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant (for Major Projects) and Application and Permit Fees Rebate. For these programs, the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] and County Councils will only have the option of funding their portion of the property tax increase or planning application/building permit fees.

Since applications will be regarded on a first come first served basis and evaluated on the criteria set out by the 'Elgincentives Implementation Committee', the provision of any incentive shall be to the limit of the available funding for that year. To the extent possible the Committee shall endeavour to distribute grants throughout the County for eligible projects. Once the annual budgets have been expended, grants will no longer be provided until the following year.

The annual budget for financial incentives will not fund tax program offered by this Plan, since this program does not represent an "out of pocket" expense. Funding for this incentive will be provided as a reimbursement in the year following payment to the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] or Elgin County, or as a cancellation, and therefore does not require funding.

Actual payment of all incentives (both the local and County funded portions) to an approved applicant will be the responsibility of the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED]. Funding from Elgin County will be provided to the Municipality

of [TO BE INSERTED] and not directly to an approved applicant.

Finally, it is recognized that other community improvement plans may exist in the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] or may be adopted in the future. The [TO BE INSERTED] Elgincentives CIP is separate from any other CIP adopted by Municipal Council. In terms of the funding of programs, Elgin County will only participate in the financial incentive programs contained in this CIP.

6.4 Application Process

The following is a summary of the process for the submission, evaluation, and approval of Financial Incentive Program applications:

- a) Applications must be submitted in accordance with the requirements outlined in Section 6.4;
- b) The 'Elgincentives Implementation Committee' will evaluate all applications and supporting materials in a timely manner. Applicants will be notified if their submission is incomplete;
- c) Based on the evaluation of complete applications, a decision will be made by the 'Elgincentives Implementation Committee' with respect to the approval or refusal of an application;
- d) For applications that are approved, a Financial Assistance Agreement will be prepared and executed by the 'Elgincentives Implementation Committee' and signed by the property owner or tenant (with consent of the owner);
- e) If an application is not approved by the 'Elgincentives Implementation Committee', the applicant will be provided an opportunity to appeal the decision to the Council of the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED]. In such cases, Municipal Council will reconsider the application. If Municipal Council approves the application, the 'Elgincentives Implementation Committee' will execute the financial incentive program agreement. An applicant shall not have the option to appeal their application to Council if the reason for refusal related to lack of funding availability. In the event that an application is refused due to lack of funding availability, the applicant may resubmit their application once funding becomes available. However, in no case shall funding be provided retroactively for a completed project;
- f) Any program commitments may be cancelled if work does not commence within six months of approval of an application, or if a project is not undertaken or completed in accordance with the Financial Assistance Agreement;
- g) When projects are completed, a statement with supporting invoices shall be submitted to the 'Elgincentives Implementation Committee'. Following this, the work will be inspected by the 'Elgincentives Implementation Committee' and, if approved, notice of completion will be issued and the financial assistance will be initiated;
- h) Upon completion of a community improvement project, the 'Elgincentives Implementation Committee' reserves the

right to inspect any properties/buildings, or to audit final costs at the owner's expense;

- i) Funding approval will lapse if a notice of completion is not issued within twelve months of the date of execution of the Financial Assistance Agreement;
- j) The 'Elgincentives Implementation Committee' may grant an extension for community improvement works following receipt of a written request by the owner setting out the reasons for the extension and providing a new date of completion; and
- k) Should the applicant fall into default of any of the requirements of the incentive program or other requirements established by the 'Elgincentives Implementation Committee', incentives may be delayed, reduced, or cancelled. Applicants may be required to repay benefits.

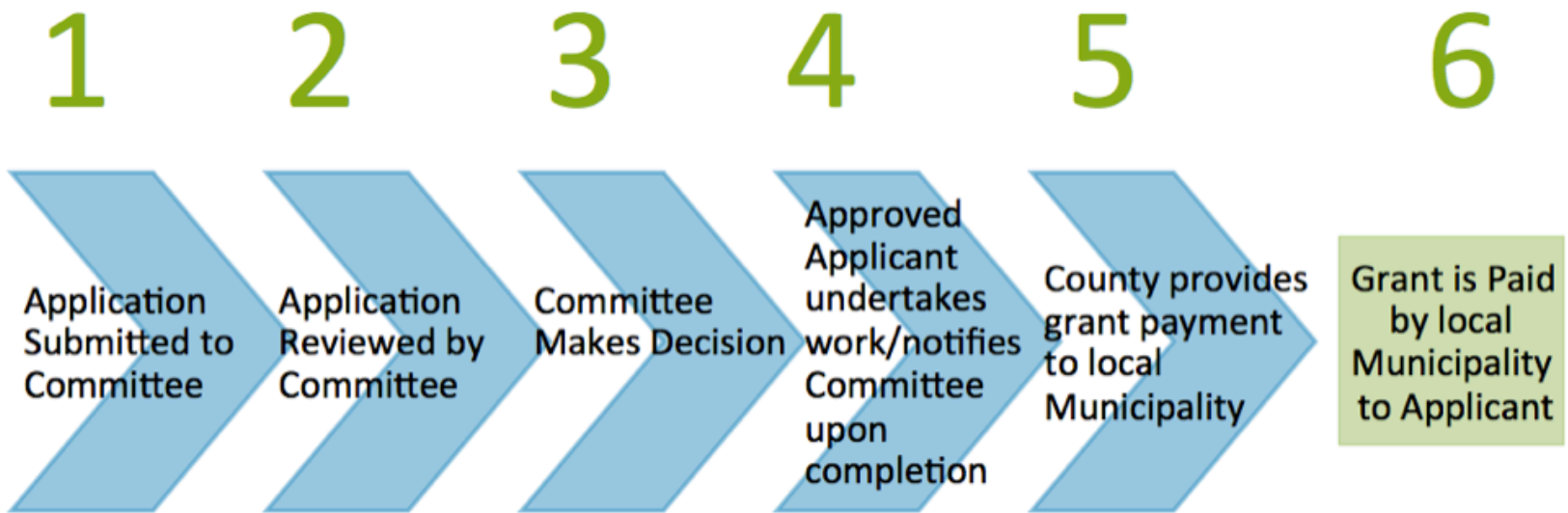
The figure provided on the following page summarizes the key steps of the application and review process.

6.5 Application Requirements

Applications for financial incentives offered through this Plan must include:

- a) Three (3) copies of the completed application form;
- b) Three (3) copies of all supporting documentation, as determined by the 'Elgincentives Implementation Committee', which may include (but is not limited to):
 - i) Specifications of the proposed project, including good quality plans, drawing, and studies;
 - ii) Good quality photographs of the existing building condition;
 - iii) Past/historical photographs and/or drawings;
- iv) Two (2) cost estimates for eligible work provided by licensed contractors;
- v) All sources of additional funding/incentives for eligible work;
- vi) A statement with respect to how the proposed project meets the goals and objectives of the CIP; and
- vii) Any additional requirements as determined by the Committee.

Key steps of the Elgincentives CIP Application and Review Process:





Marketing Strategy

7

7.0 Marketing Strategy

The success of the [TO BE INSERTED] Elgincentives CIP will depend to a large extent on how well it is promoted to target markets/potential applicants. A general strategy is outlined in this section that provides guidance for marketing.

7.1 Target Markets

Marketing efforts for the Elgincentives CIP will be undertaken by the 'Elgincentives Implementation Committee'. Efforts will focus on the potential target markets listed below.

a) **Primary target markets:**

- i. Property owners and operating businesses located within the various geographic specific Sub-Areas of the Community Improvement Project Area to ensure that there is awareness of the programs and opportunities of the CIP; and
- ii. Commercial and industrial realtors, to ensure that part of the 'marketing pitch' for any properties offered for sale in the Community Improvement Project Area includes the availability of incentives.

b) **Secondary target markets:**

- i. The broader business community and potential investors (located both within and outside of Elgin County) to which economic development marketing materials are generally directed, to promote the proactive economic development stance of this CIP.
- ii. The general public.

Another key communication initiative will be to the Councils of [TO BE INSERTED] and Elgin County, in the form of annual reports on the take-up of CIP programs, and any changes or revisions that are recommended. This is discussed further in Section 9.0.

7.2 Key Messages

The specific communications messages to be conveyed to each of these market segments are outlined below:

Target Market	Communications / Marketing Messages
Property owners and business managers in the various CIP Sub-Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide direction on how to obtain information on available incentive programs, including program guides and application forms. • Provide information about the application process. • Emphasize the significant benefits that may be available to them from participating in the program, including financial assistance.
Farm Operators and Agribusiness (as applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight the significant leverage effect of the financial incentive programs (i.e., potential to leverage/multiply the value investments).
Tourism Businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasize the potential for the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] and Elgin County to help achieve strategic business development goals. • Share success stories as a result of the CIP (i.e., successful projects and before/after pictures).
Realtors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate that the CIP enhances the attractiveness of properties in Community Improvement Project Area.

Target Market	Communications / Marketing Messages
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasize that they are being 'recruited' to help spread the word about CIP possibilities. • Share success stories as a result of the CIP (i.e., successful projects and before/after pictures).
Business associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasize that they are being 'recruited' to help spread the word about CIP possibilities. • Highlight that the CIP will benefit their members. • Share success stories as a result of the CIP (i.e., successful projects and before/after pictures).
Potential investors in community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight that the CIP reinforces the pro-active and pro-development stance of the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] and Elgin County.
General public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share success stories as a result of the CIP (i.e., successful projects and before/after pictures).
Local and County Councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on implementation, progress on achieving the CIP's objectives and any changes / revisions proposed for the program. • Share success stories as a result of the CIP (i.e., successful projects and before/after pictures).

7.3 Marketing and Communications Materials

Marketing and communications materials will be developed and maintained to promote the CIP and the related opportunities. Examples are listed below.

- a) A dedicated web site (www.elgincentives.ca) could be developed to provide information on the CIP, such as:
 - i. Goals and Objectives;
 - ii. Financial Incentive Programs;
 - iii. Community Improvement Project Area/Sub-Areas;
 - iv. Application process and requirements;
 - v. How to obtain additional information.

A link to this website could be provided on the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] website.

- b) Newsletters/information packages could be sent directly to both property-owners and tenant businesses in the CIPA sub-areas to advertise the CIP and provide additional information.
- c) Presentations could be made to property-owners, tenant businesses, business associations, and members of the public by the 'Elgincentives Implementation Committee' to communicate the opportunities available through the CIP.

- d) Notification ads could be published in local newspapers to announce the CIP programs and direct interested parties to the website containing information.
- e) An information sheet could be created and sent to agricultural organizations active in the County, to send in turn to their members (e.g. Elgin Federation of Agriculture, Environmental Farm Plan local rep; Farm Safety Council; Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association, Elgin; NFU Elgin Local; agricultural and horticultural societies; etc.);
- f) A public service radio ad and/or YouTube video could be developed to introduce the Elgincentives CIP to a wider, more general audience and to create excitement/buzz about the CIP.

The following table shows the interrelationship between these target markets and communications materials.

Communications Vehicle	Property Owners Business Managers Farm Operators and Agribusiness	Tourism Businesses	Realtors	Local Business Associations	Economic Development Audience	General Public Councils
Web site information	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Letter / information brochure / email	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tailored presentations to business community	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Newspaper ad	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
General information meeting	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Public service radio ads	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Council presentations/ report	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Any of the activities identified may be undertaken as part of the initial launch of the Elgincentives CIP. In addition, over the 10-year implementation period, activities will be undertaken on an on-going basis to regenerate excitement and awareness. 'Reminder' letters or email notifications of the program and its operation may be provided to target markets.

Finally, in addition to the above marketing and communications efforts, specific target businesses and properties where improvements would be most desirable within [TO BE INSERTED] may be identified on an annual basis. Short visits may be arranged with business owners/manager and/or landowners, in order to ensure awareness of CIP and encourage take-up of incentives.



Monitoring Strategy



8.0 Monitoring Strategy

The following provides a strategy for the annual monitoring of the results of the [TO BE INSERTED] Elgincincentives CIP, and specifically the uptake and success of financial incentive programs.

8.1 Purpose

The purpose of the following monitoring strategy is to:

- a) Track funds provided by the CIP to owners and tenants of land located within the community improvement project area;
- b) Track contributions from the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] and Elgin County toward incentive program funding;

- c) Evaluate whether the programs are achieving the overall goals and objectives of the CIP;
- d) Determine whether program adjustments are required; and
- e) Provide the basis for reporting the results of the [TO BE INSERTED] Elgincincentives CIP, and specifically the uptake and success of financial incentive programs, to the Councils of the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] and the County of Elgin.

8.2 Frequency

Collection of data related to financial incentive applications and proposed/completed projects should be on-going during the implementation of this Plan. An evaluation of the measures outlined in Section 9.3 should be completed on an annual basis.

Aggregate targets for accomplishments should be set out over a 5-year period, recognizing that awareness and momentum of the CIP will need to build over time and that any individual year may be up or down relative to the average because of general economic circumstances or specific individual business situations. At the end of the 5-year period, targets should be evaluated and revised for the next 5-year target period (i.e. 2021 – 2025).

8.3 Measures

Suggested monitoring and evaluation measures for the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] Elgincentives CIP are set out in the following table. For each of the following objectives of the overall County-wide Community Improvement framework, specific measurable (and where possible, quantified) measures are suggested.

Goals	Objectives	Recommended Measure	Suggested Target by Year 5
A) To stimulate economic growth and diversification.	1) To encourage the expansion of the agribusiness sector through new and expanded value-added/agricultural related enterprises.	- number of agribusiness operations applying for assistance, and being approved	- aim for 2-3 new establishments per year on average
	2) To encourage the expansion of business activity for existing commercial businesses in the downtown areas/mainstreets of settlement areas.	- number of existing businesses supported in expansion activity	- target 5 business expansions per year = 25 over the period that have been partially assisted through the CIP program
	3) To increase the number of business start-ups.	- number of business start-ups - sustainability of business after 2 nd year of operation	- aim for 1-2 new establishments per year on average
	4) To increase tourism in the County.	- this will be contextual data only, as there is nothing the County can do through the CIP programs to directly affect this measure - trends in tourism can be measured partially through the RTO data ¹ - increases in tourism can be inferred to have some associated benefit from increased attractiveness in terms of new attractions (e.g. agri-tourism) new support facilities (more accommodation) and beautification of downtowns, lakeshore areas, key travelled corridors, etc.)	

¹ Regional Tourism Organization (RTO) 1, which covers Southwestern Ontario (Elgin; Windsor-Essex; Chatham-Kent; Haldimand/Norfolk; Sarnia/Lambton; London/Middlesex; and Oxford).

Goals	Objectives	Recommended Measure	Suggested Target by Year 5
	5) To increase the number of tourist accommodation establishments.	- number of establishments; number of rooms	- aim for the expansion of 1 accommodation establishment per year on average
	6) To increase the number of creative economy businesses in the County.	- number of establishments defined as being in the creative economy (as per the County's definition) ²	- aim for 1-2 new establishments per year on average
	7) To increase employment opportunities for local residents.	- annual survey of all businesses assisted throughout the year through the CIP program, to determine how many new job positions have been created	costs of the CIP program relative to the new jobs created should demonstrate a positive ROI relative to the wages and salaries associated with the new jobs ³
B) To enhance the already high quality of place for residents and visitors.	1) To improve the appearance of major entry points and tourism corridors.	- define the key entry points and corridors - demonstrate improvements visually through 'before' and 'after' documentation	- target at least one area for improvement each year - at least 5 areas will have been improved at the end of the 5-year period
	2) To improve the appearance and utilization of the lakeshore.	- as above	- as above
	3) To improve the appearance of the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] and foster civic pride through improvements to private properties.	- as above	- as above
C) To improve the stability and sustainability of the tax base.	1) To reduce the number of vacant commercial building spaces in the downtown areas/mainstreets of settlement areas.	- calculate the current vacancy rate in each commercial CIP area (in terms of floor space) - determine change in vacancy rate on a year-to-year basis	- target a significant improvement in vacancy rate in each CIP area

² see: <http://www.elgintourist.com/pbn/DirectoryListing/exhibithall/Exhibithall.aspx#>

³ In other words, the total wages and salaries generated by new job positions should be considerably greater than the total amount of money spent by the County and the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] in assisting the business – likely on the order of a 3 times multiple or more.

Goals	Objectives	Recommended Measure	Suggested Target by Year 5
	2) To increase the assessment base of properties in the downtown areas/mainstreets of settlement areas, and the agricultural area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- calculate the current assessment base for each CIP area- determine change in assessment base each year⁴	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- change in the 'normal' taxes generated from the CIP area assessment base should be equal to or greater than the amount of the CIP incentive (for both the local municipality as well as the County) – note as well that this increased value to the local municipality and the County is annualized relative to the shorter-term timeframe for the CIP incentive.

⁴ Note that this will be separate from the tax revenue gained from the property – especially if there is a tax increment financing component to the incentive. The assessed value will measure the true long-term increase in value.

8.4 Reporting

An annual report should be prepared to highlight the successes and achievements of this CIP. The report will be presented to local and County Councils for consideration. The report may recommend adjustments/amendments to the Plan, as discussed below.

8.5 Adjusting/Amending the CIP

Based on the results of monitoring and evaluation efforts, adjustments to this CIP may be required. The following summarizes when Plan amendments will and will not be required:

- a) An amendment to the [TO BE INSERTED] Elgincentives CIP will not be required in order to:
 - i. Reduce funding levels for the financial incentive programs (i.e., the local Municipal portion and/or the County portion); or
 - ii. Discontinue or cancel any of the programs identified.

- b) An amendment to the [TO BE INSERTED] Elgincentives CIP will be required in order to:
 - i. Extend the implementation period of the CIP;
 - ii. Add any new financial incentive programs or increase funding levels for existing financial incentive programs;
 - iii. Modify the eligibility criteria related to financial incentive programs offered by this Plan; and
 - iv. Modify or expand the geographic area (i.e., the Community Improvement Project Area) to which financial incentive programs apply.

Amendments to this CIP will be passed by the local Council of the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] under the Planning Act. Also in accordance with the Planning act, the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED] will be required to pre-consult with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on any amendments to this CIP.



GLOSSARY

Glossary

Agricultural Sub-Area means lands that are designated Agriculture by the County Official Plan as identified on Schedule A of this CIP. A set of financial incentive programs applies to this Sub-Area.

County means the Corporation of Elgin County.

Elgincentives Implementation Committee means the designated committee appointed to review applications for financial incentives and make decisions on financial incentives in accordance with the policies of this Plan.

Eligible costs means costs related to environmental site assessment, environmental remediation, development, redevelopment, construction and reconstruction of lands and buildings for rehabilitation purposes or for the provision of energy efficient uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements or facilities.

Mixed-use means any combination of commercial uses (retail, personal services, restaurants, etc.), offices, institutional uses and/or residential uses, provided that there are commercial uses at grade.

Municipality means the Corporation of the Municipality of [TO BE INSERTED].

Priority Area means key areas where local investment will have the greatest economic benefit/impact and should therefore be prioritized with respect to improvement projects and the provision of financial incentives. Priority Areas are shown on Schedule A of this CIP.

Settlements Sub-Area means the downtowns/main street areas and ports as identified on Schedule A of this CIP. A set of financial incentive programs applies to this Sub-Area.

Sub-Area means key areas of local economic activity where the need for improvement is the greatest and where investment will result in significant economic development benefits. Sub-Areas are shown on Schedule A of this CIP.

Tax Increment means an increase in taxes, or which is calculated by subtracting the Municipal or County portion of property taxes before assessment from the Municipal or County portion of property taxes after reassessment. The Municipality or County may provide any portion of the increment as a grant for any length of time their Council deems is appropriate. The tax increment does not include any increase/decrease in Municipal or County taxes due to a general tax increase/decrease or a change in assessment for any other reason.



SCHEDULES



APPENDIX

APPENDIX B: The Community Improvement Background and Options Memo

MEMORANDUM

To: Alan Smith, General Manager, Economic Development, Elgin County

Copy: Steve Evans, Manager of Planning, Elgin County
Kate Burns, Business Development Coordinator, Elgin County

From: Nancy Reid, Meridian Planning and Jon Linton, TCI Management Consultants

Date: December 8, 2014 (revised January 8, 2015)

Re: **ELGIN COUNTY-WIDE COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN
PROJECT: PHASE ONE BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS MEMO**

.....

1.0 PURPOSE OF THIS MEMO

In October 2014, Elgin County retained Meridian Planning Consultants and TCI Management Consultants to assist with the preparation of a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) framework, which would be strongly aligned with the County's economic development goals. **The purpose of the project is to establish a County-led program for community improvement that is be supported by Elgin's 7 local municipalities and administered by senior staff at the County.**

To-date, County staff and the project consulting team have completed Phase One of the CIP project. The purpose of Phase One has been to undertake the necessary review of background materials, additional independent research, and consultation with the local municipalities and community stakeholders, in order to determine the opportunities and needs for a County-wide CIP framework.

The purpose of this Memo is document the results of Phase One of the CIP project by:

1. Providing an overview of the approach, process, and legislative/policy context for preparing a County-wide CIP framework framework in Elgin;
2. Presenting the findings of tasks completed as part of Phase One of the project, including an opportunities and needs assessment, public consultation, and case study investigations;
3. Determining where community improvement tools could apply in order to broadly promote and support County-wide economic development; and,
4. Introducing options for consideration in terms of the key elements of a County-wide CIP framework in Elgin.

2.0 STUDY OVERVIEW

2.1 What is a Community Improvement Plan (CIP)?

A Community Improvement Plan is a municipal planning tool permitted by the Ontario *Planning Act*. Many municipalities across Ontario have prepared CIPs in order to achieve important community goals, such as:

- Facilitating and coordinating the transition of neighbourhoods and areas;
- Stimulating economic growth and development;
- Assisting businesses/ property owners with repair, rehabilitation, and redevelopment projects; and,
- Raising awareness of local needs and priorities.

Simply put, a Community Improvement Plan is a planning document that sets out tools and strategies for improving the built, economic, and social environment in defined areas of a municipality.

Normally, under Section 106 of the Municipal Act, municipalities are prohibited from directly or indirectly assisting local businesses by giving or lending money. However, having a Community Improvement Plan in place allows the municipality to assist financially with improvements to private properties. Financial assistance may be available through incentive-based programs, such as grants and loans; reductions (or the cancellation of) certain fees required by the municipality; and tax assistance.

Typically, a CIP includes the following key elements:

- **Goals and Objectives**, which set out specifically what the CIP will aim to achieve;
- **A Community Improvement Project Area**, which designates the area to which the CIP will apply;
- **County-led Programs and Initiatives**, which the County may undertake to demonstrate leadership and an overall commitment to improving Elgin;
- **Financial Incentive Programs**, which may be provided to local business and land owners to assist with improvements to public property;
- **A Marketing Plan**, which helps the County “get the word out” about the CIP;
- **A Monitoring Plan**, which helps measure the extent to which the CIP is a success; and
- **An Implementation Plan**, which will set out a process for receiving and reviewing applications for financial incentives from private landowners.



2.2 Elgin's Approach to a County-wide CIP Framework

Although there is a required process for preparing Community Improvement Plans (outlined in Section 3.0 of this memo), Municipalities have a great deal of flexibility when it comes to identifying where a CIP will apply. Municipalities also have flexibility in terms identifying the specific issues to be addressed through a CIP with respect to the local built, economic, and social environment. Given this flexibility, the County has determined the following with respect to its overall approach to community improvement planning in Elgin:

1. Since the County is an upper-tier municipality with a coordinating role over seven distinctive and unique lower-tier municipalities, there is an opportunity to look comprehensively at implementing Planning Act tools throughout Elgin as a whole, rather than focusing in the needs of one or two specific geographic areas; and,
2. Over the past several years, Elgin County has invested a significant amount of energy into developing plans, strategies, and initiatives that promote Elgin's economic strengths and overall Quality of Place, and there is now an opportunity to align a CIP framework with these broader economic development goals.

On this basis, Elgin's Community Improvement Plan framework is intended to be strategic and flexible, and primarily focused on improving and diversifying the economic base and assisting broadly with County-wide economic development.

Further, the County has determined that the CIP framework should have a specific focus on supporting economic activity in the following areas:

- a) Downtowns/main street areas;
- b) Agri-businesses/the agricultural sector; and,
- c) The ports/waterfront areas.

2.3 Work Program

The County is undertaking the Community Improvement Plan project, with assistance from the consulting team, in accordance with the following work plan:



3.0 LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY

3.1 The Planning Act

The *Planning Act* is the primary piece of legislation that provides for the preparation of community improvement plans. As described in greater detail below, the Planning Act sets out:

1. Types of projects/activities/works that are considered ‘community improvement’;
2. A process by which a municipality can identify a ‘community improvement project area’ and prepare a ‘community improvement plan’;
3. Tools that can be implemented once a ‘community improvement plan’ is prepared; and,
4. Eligible costs for which a municipality can provide incentives.

Community Improvement

Section 28(1) of the *Planning Act* defines ‘community improvement’ as *“the planning or replanning, design or redesign, resubdivision, clearance, development or redevelopment, construction, reconstruction and rehabilitation, improvement of energy efficiency, or any of them, of a Community Improvement Project Area, and the provision of such residential, commercial, industrial, public, recreational, institutional, religious, charitable or other uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements or facilities, or spaces therefore, as may be appropriate or necessary”*.

Section 28(2) states that where there is an official plan in effect in a local Municipality or in a prescribed upper-tier Municipality that contains provisions relating to ‘community improvement’ in the Municipality, the Council may, by By-law, designate the whole or any part of an area covered by such an official plan as a ‘community improvement project area’.

Community Improvement Project Areas

Section 28(1) of the *Planning Act* defines the term ‘community improvement project area’ as *“a Municipality or an area within a Municipality, the Community Improvement of which in the opinion of the Council is desirable because of age, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement, unsuitability of buildings or for any other environmental, social or community economic development reason”*.

Community Improvement Plan

Section 28(4) of the *Planning Act* states that once a ‘community improvement project area’ has been designated by By-law, *“the Council may provide for the preparation of a plan suitable for adoption as a Community Improvement Plan for the Community Improvement Project Area”*.

Tools

The Municipality may then prepare and use a ‘community improvement plan’ to:

- Acquire, hold, clear, grade or otherwise prepare land (Section 28(3));
- Construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on land acquired or held by the Municipality (Section 28(6));
- Sell, lease or dispose of any land and buildings acquired or held by the Municipality (Section 28(6)); and,
- Make grants or loans to owners and tenants of land and buildings within the community improvement project area to pay for the whole or any part of ‘eligible costs’ related to community improvement (Section 28(7)).

Eligible Costs

‘Eligible costs’ are specified in Section 28 (7.1) of the Planning Act, and include costs related to *“environmental site assessment, environmental remediation, development, redevelopment, construction and reconstruction of lands and buildings for rehabilitation purposes or for the provision of energy efficient uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements or facilities.”*

Finally, Section 28 (7.3) states that the total of the grants and loans that is provided in respect of the lands and buildings shall not exceed the eligible cost of the community improvement project with respect to those lands and buildings.

Upper-tier Participation

As mentioned, Section 28(2) of the Planning Act states that only a ***prescribed upper-tier Municipality***¹ may designate a ‘community improvement project area’ for the purpose of preparing and implementing a ‘community improvement plan’. Further, Section 28 (4.0.1) of the *Planning Act* states *“the community improvement plan of an upper-tier municipality may deal only with prescribed matters.”* The prescribed matters are outlined in Ontario Regulation 550/06, as follows:

- Infrastructure within the upper-tier jurisdiction;
- Land and buildings with and adjacent to existing or planned transit corridors with potential for higher density mixed-use development and redevelopment; and
- Affordable housing.

That said, an upper-tier municipality has the ability to contribute financially to CIP programs adopted by the local municipalities. Section 28 (7.2) of the Planning Act states that *“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 purpose of carrying out a community improvement plan 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*

¹ Elgin County is not a prescribed upper-tier municipality in accordance with this Section of the Planning Act.

municipality making the grant or loan contains provisions relating to the making of such grants or loans.” This means that Elgin County can participate financially in a CIP adopted by one or more of its local municipalities, subject to having required Official Plan policies in place (which is the case, as discussed in Section 4.3 of this memo).

On this basis, community improvement planning has evolved in recent years and has become much more innovative and comprehensive than in the past. ***Some upper-tier municipalities in Ontario have relied on Section 28 (7.2) of the Planning Act in order to develop and implement County or Regionally-led CIPs.*** In these cases, the following approach has been undertaken:

- 1) An upper-tier Community Improvement Plan is developed and endorsed by County or Regional Council;
- 2) The CIP is enacted through adoption by a lower-tier municipality’s Council; and
- 3) An upper-tier municipality participates by making grants and loans in accordance with the CIP programs.

In summary, an upper tier municipality has the authority to create and implement CIPs in three areas: (1) infrastructure for which it is responsible; (2) property improvements for higher densities in mixed-use developments and redevelopments in areas abutting transportation corridors; and (3) affordable housing. A CIP addressing any other community improvement needs or issues may only be prepared and implemented by lower-tier municipalities.

This is discussed further as a CIP best practice (in Section 5.0 of this memo) and as a possible approach for Elgin’s County-wide CIP framework (in Section 7.0).

3.2 Additional Legislative Tools

Outside of Section 28, municipalities also use provisions from Section 69 of the Planning Act (related to establishing tariffs of fees in respect to planning and building) as part of community improvement plans². Under Section 69(2), Municipalities are permitted to reduce the amount of, or waive entirely, the requirement for the payment of a fee in respect of an application where the Council, planning board or committee is satisfied that it would be unreasonable to require payment.

In addition to the range of community improvement tools established by the *Planning Act*, Section 5 of the *Development Charges Act* allows a Municipality (through its development charge by-law) to provide for full or partial development charge exemptions for certain types of development. This tool is often incorporated into municipal CIPs³.

² However, it is noted that a Community Improvement Plan is not required as a basis for implementing this tool.

³ Again, a Community Improvement Plan is not required as a basis for implementing this tool.

4.0 PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

4.1 2014 Provincial Policy Statement

As a key part of Ontario's policy-led planning system, the 2014 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) provides direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development and sets the foundation for regulating the development and use of land. There are a number of PPS policies that support the County's goals and approach for community improvement, and present specific opportunities for a County-wide CIP framework that is aimed at improving local economic development. These policies are summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1: PPS Policies and their Support/Implications for a CIP Framework in Elgin

PPS Policy	Comments
<p>1.7.1 Long-term economic prosperity should be supported by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) promoting opportunities for economic development and community investment-readiness; c) maintaining and, where possible, enhancing the vitality and viability of downtowns and mainstreets; g) providing opportunities for sustainable tourism development; h) providing opportunities to support local food, and promoting the sustainability of agri-food and agri-product businesses by protecting agricultural resources, and minimizing land use conflicts; i) promoting energy conservation and providing opportunities for development of renewable energy systems and alternative energy systems, including district energy; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egin's County-wide approach to community improvement focuses broadly on facilitating economic growth and diversification, enhancing downtowns/ mainstreet areas/ the ports/ waterfront areas, and supporting agri-businesses/ the agricultural sector. These overall goals are supported to a great extent by Policy 1.7.1 of the PPS.
<p>1.1.3.1 Settlement areas shall be the focus of growth and development, and their vitality and regeneration shall be promoted.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PPS supports initiatives that promote the economic health and regeneration of settlement areas, such as a Community Improvement Plan. • There are multiple settlement areas throughout the County with a large number of downtowns, mainstreets, and ports, which will be the focus of the CIP framework.
<p>1.1.4.1 Healthy, integrated and viable rural areas should be supported by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) building upon rural character, and leveraging rural amenities and assets; f) promoting diversification of the economic base and employment opportunities through goods and services, including value-added products and the sustainable management or use of resources; g) providing opportunities for sustainable and diversified tourism, including leveraging historical, cultural, and natural assets; i) providing opportunities for economic activities in prime agricultural areas, in accordance with policy 2.3. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an opportunity for the County's CIP framework to promote and encourage regeneration and redevelopment within agricultural areas. • The PPS supports initiatives that promote diversification of the rural economic base, provide opportunities for tourism, and encourage value-added economic activities in prime agricultural areas.
<p>1.2.1 A coordinated, integrated and comprehensive approach should be used when dealing with planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is support for a comprehensive approach to community improvement

PPS Policy	Comments
<p>matters within municipalities, across lower, single and/or upper-tier municipal boundaries, and with other orders of government, agencies and boards including:</p> <p>b) economic development strategies;</p> <p>1.3.1 Planning authorities shall promote economic development and competitiveness by:</p> <p>b) providing opportunities for a diversified economic base, including maintaining a range and choice of suitable sites for employment uses which support a wide range of economic activities and ancillary uses, and take into account the needs of existing and future businesses;</p>	<p>planning, including the development of a County-wide CIP framework that looks at addressing economic development broadly throughout Elgin.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an opportunity for the CIP framework to promote economic development and competitiveness by encouraging new investment and the development of new, diverse employment uses on lands that are serviced.

4.2 2011-2014 Economic Development Strategy

In 2011, the County implemented an Economic Development Strategy (EDS), with the primary objective to foster or create an environment that supports the growth of the economy and prosperity for local residents. The EDS puts forward a 'Grow Elgin model', which emphasized the importance of the creative rural economy in order to create an enabling environment for the County's key sectors to grow, including:

- Agriculture;
- Tourism; and
- Culture.

The EDS also identified the following four goals in order to continually enable growth and prosperity in Elgin County's creative rural economy:

1. Building Social Capital;
2. Developing Talent and Innovation;
3. Enhancing the Built Environment; and
4. Telling Your Story.

Table 2 below provides a description of each of these goals, as well as an indication of how they are to be achieved through strategic actions that are also set out in the EDS, each of which present specific opportunities for a County-wide CIP framework that is aimed at improving local economic development.

Table 2: Opportunities for a CIP Framework in Elgin Coming out of the County's EDS

EDS Goal	Comments
<p>1. Build Social Capital: Social capital includes social networks of friends, family and business associates that strengthen a community and leave it in a stronger position to resist economic challenges and take advantage of economic opportunities. Social capital in Elgin will assist the County to mobilize and leverage resources and is comprised of 2 objectives. Elgin County will Build Social Capital through enhancing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Civic pride and ownership –with special attention being 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through assisting businesses and property owners with repair, rehabilitation, and redevelopment projects, there is an opportunity for the CIP framework to help enhance civic pride and ownership throughout the County.

EDS Goal	Comments
<p>paid to the agricultural and artistic aspects of the community; and,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Networking –with a focus on business and creative leaders in the community. <p>2. Enhance the Built Environment: The built environment shapes how residents and community members interact with each other and impacts networks, enterprise development and industry attraction. Investigations into the built environment will include gathering places, built and natural heritage and live/work spaces desired by creative cultural businesses. The goal of the built environment for Elgin County has 3 strategic objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully utilize employment lands –including conducting an employment land strategy as well as standardized secondary uses on agricultural land to be inserted in the Official Plan; Protecting our Heritage –to make full use of undesignated heritage buildings and create tours and activities centred on heritage places; and, Creating engaging public places –to generate activity and vitality to public spaces and attract people and business to the places. <p>3. Develop Talent and our Entrepreneurs: The attraction and retention of talent and creative people and enterprises is becoming a new economic reality for rural regions. This goal builds from the findings and recommendations set forth in the Elgin-St. Thomas Labour Force Development Strategic Plan and has 3 objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen linkages to research institutions –focusing on those local institutions with research activities related to Elgin’s agricultural and resource base; Support enterprise development –through a business retention and expansion program and continued support to the business incubator (ICE) and innovation centre in Elgin while developing value added activities in Elgin; and, Engage and reinforce life-long learning –by building connections with youth and skills resources and a needs portal on the economic development website. <p>4. Tell our Story: Storytelling is as much about who is telling the story as it is about the story itself. Leaders spread ideas and make a difference. Stories need to be about challenging the status quo and connecting to people who can make a difference. There are 2 objectives related to storytelling for Elgin County:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focusing and targeting the message –clearly stating the value proposition and creating videos to attract investment and talent; and, Engage leaders –to carry the message to a broader audience and have Elgin top of mind as a place for creative leaders and businesses to settle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is an opportunity for the CIP framework to help promote secondary uses on agricultural land, which are now permitted through the County’s Official Plan. Municipal leadership initiatives could be identified in the CIP framework that would help create engaging public places and attract people to businesses. There is an opportunity for the CIP framework to help support enterprise development through the use of financial incentive programs. By developing a CIP framework the County will send a clear message to the business and development community that it is committed to stimulating economic growth and attract/retaining businesses, and that it has thought strategically and proactively about doing so. There is an opportunity for the CIP framework to help create positive stories about revitalization and business development within the community.

4.3 2012 Elgin County Official Plan

In 2012, Elgin County adopted its first Official Plan (which was prepared by Meridian Planning Consultants), which provides direction and a policy framework for managing growth and land use decisions over the planning period to 2031. The County's Official Plan also provides a framework for coordination and cooperation amongst the local municipalities and the County.

The following goals from Section A3 of the County Official Plan provide general support for Elgin's CIP framework initiative:

1. *To provide opportunities for economic development in a manner that fosters competitiveness and a positive and attractive business environment;*
3. *To protect and enhance the character of existing settlement areas, and to maintain them as diverse, liveable, safe, thriving and attractive communities;*
4. *To protect as much of the County's prime agricultural area as possible and to encourage the development of a broad range of agricultural uses, agriculture related uses and secondary uses to ensure that the agricultural industry can continue to thrive and innovate; and*
6. *To ensure the protection and enhancement of tourism and recreation opportunities (both active and passive) in the many downtown/main street areas and ports throughout the County.*

There are also a number of Official Plan policies that support the County's goals and approach for community improvement, and present opportunities for a County-wide economic development CIP framework. These policies are summarized in Table 3 below.

Table 3: OP Policies and their Support/Implications for a CIP Framework in Elgin

County Official Plan Policy	Comments
<p>A5 ECONOMIC STRATEGY A5.2 DIRECTIONS It is a policy of this Plan that the County and local municipalities endeavour to:</p> <p>a) enhance the profile of the County, its communities, ports and tourism attractions and destinations;</p> <p>b) maintain agriculture as the principal economic activity in the rural areas of the County;</p> <p>c) support opportunities for farmers to protect, diversify and expand their operations through initiatives such as: crop diversification; conservation farming practices; promotion and encouragement of associated food processing and value added technology facilities and encouraging bed and breakfast operations, farm vacation facilities, roadside markets and related activities, provided that they are located in a land use designation that permits the activity and that they do not conflict with agricultural operations;</p> <p>d) promote the County as a destination for tourists in accordance with Section A5.3;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elgin's County-wide approach to community improvement focuses broadly on facilitating economic growth and diversification, enhancing downtowns/ mainstreet areas/ the ports/ waterfront areas, and supporting agri-businesses/ the agricultural sector. These overall goals are supported to a great extent by the economic directions in Section A5.2.

County Official Plan Policy	Comments
<p>C1.5 DOWNTOWN AREAS It is a policy of this Plan that the scale and location of new development in the downtown or main street areas identified in local Official Plans maintain and/or enhance the existing character of these areas. This will be accomplished by encouraging:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the development of diverse, compatible land uses in close proximity to each other; b) the maximum use of existing buildings to accommodate a wide range of uses, with an emphasis on using upper level space for offices, residential uses and other uses; c) the establishment and maintenance of a streetscape that is pedestrian oriented; d) the preservation and enhancement of the cultural and historic features that exist in these areas; e) partnerships and collaboration between local municipalities and service delivery groups such as Business Improvement Areas, Business Associations, Chambers of Commerce and/or Local Heritage Committees; and, f) the physical and aesthetic improvement of these areas through their designation as community improvement plan areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an opportunity for the CIP framework to include programs that will assist in attracting new development/ redevelopment/ revitalization that will maintain the existing character of these areas. • The CIP framework can help encourage the goals/activities identified in policy C1.5. • Policy C1.5 identifies the potential for a CIP framework to assist with physical and aesthetic improvement of the downtown areas.
<p>C2 AGRICULTURAL AREA C2.1 OBJECTIVES It is the objective of this land use designation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) recognize agriculture as the primary activity and land use; e) promote a diverse, innovative and economically strong agricultural industry and associated activities by enhancing their capacity to contribute to the economy of the County; and, f) preserve and promote the agricultural character of the County and its local communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an opportunity for the CIP framework to include programs that will assist in achieving the objectives of the County's Agricultural Area designation.
<p>C2.11 SUPPORTING AGRICULTURE IN ELGIN COUNTY It is a policy of this Plan to encourage all levels of government to develop and implement programs and plans to support and sustain agriculture in Elgin, which may include, among others, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> g) the use of Community Improvement Plans under the Planning Act to promote agriculture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy C2.11 identifies the potential for a CIP framework to assist with the promotion of agriculture.
<p>E5.7 THE PORTS OF ELGIN COUNTY The County will continue to promote and support the viability of the many ports along Lake Erie as important economic resources and locations for tourism and recreation. The County recognizes the potential of the various ports as gateways to the County and components of a broader transportation system. The County encourages the pursuit of appropriate opportunities for the expansion of port facilities and the establishment of commercial uses and marine transportation infrastructure, subject to the policies of this Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an opportunity for the CIP framework to include programs that will assist in supporting the viability of the County's Ports, expansion of port facilities, and the establishment of commercial uses.

Finally, Section F6 of Elgin County's 2012 Official Plan sets out policies related to community improvement planning, as required by the Planning Act. These policies are summarized in Table 3 below, with comments on whether or not they are consistent with the County's goals for a County-wide CIP framework.

Table 4: Current Community Improvement Policies in the County Official Plan

Community Improvement Policy	Comments
<p>F6 COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLANS 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.</p> <p>F6.1 Objectives Community Improvement Areas are intended to achieve one or many objectives, including to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) 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; b) address issues which may be particular to one neighbourhood; c) ensure the maintenance and renewal of older housing stock; d) foster redevelopment, reuse and/or maintenance of existing brownfield sites and/or current industrial sites; e) enhance retail and downtown commercial areas within the municipalities; f) encourage the preservation and adaptive re-use of built heritage; g) promote energy efficiency and sound environmental design; h) foster economic growth within designated areas; i) promote intensification in targeted areas; j) enhance the visual characteristics of neighbourhoods; and, k) encourage local participation in funding programs. <p>F6.2 IMPLEMENTATION Local municipal councils, under the Planning Act may choose to designate Community Improvement Areas. Identifying a Community Improvement Area shall be carried out through a by-law designating the whole, or any part of the local municipality as a Community Improvement Area.</p> <p>Background studies shall first be completed and made available to the public outlining the need for the Community Improvement Area. Community Improvement Plans at the local municipal level shall be submitted to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for review and comment.</p> <p>County Council may make grants or loans to the council of a lower tier municipality for the purpose of carrying out a community improvement plan that has come into effect, on such terms as to security and otherwise as the council considers appropriate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An overall goal of the County-wide CIP framework should be to foster and coordinate physical improvements within the Community Improvement Project Area. • These policies are interpreted as criteria for the identification of a Community Improvement Project Area by the County. • The County's overall objectives for identifying Community Improvement Project Areas are very broad and address a wide range of issues such as maintenance of infrastructure, housing stock, brownfields, downtown areas, heritage buildings, energy efficiency, economic growth, and intensification. • The County's policy framework for community improvement activities is quite broad and flexible in relation to the range of opportunities/tools set out in the Planning Act. • This policy is in accordance with Section 28 (7.2) of the Planning Act and enables Elgin County to participate in a CIP adopted by its local municipalities.

4.4 Local Community Improvement Policies and Plans

As noted earlier, in accordance with Section 28 of the Planning Act, and based on best practices explored in Section 5.0 of this memo, the following approach may be used in order for an upper-tier municipality to develop and enact a County or Regional CIP program:

- 1) An upper-tier Community Improvement Plan is developed and endorsed by County or Regional Council;
- 2) The CIP is enacted through adoption by a lower-tier Council; and
- 3) An upper-tier municipality participates by making grants and loans in accordance with the CIP programs.

As discussed in Section 3.1, a municipality's Official Plan must contain provisions relating to 'community improvement' in the municipality in order to implement Planning Act tools. A brief review of the community improvement policies from each of the County's lower-tier municipalities has been completed to confirm that there are appropriate policies in place (which is the case in all 7 local municipalities) and determine if the local policy frameworks would generally support the County's overall goal to prepare a strategic and flexible CIP framework, which is primarily focused on improving and diversifying the economic base and assisting broadly with County-wide economic development, with a specific focus on the following areas:

- a) Downtowns/main street areas;
- b) Agri-businesses/the agricultural sector;
- c) The ports/waterfront areas.

A brief summary of the findings of the local policy framework review is provided in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Summary of Local CIP Policy Frameworks

Lower Tier Municipality	Comments
Aylmer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A CIP is currently in place (see below). • Goals and objectives for community improvement are fairly flexible in relation to Elgin's goals for a County-wide CIP framework. • Criteria for selecting community improvement project areas may not currently permit the municipality to include agricultural lands.
Bayham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goals and objectives for community improvement are primarily focused on commercial and residential lands. • Criteria for selecting community improvement project areas may not currently permit the municipality to include agricultural lands
Central Elgin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goals and objectives for community improvement are very flexible in relation to Elgin's goals for a County-wide CIP framework. • Criteria for selecting community improvement project areas would be adequate to include the County's areas of focus (i.e., downtowns, agricultural area, ports).
Dutton/Dunwich	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goals and objectives for community improvement are focused primarily on the hamlets and villages.

Lower Tier Municipality	Comments
Malahide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criteria for selecting community improvement project areas may not currently permit the municipality to include agricultural lands. Goals and objectives for community improvement are primarily focused on commercial and residential lands. Criteria for selecting community improvement project areas may not currently permit the municipality to include agricultural lands.
Southwold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goals and objectives for community improvement are primarily focused on commercial and residential lands. There are general criteria for identifying community improvement project areas as well as residential criteria, which may not currently permit the municipality to include agricultural lands.
West Elgin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A CIP is currently in place (see below). Goals and objectives for community improvement are focuses mainly on infrastructure, streetscape, building, and residential improvements, as well as land use compatibility. As presently worded, it would appear as though a community improvement project area may only be designated in the built-up areas of Rodney and West Lorne.

As shown in Table 5, while most municipal local official plans include criteria for designating a community improvement project area within a downtown or commercial area, most do not have criteria that would allow for designating one within an agricultural area. Also, in most case, the local municipal official plan policies do not have goals and objectives relating to community improvement activities that would broadly address local economic development issues. As a result, local official plan amendments will likely be required in order to identify a County-wide community improvement project area and implement a County-wide CIP framework.

In addition to a local policy review, additional research was completed to determine which of the County's lower-tier municipalities currently has a CIP in place and the range of programs currently implemented. The findings are as follows:

- a) The Town of Aylmer currently has a CIP in place, which was prepared in 2012. The entire municipality is designated a Community Improvement Project Area, and there are a set of programs which are made available to the following areas:
 - i. Downtown Aylmer;
 - ii. The former Carnation site; and
 - iii. The Fairgrounds.

Table 6: Overview of the Town of Aylmer CIP

Municipal Leadership Programs	Financial Incentive Programs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to the streetscape or public realm • Infrastructure improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Application and Building Permit Fees Grant Program (up to 50% of fees paid to Town) • Development Charges Grant Program (up to 50% of development charges paid to Town) • Cash in lieu of Parkland Grant Program (up to 50% of the amount of cash in lieu required by the Town) • Property Tax Increment Equivalent Grant Program (up to 50% of the tax increase for municipal portion of taxes for up to five years) • Façade Improvement Grant Program (50% of construction costs to a maximum of \$5,000 per application)

- b) West Elgin currently has a CIP in place, which was prepared in 2009 and applies to the Town Centres of Rodney and West Lorne.

Table 7: Overview of the West Elgin CIP

Municipal Leadership Programs	Financial Incentive Programs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to the streetscape or public realm • Establishment of a farmers' market • Creation of a heritage conservation / arts and culture district • Business expansion and recruitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Façade improvement program (maximum 50% of the total cost of the work with a ceiling on the grant portion. The remainder constitutes an interest free loan) • Property Tax Increment Equivalent Program (grant equal 10% to 40% of the increase in the municipal portion of property taxes for 5 years) • Heritage Design Grant (maximum of \$2000 but not more than 50% of the cost of the design study plan/restoration plan) • Heritage Improvement Grant (up to 50% of the total cost of the work) • Heritage tax relief (grants equaling between a 10% to 40% of municipal portion of property taxes for 5 years) following successful completion • Brownfield financial tax incentive program (Province cancels all or a proportion of the education taxes of a property for up to three years)

- c) In 2008 the Municipality of Bayham implemented a Façade Improvement Loan Program, which offers loans of up to \$5,000 per property, based on 50/50 matching contributions.

As part of the development and implementation of a CIP framework for Elgin County, consideration will be required with respect to if/how existing programs for these local CIPs are made available and if/how they are to be associated/integrated with the programs of the new County-wide CIP framework. Some options in this regard are identified in Section 7.0 below.

5.0 CASE STUDIES AND BENCHMARKING

5.1 A Case Study for Upper-tier CIP Development and Implementation

In 2012, the Regional Municipality of Niagara prepared the Niagara Gateway Economic Zone and Centre CIP (Gateway CIP) in order to revitalize, diversify and strengthen the economy in Niagara by making employment lands more attractive and to accelerate the process of bringing these employment lands to market.

This CIP has been reviewed as a best practice for the Elgin County-wide CIP framework project not because of the overall CIP goals and programs of the CIP (which focus on leveraging investment to employment lands in the Region's 'gateway zone'); rather, it provides details of the approach taken by an upper-tier municipality to develop a Regional CIP that is adopted and implemented by one or more lower-tier municipalities. The following is a brief summary of how the Region's approach was identified and implemented.

- Based on a review of the legislative and regulatory framework, it was determined that a CIP offering grants and loans for the development of the employment lands in the Niagara Gateway Economic Zone and Centre could not be adopted by the upper-tier (Niagara Region) because this is not a prescribed matter under Ontario Regulation 550/06.
- Niagara Region and the five Local Municipalities in the Gateway Economic Zone and Centre (Fort Erie, Niagara Falls, Port Colborne, Thorold and Welland) identified the following two options for approaching the preparation of a CIP:
 - 1) expand the myriad of existing CIPs in the five Local Municipalities to cover the employment lands in the Gateway Economic Zone and Centre; or,
 - 2) prepare a new Gateway CIP that applies only to employment lands in the Gateway Economic Zone and Centre with this Gateway CIP being endorsed by Niagara Region and adopted by the five Local Municipalities.
- Approach 1 above was seen as a very complex and time-consuming process because the five Local Municipalities in the Gateway currently have no less than a dozen adopted and approved CIPs in place. Several of these CIPs would have to be amended to modify the incentives contained in the CIPs and then expand the financial incentives contained within each CIP to cover the employment lands in the Gateway Economic Zone and Centre.

- Furthermore, the amendments to the incentive programs contained in existing CIPs could compromise the intent of the original CIPs which were designed primarily to promote downtown/commercial area and brownfield redevelopment, and thereby possibly expose these existing CIPs to an appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board.
- Consequently, it was determined that the preferred approach to the preparation and adoption of a Gateway CIP was Option 2) above.

Therefore, on the basis of the approach described above, Niagara Region led and coordinated the preparation of a “Master Gateway CIP” in consultation with the five Local Municipalities and other key stakeholders. Following that, the Master Gateway CIP was endorsed by the Region and then adopted by the lower-tier municipalities of Fort Erie, Niagara Falls, Port Colborne, Thorold and Welland (with some modifications that were also approved by the Region). Currently, all five CIPs are in-effect. This approach ensured consistency in the incentive programs offered across the five local municipalities, and each are now offering grants that are partially funded by Niagara Region.

In addition to the Region of Niagara, the following upper-tier municipalities in Ontario have taken/are in the process of implementing the same approach to developing and implementing upper-tier CIPs:

- ‘Spruce the Bruce’ is a downtown improvement program created by the County of Bruce and implemented by 12 individual downtown CIPs across 8 local municipalities; and
- The County of Frontenac and the Township of North Frontenac are currently working together to develop a community improvement plan for North Frontenac.

5.2 Other County-wide CIP Case Studies

Prince Edward County

The Prince Edward County Creative Rural Economy CIP is an example of an innovative County-wide CIP that attempts to align community improvement strongly with local economic development goals. Work done in 2004 indicated that Prince Edward County (a single-tier municipality) had little competitive advantage with respect to attracting traditional industry or manufacturing; however, the County has a strong competitive advantage with its emerging and growing creative economy. Therefore, the following specific goals of the Creative Rural Economy CIP were established:

- To attract and retain Creative Economy business, and help existing Creative Economy business expand;
- To attract creative entrepreneurs;
- To create jobs;
- To train creative workers;
- To encourage small business start-up, business expansion, or new product development in the creative business clusters identified by the County;
- To encourage the development/redevelopment of creative or live/work space; and;

- To encourage the adaptive reuse of heritage property as creative work or live/work space.

Table 8: Overview of the Prince Edward County

Prince Edward County CIP Summary Table	
Designated CIPA	County-wide (single-tier municipality)
'Sub Areas' Identified	None
Municipal Leadership Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Review Awareness Program and Streamlining • Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments • Cycling Route Project • Recreational Trails Signage Project • Shoulder Season Partnership Project • Gateways Project • Public Art and Policy Program • Small Business Incubator Project
Financial Incentive Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and Building Fees Rebate Program (rebates all or a portion of fees or charge equivalent of 50% of the fee and charge) • Development Charges Rebate Program (rebates all or a portion of fees or charge equivalent of 50% of the fee and charge) • Property Tax Increment Equivalent Grant Program (100% of the increase in the municipal portion of the property taxes resulting from the reassessment) • Design Studies Program (matching 50-50 basis and up to a max of \$5,000) • Project Feasibility Studies Program (matching 50-50 up to a max of \$5,000) • Façade Improvement Program (matching 50-50 up to a max of \$5,000)

Haldimand County

Haldimand County currently has 2 CIPs in place. Its Downtown Areas CIP is a traditional CIP program that applies to the County's 6 downtown areas and its Rural Business and Tourism Community Improvement Plan is a more innovative CIP that looks at supporting the local economy by focusing on Value-added Agriculture and Tourism related businesses. The Rural Business and Tourism Community Improvement Plan is one of the only CIPs to offer incentives to agricultural and rural properties to promote value-added agricultural activities in Ontario.

Table 9: Haldimand County CIPs

Downtown Areas and Rural Business and Tourism CIP Summary Table	
Designated CIPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downtown CIP: 6 Downtown Areas of Caledonia, Cayuga, Dunnville, Hagersville, Selkirk, Jarvis. • Rural Business and Tourism CIP: Entire municipality, excluding all properties within the existing Downtown Areas CIP project area.
Financial Incentive Programs for the Downtown Areas CIP	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tax-based Redevelopment Grant (TIG) Program for Large Scale Capital Projects (Grants back 50% of the increase in taxation resulting from re-development (May be increased up to 90% subject to additional criteria) 2. Downtown Housing Grant (15% of construction costs up to a maximum of \$15,000)

Downtown Areas and Rural Business and Tourism CIP Summary Table

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Façade Improvement Grant (50% of construction costs up to a maximum of \$10,000) 4. Development Charge, Planning Fees & Building Permit Grant (100% of Development Charges, Planning and Building Permit Fees) 5. Building Restoration, Renovation, and Improvement Grant 6. Heritage Improvement Grant (50% of construction costs up to a maximum of \$10,000) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where a heritage building has significant public/street presence and/or is clearly visible along and located adjacent the Grand River, the maximum grant amount may be increased.
Financial Incentive Program for the Rural Business and Tourism CIP	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Façade, Landscape, and Signage Grant Program (Matching grant of up to 50% of eligible costs up to a maximum grant of \$10,000 per property. Landscaping improvements will be funded to a maximum 15% of the total grant) 2. Development Charge, Planning Fees & Building Permit Grant (100% of Development Charges, Planning and Building Permit Fees) 3. Building Restoration, Renovation, and Improvement Grant (Grant valued at 50% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$25,000) 4. Tax-based Redevelopment Grant (TIG) Program for Large Scale Capital Projects (Maximum grant of 50% of the annual County tax increase resulting from redevelopment for a maximum of 10 years) 5. Heritage Commercial Use Grant Program (Grant valued at 50% of construction costs to a maximum of \$10,000) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where a heritage building has significant public/street presence and/or is clearly visible along and located adjacent the Grand River, the maximum grant amount may be increased. • Eligibility is restricted to these types of businesses and uses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Value-added Agriculture: grants for value-added agriculture related activities such as the creation of: on-farm retailing, small scale processing, and agri-tourism activities. ○ Businesses Operating in Hamlets: facade, landscape, and signage improvement grants are available to commercial properties in all designated hamlets. ○ Building Restoration, Renovation and Improvement grants are available for the conversion of vacant space for use as a restaurant, market, or place of assembly related to arts, culture, or recreation. ○ Commercial Roofed Accommodations: defined as a year-round, permanent fixed roof accommodations including hotels/motels/B&B. ○ Heritage Designated Properties with a Commercial Use: grant for preservation of heritage elements

5.3 Benchmarking Neighbouring CIP Programs

Finally, in addition to the relevant Upper-tier and County CIPs discussed above, a review of existing CIPs in place in municipalities surrounding Elgin County was completed in order to benchmark the range and value of financial incentive programs currently made available in neighbouring municipalities. The findings are provided in Appendix A to this memo.

6.0 CONSULTATION AND SUMMARY OF INPUT

6.1 Community and Business Survey

A Community Survey was conducted as part of the consultation events for Phase One of the Elgin County CIP framework project. The purpose of the survey was to collect information from community members, downtown business owners/tenants, and local farmers/agri-business owners. The survey was made available on the County's website and in the local libraries from Wednesday November 12, 2014 to Friday November 21, 2014.

The survey was designed to determine:

- Local needs and opportunities for community improvement within key areas of the County;
- Information about local businesses/agri-businesses in terms of needs and opportunities for improvement, expansion, and business development;
- Familiarity and level of interest in community improvement plans; and
- Types of programs that may be of assistance to the business and agricultural community.

50 respondents completed the CIP framework survey.⁴ The following points highlight some general information about the respondents/their businesses:

- Just less than half (47%) of the respondents indicated they currently own a business in Elgin County;
- 85% of these business owners also own the property on which their business is operated;
- The following is a sample of the range of businesses types that respondents operate:

○ Consulting	○ Real Estate
○ Hospitality	○ Publishing
○ Cash Crop Farm	○ Hospitality
○ Retail	○ Artist
- 36% of those respondents indicating they owned a business have been operating for 5 years or less, while 19% have been operating for more than 26 years; and
- In terms of the size of the businesses, 38% of the respondents report having 2 or less employees.

⁴ Note that while the survey results should not be construed as depicting a representative sample of Elgin County residents, or land or property owners (due to the small sample size and the survey's method of distribution), it nevertheless is indicative of the needs and desires of at least some property and business owners who could be assisted through a CIP.

Respondents were asked to comment on the types of improvements or changes to their businesses they would make in the near future. The following provides a breakdown:

Type of Improvement/Change	Response
Improve energy efficiency	68%
Make structural improvements to a building	63%
Improve signage or access	58%
Produce different products	42%
Provide different services	32%
Undertake business, marketing, financial or succession planning	32%
Make façade improvements	32%
Expand existing premises	21%
Expand elsewhere	21%
Restore heritage features	5%

Respondents were then asked to identify the main barriers with respect to moving forward with changes or improvements. Over 88% of respondents owning businesses stated that it was too costly to make the changes they envisioned, as shown in the table below:

Barriers to Improvement/Change	Response
Too costly	88%
Not high enough priority at the moment	29%
Municipal regulations/red tape	24%
Lack of information about the procedures/process involved	12%

In order to understand some of the most successful areas in Elgin, respondents were asked to identify some of their favourite places to visit within the County. The following is a list of the places that were most frequently identified:

- Sparta
- Port Stanley
- Port Bruce
- Dutton
- Aylmer
- Port Burwell
- West Lorne
- New Sarum

When asked why these places were identified, the following responses were provided:

Reasons for Visiting	Responses
Variety of restaurants/cafes	68%
Variety of stores and shops	68%
Unique, attractive shopping environment	57%
Arts, culture or recreational events and activities	46%
I live there	43%
Special events	43%
I work there	39%
Entertainment	25%

Respondents were also asked to identify some of the places within the County that were in most need of improvement. The following is a list of places that were most frequently identified:

- West Lorne/Rodney
- Sparta
- Port Burwell
- Vienna

- Dutton
- Shedden
- Straffordville
- Springfield

When asked about how these areas were in need of improvement, the following responses were provided:

Types of Improvement Needed	Responses
Streetscape improvements are required	75%
Physical improvements to buildings, facades and signage are required	68%
Too many vacancies	64%
Lack of variety of stores, shops and restaurants	54%
Improvements to infrastructure are required	46%
Not pedestrian friendly	25%
Nothing to do	25%
No parking	14%

Respondents were also asked to comment on the ways in which they participate and support local agri-businesses within the County. Responses are summarized as follows:

Participation/support for Local Agricultural Businesses	Response
I buy local as much as possible from farms/markets/local stands	83%
I visit farm related tourist attractions	47%
I participate in local food events	40%
I occasionally buy local food from farms/markets/local stands when it is in season and readily available	33%
I visit farm/agri-business for other arts, cultural or recreational events and activities	23%
I visit farms/agri-business for other retail/shopping needs	20%
I visit farm vacation homes/bed and breakfasts	3%

With respect to the familiarity/interest in CIPs, the following is a summary of findings:

- 67% of respondents indicated that had heard of a CIP before;
- 94% of respondents indicated that they would be interested in finding out more about an incentive program in Elgin County; and
- Most people would like to receive the information about a CIP framework via email or on-line.

Finally, respondents were asked to comment on the types of financial incentive and municipal leadership programs that they would like to see included in an Elgin County-wide CIP framework. The following tables summarize the response:

Financial Incentive Programs	Responses
Building improvement grants/loans	83%
Facade and signage improvement grants/loans	73%
Rebates/cancellations of municipal fees	40%
Tax assistance	40%
Space conversion for commercial and agri-business	30%
Business planning	30%

Municipal Programs	Responses
Streetscape improvements	88%
Tourism marketing	82%
Infrastructure improvements	53%
Community Branding	35%
Urban Design Guidelines	23%
Special Planning Studies (describe)	12%

6.2 Municipal and Community Workshops

In addition to the Community and Business Survey, three Stakeholder Workshop were held on Tuesday November 18, 2014 as part of the Phase One consultation efforts for the CIP framework project. The workshops were held as follows:

- A Municipal Workshop was held with 14 representatives from each of the lower-tier municipalities within the County; and
- Two Business Community Workshops were held with interested business owners/other stakeholders from across the County. The first was held in West Lorne and was attended by approximately 24 local business owners/stakeholders. The second was held in New Sarum and was attended by approximately 25 local business owners/stakeholders.

The purpose of the workshop and open house was to:

- Introduce the project, process, and goals;
- Provide an overview of community improvement planning and some of the tools that can be implemented through a CIP framework;
- Discuss local issues and needs regarding the downtown/mainstreet area, ports, and agricultural areas of the County as well as opportunities for improvement in these areas; and,
- Explore opportunities to apply community improvement tools locally.

The following is a brief summary of the ideas and input obtained during the three CIP Workshops.

Identifying a Community Improvement Project Area

Participants were asked to discuss and record their thoughts with respect to identifying a Community Improvement Project Area for the Elgin County-wide CIP framework. The following key themes/ideas emerged from the workshops:

- *The County's Settlement Areas are important because they serve as focal points and attract people and visitors.*
- *The Villages located along the water are key 'nodes' for improvement.*
- *Major commercial centres should be prioritized.*
- *Any 'crossroad' within the County should be included in the CIP framework.*
- *Ports are extremely important to the County from a tourist perspective and there is a need to improve connections between them.*

- *There is generally a need to improve connections between all focal points in the County.*
- *The Waterfront generally is a priority for improvement. There is a need to focus on getting the waterfront 'right' because visitors travel through the County in order to visit the Ports and waterfront areas.*
- *The entire agricultural area needs to be included as part of the CIP framework because it is not feasible to select only certain agricultural areas.*
- *Corridors (running north/south and east/west), such as Highway 3, are a priority for improvement.*
- *With respect to priority areas, it would be beneficial to provide more incentives or higher valued incentives to properties that are located in certain priority areas of the County, such as the waterfront, ports, and corridors.*
- *Including too many financial incentive programs could not water down the CIP framework.*
- *The CIP framework should focus on areas where improvements will result in the most benefit to the local economy.*
- *With respect to implementation, the County should identify a broad Community Improvement Project Area and the local municipalities should be able to refine it.*

Identifying Needs and Opportunities for Improvement

Participants were asked to discuss and record specific needs and opportunities for community improvement in each of the areas discussed. The following key themes/ideas emerged from the workshops:

- *Attract more visitors and tourists to the County as a whole.*
- *More festivals and events could assist in attracting visitors.*
- *Increased/better marketing and promotion is required to attract more visitors.*
- *There is a need to improve signage and wayfinding throughout the County.*
- *Improved gateway features are required.*
- *There are not enough roofed accommodations in Elgin for visitors/tourists.*
- *Buildings are in need of façade improvements in the downtowns/mainstreets.*
- *Downtown areas need public washrooms.*
- *Rental buildings in the downtowns/mainstreets need to be fixed-up. There is an issue with absentee landowners.*
- *Some buildings need to be brought up to building code or fire code standards.*
- *Buildings will need to implement improvements to accessibility/barrier free design.*
- *Buildings throughout the County require energy efficiency improvements.*
- *Each downtown/mainstreet area has its own specific set of issues.*
- *Streetscape and infrastructure improvements are required in most, if not all, of the downtown/mainstreet areas. A similar look or feel could be promoted through streetscape improvements, to help brand the County. Southwold is an example of a community that did this successfully.*
- *There are a lot of vacancies and empty storefronts.*
- *There is a need for more opportunities to sell produce out of the County.*
- *There is a need for more farmers markets.*

- *Agri-businesses are burdened by significant tax increases once their assessment goes from agricultural to commercial.*
- *There is a need for a municipal heritage committee to ensure that built heritage features are protected. A County-wide heritage plan is needed.*
- *There is a need to improve water quality throughout the County and specifically Lake Erie.*
- *There is a need for improved trails, linkages, and connections throughout the County.*

Identifying Potential CIP Framework Programs

Finally, participants were asked to discuss and record their ideas about the types of municipal and financial incentive programs that should be included in the CIP framework.

The following comments/potential municipal programs were identified:

- *Establish a Municipal Heritage Committee (County or local).*
- *Property standard by-laws could be better enforced by local municipalities.*
- *Participate in shared-cost advertising.*
- *Infrastructure improvements to downtown areas.*
- *Streetscape improvements to downtown areas.*

The following comments/potential financial incentive programs were identified:

- *Tax Assistance Programs.*
- *Facade and Signage Improvement Programs.*
- *Incentives for designated heritage buildings.*
- *Energy efficiency retrofit programs.*
- *Building improvement programs (i.e. to assist with building/fire code and accessibility upgrades).*
- *There is an opportunity for the County to participate in the grant programs offered by the local Conservation Authority related to groundwater and stewardship programs.*
- *Incentives should be dollar matched – for every \$X dollars that the business owners invests, it should be matched by the local municipality/County.*
- *The County should explore creative ways to offer incentives.*
- *The County should offer forgivable loans,*
- *The County should explore ways to piggy-back with other financial incentive programs offered elsewhere.*
- *The County should offer increased incentives to 'priority areas' that are identified in the CIP framework.*
- *The County should offer increased incentives to applications that are submitted by multiple property owners that have coordinated on planning improvements to their properties.*

7.0 OPTIONS FOR A COUNTY-WIDE CIP Framework

7.1 Community Improvement Goals

As discussed in Section 2.0 of this memo, most CIPs establish a set of community improvement goals, which summarize specifically what the CIP framework will aim to achieve. On the basis of the County's strategic directions for economic development as well as the existing goals and policies in the 2012 Official Plan, the following goals could be included in a County-wide Community Improvement Plan for Elgin:

1. To align community improvement with the County's broader economic development goals and invest in projects that strengthen Elgin's overall Quality of Place.
2. To stimulate economic growth and development through the attraction/expansion of commercial and agri-businesses.
3. To foster civic pride through the coordination of physical improvements/enhancements to the built environment.
4. To promote diversification of the agricultural industry and contribute to the development of agriculture related and on-farm diversified uses.
5. To enable growth and prosperity in Elgin's creative rural economy by attracting creative people and enterprises.
6. To support opportunities for sustainable tourism development and enhance the County as a destination for tourists.

These goals would be supported by a series of objectives in the CIP framework (which will be developed at a later date during the development of a County-wide CIP framework and based on feedback with respect to the goals above) and would be used as the basis for reviewing and approving applications for financial incentives.

7.2 Community Improvement Project Area

As required by the Planning Act, in order to establish a CIP, a municipality must first identify and designate a Community Improvement Project Area, by by-law. Based on review of background material and input from local municipal representative, local business owners, and stakeholders, the following areas could be included in a County-wide CIP framework for Elgin:

- All lands designated Agricultural Area as shown on Schedule A of the County's Official Plan.

- All lands that are located within a Tier 1, 2, or 3 Settlement Area as designated by the County's Official Plan and designated 'Downtown Core', 'Central Business District', 'General Commercial', etc. by the local municipal Official Plans⁵.

Each of these areas has its own character, set of opportunities and needs, strategic role in the community, and potential to contribute to the community improvement goals identified in Section 7.1, all of which can be recognized and reinforced by the CIP mechanisms.

These areas collectively make up the majority of lands located in Elgin County. It is therefore recommended, for maximum flexibility, that **all lands** included within the County be designated a Community Improvement Project Area for the purpose of broadly promoting local economic development.

Within the designated CIPA, it is also recommended that the following be further identified as "Project Sub-Areas", to which a set of Area-Specific Programs apply:

- Agricultural Sub Area; and
- Downtown/Mainstreet/Port Sub-Areas.

While the CIP framework would provide clear policies with respect to eligibility criteria, this would be the most flexible approach to offering incentives to landowners and business owners. This approach may also avoid the need for any future amendments to the CIP framework.

7.3 Prioritizing Areas and Uses

In addition to designating a CIPA and Sub-Areas, the County could also structure the CIP framework in order to prioritize certain areas of the County/certain types of proposed uses with respect to eligibility for financial incentive programs. Certain areas/proposed uses would be prioritized in the following ways:

- The County could increase the **value of incentives** for properties or projects that meet a set of 'Priority Criteria'.
- The County could offer **multiple incentives** for properties or projects that meet a set of 'Priority Criteria'.

Potential 'Priority Criteria' could include the following:

- The property is located within the County's Waterfront Area (the boundaries of which would be defined and potentially identified as an overlay on the CIPA mapping);
- The property is located along/visible from key transportation corridors within the County, such as Highway 3 and other Tourism Corridors identified on Schedule B of the County's Official Plan; and

⁵ Exact designations to be determined in consultation with the local municipalities prior to drafting the County-wide CIP.

- The proposal is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Elgin Arts Trail Program and the Savour Elgin Program, and the business owner can demonstrate that the program criteria will be met.

7.4 Potential Options for Financial Incentive Programs

Financial incentive programs are the most significant element of a CIP framework and may be provided by a municipality to a private landowner under Section 28 of the Planning Act only. The following presents a number of financial incentive options that ***could possibly*** be offered by the County-wide CIP framework in association with the options described above. The programs are identified for discussion purposes.

Potential Incentives for ALL Sub-Areas

- **Feasibility/Design/Planning Study Loan/Grant**
 - to assist with the completion of professional feasibility, design, planning and other related studies in support of a potential business or development proposal
 - there is potential for both the County and the local municipality to participate in this program
- **Development Charges/Planning Application/Building Permit Fee Rebate**
 - to rebate all or a portion of the costs associated with a local application or permit fee or development charge
 - there is potential for both the County and the local municipality to participate in this program
- **Energy Efficiency Retrofit Grant**
 - to assist with retrofits to commercial, mixed-use or agricultural buildings, which improve the overall energy efficiency of buildings
 - there is potential for both the County and the local municipality to participate in this program
- **Tourist Accommodation Grant/Loan**
 - to assist with the development/improvement of year-round, permanent fixed roof accommodations including farm vacation homes/hotels/motels/bed and breakfasts;
 - there is potential for both the County and the local municipality to participate in this program
- **Outdoor Art/Sculpture/Mural Grant/Loan**
 - to assist with the establishment of outdoor art project, where a property is located/visible along a tourist corridor
 - there is potential for both the County and the local municipality to participate in this program

Potential Financial Incentives for the Agricultural Sub-Area

- **Agricultural Building Conversion/Construction/Expansion Grant/Loan**
 - to assist with the conversion of an agricultural building to another agricultural/agri-business use, or the construction of a new building, or the expansion of an existing building

- there is potential for both the County and the local municipality to participate in this program
- **Agri-Business Façade, Building, and Property Improvement Grant/Loan**
 - to assist with façade, signage, property, or building improvements to agri-business operations
 - there is potential for both the County and the local municipality to participate in this program
 - could include improvements to bring a building up to code, accessibility improvements, improvements to on-site infrastructure, parking, landscaping, etc.
- **Tax Increase Equivalent Grant (TIEG) for Large-scale Agricultural/Agri-Business Projects**
 - would apply to large scale projects where more than a certain dollar amount is invested by the land owner, or where the proposal involves a certain percentage of the gross floor area of the building
 - a wide range of projects would be eligible
 - there is potential for both the County and the local municipality to participate in this program

Potential Financial Incentives for the Downtown/Mainstreet/Port Sub-Area

- **Rental Housing Grant/Loan**
 - to assist with improvements to the upper floors of downtown buildings to either bring existing residential units up to code, or to convert existing space to residential units
 - there is potential for both the County and the local municipality to participate in this program
- **Commercial Façade, Building, and Property Improvement Grant/Loan**
 - Same as agricultural program above
- **Building Conversion, Construction or Expansion Grant/Loan**
 - Same as agricultural program above
- **Commercial Tax Increase Equivalent Grant (TIEG) for Large-scale Projects**
 - Same as agricultural program above
- **Rent Abatement Program**
 - monthly grants provided to tenants of commercial buildings that are equivalent to the building rent provided the tenant undertakes one or more improvements to the façade, signage, or building
 - eligible costs would include costs related to the improvement implemented by the tenant
 - there is potential for both the County and the local municipality to participate in this program
- **Multiple Property Owners Improvement Increase**
 - the value of grants would be subject to an increase where multiple landowners propose improvements/works that are coordinated
 - there is potential for both the County and the local municipality to participate in this program

7.5 Options for County Leadership Programs

Municipally-led programs are often included in CIPs, and represent projects or programs that may be implemented by the municipality to demonstrate leadership and an overall commitment to community improvement. The following have been identified as options for County Leadership Initiatives that could be included in the CIP framework:

- Gateway/Signage Improvements;
- Financial Assistance with Local Streetscape Improvements;
- Implementation of County-wide Marketing and Promotion Programs;
- County/Local Strategy for a Heritage Committee;
- Implementation of the Provincial Heritage Property Tax Relief Program;
- Participation in a Festival/Events Partnership Program;
- Participation in the an Empty Storefront Program; and
- The County could also identify innovative and exciting ways to make the Financial Incentive available, such as creating and implementing contests.

7.6 Implementation

As mentioned, it is anticipated that the County will undertake the following process with respect to the development and enactment of a County-wide CIP framework:

- 1) An Elgin Community Improvement Plan template will be developed and endorsed by County Council;
- 2) In each lower-tier municipality, a locally modified CIP is enacted through adoption by the lower-tier Council⁶; and
- 3) The County will be able to participate in the lower-tier CIP by making grants and loans in accordance with the parameters established by the CIP.

In terms of the administration of the County-wide Community Improvement Plan, it is the County's intent that senior staff at the County level will be responsible for administering all 7 of the locally adopted CIPs (which will make up an overall framework for County-wide community improvement), including the administration of financial incentive programs. Therefore, each of the Councils of the local municipalities will be required to delegate the administration of the local CIPs to County staff upon adoption of the CIPs. It is anticipated that County staff will be responsible for:

- Reviewing applications for financial incentive programs; and
- Making a decision with respect to the approval or refusal of an application.

County staff may also wish to consult with staff at the appropriate local municipality when making decisions on applications.

⁶ Provided the appropriate Official Plan policies are in place to do so. As already mentioned, Official Plan Amendments may be required by some local municipalities in order to identify a Community Improvement Project Area that deals with agricultural lands.

With respect to participation in the financial incentive programs, it is not anticipated that the local municipalities will contribute financially to programs established in the locally adopted CIP. Rather, it is anticipated that the County will establish an annual budget for financial incentives and will participate financially as the primary source of funding. That said, should a local municipality determine that there are resources available in any given year that could be dedicated to the funding of one or more incentive programs established by the locally adopted CIP, they **may** identify a CIP budget during the local Council's annual budgeting process. Therefore, for maximum flexibility, each of the financial incentive programs could be structured in the County-wide CIP framework in a way that identifies parameters for the extent to which each level of government could participate (i.e., a maximum percentage/dollar amount per eligible project); however, neither municipality would be committed to providing funds. By setting up the programs in this way, the need for an amendment to the plan would be avoided should a local municipality decide to participate financially in an incentive program.

Prior to the adoption of the local CIPs by lower-tier municipalities, consideration will be required with respect to how they are implemented in association with existing CIPs (as summarized in Section 4.4). The following preliminary options have been identified for discussion in this regard:

1. The existing local CIP could be dissolved and replaced by the new locally adopted CIP. In this case, a further, more detailed review of the content and details of each existing CIP may be undertaken to ensure that certain programs and details of the existing CIPs are carried over/addressed by the new CIP.
2. The existing local CIP may continue to be administered by the local municipality. Programs in each of the CIPs could be made available on a mutually exclusive basis. In this regard, the new CIP could explicitly state that an applicant may be approved for only one program - either offered through the existing local municipal CIP or the new CIP. In this case, it is possible that the County may still participate in the programs of a local CIP.

8.0 NEXT STEPS

Feedback/comments will be considered during the development of a Draft County-wide CIP template in early January 2015. Once complete (in mid-January), the Draft CIP template will also be made available to the local municipalities for review and comment. It is anticipated that a County-wide CIP template will be completed and endorsed by County Council in February 2015.

Appendix A: Community Improvement Financial Incentive Benchmarking Table

	London Downtown Community Improvement Plan	City of Brantford Downtown Revitalization	City of St.Thomas	Town of Tillsonberg Downtown Community Improvement Plan	Chatham-Kent Downtown & Main Street
Tax Increase- based Equivalent Rebate (TIER) Grant	Grant for the total value of the work done, plus the amount of municipal portion of the taxes paid prior to and after the redevelopment. The grant will not exceed to total value of the work being done.		Grant equivalent to the eligible incremental increase in the municipal portion of property taxes resulting from the improvements to the property.	<p>Rehabilitation, Renovation or Redevelopment - Grant equivalent to 80% of the increase in the municipal portion of the taxes and BIA levy in year one, decreasing to 60% in year two, 50% in year three, 40% in year four and 30% in year five following reassessment.</p> <p>New Residential Dwelling Unit(s) - Grant equivalent to 90% of the increase in the municipal portion of the taxes, decreasing to 80% in year two, 70% in year three, 60% in year four and 50% in year five, 40% in year six, 30% in year seven, 20% in year eight, 10% in year nine and 0% in year 10 following reassessment.</p>	Grant equivalent to 100% of the increase in the municipal portion of the property taxes resulting from reassessment of the property following rehabilitation for 5 years following successful completion of the approved work.
Heritage Improvement Grant	Grant equivalent to 80% of tax increase for the first 2 years then decreases 10% each year for a max of 10 years. Total value of the grant shall not exceed value of the work being done.		<p>Hertiage Tax Relief - Grant equivalent to a 40% reduction in the City portion of the post-restoration taxes and applies for a consecutive 4-year period.</p> <p>Heritage Design: Grant up to \$1,500 towards the preparation of the design study costs.</p>	Grants to a maximum of \$5,000.00 per building.	Grants for 50% of the cost of a heritage design study, to a maximum of \$1,500 for designated heritage buildings or buildings listed by the Municipal Heritage Committee.

Appendix A: Community Improvement Financial Incentive Benchmarking Table

	London Downtown Community Improvement Plan	City of Brantford Downtown Revitalization	City of St.Thomas	Town of Tillsonberg Downtown Community Improvement Plan	Chatham-Kent Downtown & Main Street
Façade Improvement Grant/Loan	Loans will cover 50% of the cost of the eligible works per buildings and to a maximum of \$25,000 per building.	Façade Grant - a maximum value of \$7,500 to improve the exterior appearance or structural quality of buildings. Design Grant - a maximum value of \$2,000 to assist applicants who require the services of an architect, engineer, or designer. Applicants can apply for the Design Grant in advance of the Façade Grant to help develop the project concept.	Grant up to \$10,000 per application. An interest-free loan up to \$20,000 per application with up to 5 years to repay the loan.	Loans for a matching 50/50 contribution basis, to a maximum of \$40,000 per building.	Grants for 50% of the construction costs to a maximum of \$7,500. Where improvements are also being made to side or waterfront facades with a significant public view, the grant amount increases to \$15,000. Interest-free loans, for 50% of the construction cost to a maximum loan of \$20,000, are repayable over a 5-year period.
Application and Permit Fees Rebate			The City will rebate Planning fees after successfully completion of the improvement project.	The Town will rebate Planning fees after successfully completion of the improvement project.	The City will rebate 100% of the planning application fees.
Building Restoration, Renovation and Improvement Grant	Grant equivalent to 70% of tax increase for the first 2 years then decreases 10% each year for a max of 10 years. Grant shall not exceed the total value of the work being done.			Grant of a maximum of \$5,000.00 per building for concept design costs.	
Upgrade to Building code Loan	Loan will cover the less of 50% of the cost of the eligible works per buildings or a maximum of \$50,000 per building. Interest free loan amortized over a 10-year period.			Loans for a matching 50/50 contribution basis, up to a maximum of \$40,000 per building.	
Municipal Development Charge Incentive	Rebate of 50% or 100% of the DC charges that are payable in the Downtown Area or Old East Village Area.		The City will rebate the Development Charges for a property owner adding new residential units and to property owners who are redeveloping lands in the defined project area.		The City will rebate 100% of the development charges.

Appendix A: Community Improvement Financial Incentive Benchmarking Table

	London Downtown Community Improvement Plan	City of Brantford Downtown Revitalization	City of St.Thomas	Town of Tillsonberg Downtown Community Improvement Plan	Chatham-Kent Downtown & Main Street
Residential Conversion, Rehabilitation and Intensification Program			<p>A grant up to \$5,000 per residential unit.</p> <p>A grant up to \$40,000 per application.</p> <p>An interest-free loan up to \$10,000 per residential unit and 5 years to repay.</p> <p>An interest-free loan up to \$80,000 per application and 5 years to repay.</p>		<p>Grants for 50% of the construction cost, to a maximum of \$5,000 per unit or \$40,000 per application.</p> <p>Loans for 50% of construction cost, to a maximum of \$10,000 per unit or \$80,000 per application repayable over 5 years</p>
Cafes, Patios, Display Areas and Court Yard					<p>Grant equivalent to 50% of construction cost to a maximum grant of \$10,000 per application.</p> <p>Maximum interest-free loan amount is 50% of construction cost to a maximum loan of \$20,000 per application repayable over 5 years.</p> <p>Only one application can be made for a property.</p>
Parking Standards Exemption					<p>Rebate on parking standards or cash-in-lieu for 100% of the cash equivalent paid by the owner following successful completion of the approved work.</p>
Project Feasibility					<p>Grants equivalent to 50% of the cost of the study to a maximum of \$5,000.</p>

APPENDIX C: Local Official Plan Amendments – Preliminary Recommendations

MEMORANDUM

To: Alan Smith, General Manager, Economic Development, Elgin County

Copy: Steve Evans, Manager of Planning, Elgin County
Kate Burns, Business Development Coordinator, Elgin County

From: Nancy Reid, Meridian Planning

Date: March 3, 2015

Re: **ELGINCENTIVE COUNTY-WIDE COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT
PLANNING FRAMEWORK - PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS
WITH RESPECT TO CHANGES TO THE LOCAL POLICY FRAMEWORK**

.....

PURPOSE OF THIS MEMO

As part of the development of our Phase One Background and Options Memo for the Elgincivites CIP project (dated December 2014 and revised January 2015), a review of the community improvement policies from each of the County's lower-tier municipalities was completed to confirm that there are appropriate policies in place to implement community improvement tools under the Planning Act. The intent of the review was also to determine if the local policy frameworks will support the adoption of a strategic and flexible CIP, which:

- a) Focuses generally on diversifying the economic base; and,
- b) Includes the following areas as part of a community improvement project area:
 - i. Downtowns/main street areas;
 - ii. Agri-businesses/the agricultural sector;
 - iii. The ports/waterfront areas.

The results of the review (presented in Section 4.4 of the memo) indicated that local official plan amendments would be required (in most cases) in order to adopt the Elgincivites CIP template, which addresses the goals identified above. This is because, while most existing local official plans include criteria for designating a community improvement project area within a downtown or commercial area, **most do not have criteria that would allow for designating one within the agricultural area.** Also, in most cases, the local municipal official plan policies **do not have goals and objectives relating to community improvement activities that would broadly address local economic development.**

Therefore, in order to assist with the task of amending the local municipal official plans, some preliminary recommendations have been identified with respect to potential policy changes. The purpose of this memo is to present those preliminary recommendations.

PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the review of existing community improvement policies in each of the local municipal official Plans, the following is a summary of

- a) The existing policies; and
- b) Recommended policy changes that should be made in order to update local community improvement policies and adopt the County's Elgincentives CIP template.

The Town of Aylmer Official Plan

As summarized in the Phase One Background and Options Memo, the review of existing local CIP policies in Aylmer indicated that:

- a) Goals and objectives for community improvement are fairly flexible in relation to Elgin's goals for a County-wide CIP framework.
- b) Criteria for selecting community improvement project areas may not currently permit the municipality to include tourism activities-

Therefore, the following policy changes are recommended in order to facilitate the adoption of the Elgincentives CIP template:

1. The following goal could be added to Section 5.3.3 (Goals and Objectives):
 - *To generally foster local economic growth.*
2. The following objectives could be added to Section 5.3.3 (Goals and Objectives):
 - *To promote the establishment, expansion, and rehabilitation of existing tourism and tourist destination-oriented uses.*
 - *To facilitate and stimulate local economic development.*
3. The following criterion for the designation of community improvement project areas could be added to Section 5.3.4 (Criteria for Selecting Community Improvement Areas):
 - *For any other environmental, social, or community economic development reasons.*

The Municipality of Bayham

The review of existing local CIP policies in Bayham indicated that:

- a) Goals and objectives for community improvement are primarily focused on commercial and residential lands.
- b) Criteria for selecting community improvement project areas may not currently permit the municipality to include agricultural lands.

Therefore, the following policy changes are recommended in order to facilitate the adoption of the Elgincentives CIP template:

1. The following sentence could be added to the introductory paragraph in Section 7 (Community Improvement):
 - *Municipal Council may determine that additional community improvement project areas within the Municipality of Bayham may be identified subject to the criteria set out in this section.*
2. The following objectives could be added to Section 7.1.4.1 (Other Objectives):
 - *Generally foster local economic growth.*
 - *To promote the establishment, expansion, and rehabilitation of existing tourism and tourist destination-oriented uses.*
 - *To encourage the establishment, expansion, and rehabilitation of existing agriculture-related and secondary uses in the agricultural area.*
3. The following criteria could be added into a new Section 7.2.3 (Other Criteria):
 - *Any other environmental, social or community economic development reasons.*
4. The following paragraph could replace the wording in Section 7.3 (Delineation of Community Improvement Areas) and replace with the following:
 - *In addition, Municipal Council may also designate other “Community Improvement Project Areas” within the overall Municipality of Bayham. These areas will also be eligible for “Community Improvement” as defined in the Planning Act.*

Central Elgin

The review of existing local CIP policies in Central Elgin indicated that:

- a) Goals and objectives for community improvement are very flexible.
- b) Criteria for selecting community improvement project areas are adequate to include agricultural lands.

The following policy changes could also be considered in order to facilitate the adoption of the Elgincentives CIP template:

1. The following sentence could be added to Section 2.10.2 (Community Improvement):
 - *Additional Community Improvement Areas may be designated provided the area meets the conditions set out in Section 2.10.2.1 e) of this Plan.*
2. The following item could also be added to Section 2.10.2.1 subsection f):
 - *To promote the establishment, expansion, and rehabilitation of existing tourism and tourist destination-oriented uses.*
 - *To encourage the establishment, expansion, and rehabilitation of existing agriculture-related and secondary uses in the agricultural area.*

Dutton/Dunwich

The review of existing local CIP policies in Dutton/Dunwich indicated that:

- a) Goals and objectives for community improvement are focused primarily on the hamlets and villages.
- b) Criteria for selecting community improvement project areas may not currently permit the municipality to include agricultural lands.

Therefore, the following policy changes are recommended in order to facilitate the adoption of the Elgincentives CIP template:

1. The following specific objectives could be added to Section 6.1.1 (Policies):
 - *To facilitate and stimulate local economic development.*
 - *To promote the establishment, expansion, and rehabilitation of existing tourism and tourist destination-oriented uses.*
 - *To encourage the establishment, expansion, and rehabilitation of existing agriculture-related and secondary uses in the agricultural area.*
2. The following could be added to Section 6.1.2:
 - *For any other environmental, social, or community economic development reasons.*
3. The following could be added to Section 6.1.3:
 - *Additional 'Community Improvement Areas' may be designated the criteria described in Section 6.1.2 of this Plan.*

Malahide

The review of existing local CIP policies in Malahide indicated that:

- a) Goals and objectives for community improvement are focused primarily on commercial and residential lands.
- b) Criteria for selecting community improvement project areas may not currently permit the municipality to include agricultural lands.

Therefore, the following policy changes are recommended in order to facilitate the adoption of the Elgincentives CIP template:

1. The following sentence could be added to the first paragraph of Section 7.0 (Community Improvement Goals):
 - *Township Council, from time to time, may designate additional Community Improvement Areas provided the proposed area meets one or more of the criteria set out in Section 7.3 of this Plan.*
2. The following goal could be added to Section 7.1 (Community Improvement Goals):
 - *To generally foster local economic growth throughout the Township.*

3. The following new Section (General Objectives) could be added to Section 7.2:
 - *To promote the establishment, expansion, and rehabilitation of existing tourism and tourist destination-oriented uses;*
 - *To encourage the establishment, expansion, and rehabilitation of existing agriculture-related and secondary uses in the agricultural area.*
 - *To encourage appropriate development and redevelopment to facilitate economic activity; and*
 - *To provide funding in the form of grants and/or loans and /or waiving of fees for appropriate projects that meet the objectives of the Community Improvement Plan.*
4. The following new Section (General Criteria) could be added could be added to Section 7.3:
 - *For any other environmental, social and/or community economic development reason.*
5. The following paragraph could replace the existing introductory paragraph in Section 7.4 (Delineation of Community Improvement Areas):
 - *Township Council may designate by By-law, "Community Improvement Project Areas" within the Municipality of Malahide. These areas are eligible for "Community Improvement" as defined in the Planning Act.*

Township of Southwold

The review of existing local CIP policies in Southwold indicated that:

- a) Goals and objectives for community improvement are focused primarily on commercial and residential lands.
- b) Criteria for selecting community improvement project areas may not currently permit the municipality to include agricultural lands.

Therefore the following policy changes are recommended in order to facilitate the adoption of the Elgincentives CIP template:

1. The following objective could be added to Section 3.6 (General Objectives)::
 - *To promote the establishment, expansion, and rehabilitation of existing tourism and tourist destination-oriented uses.*
 - *To encourage the establishment, expansion, and rehabilitation of existing agriculture-related and secondary uses in the agricultural area.*
2. The following criteria could be added to Section 3.6 (General Criteria):
 - *For any other environmental, social or community economic development reasons.*

West Elgin

As summarized in the Phase One Background and Options Memo, the review of existing local CIP policies in West Elgin indicated that:

- a) Goals and objectives for community improvement are focused primarily on commercial and residential lands.
- b) Criteria for selecting community improvement project areas may not currently permit the municipality to include agricultural lands.

Therefore the following policy changes are recommended in order to facilitate the adoption of the Elgincentives CIP template:

1. The following objective could be added to Section 4.3.1:
 - *To generally foster local economic growth.*
2. The following sentence could be added to Section 4.3.2:
 - *Additional 'Community Improvement Areas' may be designated within the Municipality provided they meet the guidelines outlined below.*
3. The following guidelines be added to Section 4.3:
 - *To promote the establishment, expansion, and rehabilitation of existing tourism and tourist destination-oriented uses.*
 - *To encourage the establishment, expansion, and rehabilitation of existing agriculture-related and secondary uses in the agricultural area.*
 - *For any other environmental, social, or community economic development reasons.*

We look forward to discussing the preliminary recommendations further with you.