



The Corporation of the Township of Huron-Kinloss

Staff Report

Report Title: 2024 Community Improvement Plan

Date: Apr. 8, 2024

Report Number: BED-2024-04-10

Department: BED

File Number: C11 BED 24

Prepared By: Michelle Goetz, Manager of Strategic Initiatives

Attachments: Huron-Kinloss Community Improvement Plan 2024, Huron-Kinloss Community Improvement Plan Areas

Recommendation:

THAT the Township of Huron-Kinloss Council hereby approves Report number BED-2024-04-10 prepared by Michelle Goetz, Manager of Strategic Initiatives;

AND FURTHER THAT Council supports in principle the 2024 Community Improvement Plan as presented;

AND FURTHER authorizes the appropriate by-laws to come forward.

Background:

A community improvement plan (CIP) is an economic development tool that encourages community revitalization by providing financial assistance to business owners and commercial property owners. The Township of Huron-Kinloss adopted a CIP in 2013 that included two plan areas: Ripley and Lucknow and focused on the revitalization of our downtowns. The original plan provided financial assistance through the following funding programs:

- Façade Improvement
- Storefront Sign Improvement
- Infrastructure Works/Building Restoration (Tax incentive grant)
- Community Energy Efficiency

In 2019, the Township updated the CIP to include an additional plan area, Point Clark, and three new funding programs:

- Building Improvement/Structural Grant
- Branding Design and Marketing
- Start-up Business Program

Since 2013, the Township has invested \$147,007.59 in community revitalization and beautification efforts through the CIP. A CIP is the only permissible way to provide funding to private businesses according to the *Municipal Act, 2001*.

Bruce County also offers funding programs through the Spruce the Bruce program. The regular funding ratio for Spruce the Bruce applicants is 50/50 between the

County and the applicant; however, Huron-Kinloss has a partnership with the County that allows us to offer 1/3, 1/3, 1/3 funding using funds from our Downtown Improvement Program. Through this partnership, the County provides 1/3 funding, the Township provides 1/3 funding, and the applicant provides 1/3 funding. This allows the funding to spread farther, supporting more applicants across Huron-Kinloss. Spruce the Bruce is run by the County through the lower tier municipalities community improvement plans because the County does not have a CIP of their own.

In 2022, Bruce County updated the Spruce the Bruce program to include several new funding programs and set aside \$15,000 for businesses in each lower tier municipality to access the new programs. Unfortunately, without updating our CIP, Huron-Kinloss businesses were not eligible for the new funding programs.

The Economic Development Team has worked closely with the County as they rolled out their new Spruce the Bruce programs and monitored the other lower tier municipalities to see how they move forward with their CIPs. At this time, all lower tier municipalities in Bruce County have adopted or are in the process of adopting a CIP with the new Spruce the Bruce programs as well as any other funding programs they have identified to support their economic development priorities.

Discussion/Analysis/Overview:

The Downtown Improvement Committee, consisting of the Chief Administrative Officer, the Treasurer, the Building and Planning Manager, the Manager of Strategic Initiatives, and the Economic Development Officer, have reviewed our current CIP, CIP areas, Downtown Improvement Program procedures, and the new Spruce the Bruce programs. Upon this review, the Downtown Improvement Committee drafted a new CIP. The new CIP outlines 4 community improvement plan areas (Ripley, Lucknow, Point Clark and a new area that includes the whole Township), the municipally driven funding programs, and the County driven funding programs.

The updated plan organizes the funding programs by the organization responsible for administering the program and by community improvement plan areas. Schedule B outlines all the programs that the Township will offer through the Downtown Improvement Program (businesses or property owners can apply directly to the Township at any time of the year if funding is available). Schedule C outlines the programs offered by the County; businesses can apply directly to Spruce the Bruce for funding through these programs. Some of the programs are offered by the County and not offered by the Township and vice versa. Additionally, some programs are only applicable to businesses that are located within the commercial areas of Lucknow, Ripley, and Point Clark, according to the CIP area maps.

In the updated CIP the Township has added 3 new programs to the municipally driven section. By adding the following programs, we can provide 1/3 funding to the applicant through the Spruce the Bruce program OR we can offer 50/50 funding to the applicant through the Downtown Improvement Program (if the County runs out of funds or their program deadlines have passed).

Two programs were added that agricultural and tourism businesses outside of our commercial areas can access through the full Township CIP area:

- Agri-Food Innovation Grant
- Product and Experience Development Grant

And one additional program was added to the Lucknow, Ripley and Point Clark Community Improvement Plan areas:

- Business Adaptability and Accessibility Grant

Finally, Spruce the Bruce offers additional 50/50 programs that are not eligible for the Township's Downtown Improvement Program 1/3, 1/3, 1/3 funding ratio:

- Residential Improvement Grant
- Streetscape Beautification
- Community Signage
- Destination Infrastructure and Active Transportation

April 8th, 2024, is the public meeting where residents, business owners and property owners can provide their feedback on the updated CIP. Any feedback received at the meeting will be considered and any edits will be made to the draft plan as required.

The draft CIP was sent to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for review, as required by the *Planning Act, 1990* and Staff expect to have Ministry comments back in the very near future. Once comments are received and any necessary edits are made (if required), the by-law will be brought forward to Council for approval.

Staff are recommending amending By-law No. 2013-45 Community Improvement Plan Areas by removing the current Lucknow and Ripley maps and replacing them with the four community improvement plan area maps for Ripley, Lucknow, Point Clark and the whole Township. Furthermore, we are recommending repealing By-law No. 2013-46, the original CIP and By-law No. 2015-105, the amended CIP; and replacing them with a new By-law with the attached Community Improvement Plan.

Financial Impacts:

There is no budget required to update the community improvement plan. Funding for the Downtown Improvement Program is included in the 2024 Economic Development Budget.

Performance Measurement:

The approved Community Improvement Plan By-Law is approved.

The Downtown Improvement Program has its own set of performance measures, including number of grants administered and amount invested into the community.

Strategic Area:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Embrace a thriving rural lifestyle | <input type="checkbox"/> Enhance Municipal Service Delivery |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prepare for Inclusive Growth | <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure Financial Stability |

Strategic Goal: Encourage economic vitality

Respectfully Submitted By:

Michelle Goetz, Manager of Strategic Initiatives

Report Approved By:

Jodi MacArthur, Chief Administrative Officer