

# DOWNTOWN GRIMSBY

---

## COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

FINAL - FEBRUARY 2010

**T****TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>Area Assessment</b>	<b>26</b>
1.1	History	1	5.1	Purpose and Method	26
1.2	CIP Background	2	5.2	Characteristics	26
1.3	Rationale for a Downtown CIP	2	5.2.1	Core District	28
1.4	Study Area	3	5.2.2	Main West District	29
1.5	Goal and Objectives	3	5.2.3	Main East District	30
			5.2.4	Ontario District	31
			5.2.5	Elm District	32
			5.2.6	Livingston District	33
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Legislative Basis</b>	<b>5</b>	5.3	SWOT Analysis	34
2.1	Municipal Act	5	5.4	Recommended Project Area	39
2.2	Planning Act	5			
2.3	Heritage Act	6	<b>6.0</b>	<b>Land Use and Design Strategy</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Policy and Regulatory Context</b>	<b>8</b>	6.1	Gateway Features	44
3.1	Provincial Policy Statement	8	6.1.1	Primary Gateway Feature	44
3.2	Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe	8	6.1.2	Secondary Gateway Features	44
3.3	Regional Niagara Policy Plan	9	6.1.3	Other Gateways	44
3.4	Niagara Growth Management Strategy	10	6.2	Wayfinding Signage	45
3.5	Grimsby Official Plan	11	6.3	Districts	46
3.5.1	Official Plan (1987)	11	6.4	Streetscape Improvements	48
3.5.2	Official Plan (Draft)	16	6.4.1	General Streetscape Improvements	48
3.6	Grimsby Zoning By-law	20	6.4.2	Specific Streetscape Improvements	51
3.7	Model Urban Design Guidelines	20	6.5	Pedestrian Crossings	54
3.8	Town Character Study	21	6.6	Ontario/Elm Realignment	55
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Vision</b>	<b>23</b>	6.7	Public Square	56
4.1	Consultation	24	6.8	Coronation Park	57
4.2	Vision	24	6.9	Forty Mile Creek	57
4.3	Principles	24	6.10	Municipal Parking Lots	58
			6.11	Public Art	59
			<b>7.0</b>	<b>Incentive Programs</b>	<b>60</b>
			7.1	Critical Community Needs	60
			7.2	Approach	60
			7.3	General Program Requirements	60

7.4	Commercial/Mixed Use Building Façade Grant	63	8.2.1	Basis	78
7.4.1	Purpose	63	8.2.2	Priorities	78
7.4.2	Description	63	8.2.3	Public Domain Incentive Program	78
7.4.3	Eligibility Criteria and Program Requirements	63	8.3	Policy and Regulatory Amendments	82
7.5	Residential Conversion/Intensification Grant or Loan	65	8.3.1	Official Plan	82
7.5.1	Purpose	65	8.3.2	Zoning By-law	82
7.5.2	Description	65	8.3.3	Sign By-law	83
7.5.2.1	Grant Program	65	8.4	Downtown Design Guidelines	83
7.5.2.2	Loan Program	65	8.5	Incentive Program Monitoring	84
7.5.3	Eligibility Criteria and Program Requirements	65	8.5.1	Purpose	84
7.6	Property Revitalization (Tax Increment) Grant	66	8.5.2	Description	84
7.6.1	Purpose	66	8.5.3	Program Adjustments	85
7.6.2	Description	66	9.0	Summary	87
7.6.3	Eligibility Criteria and Program Requirements	67			
7.7	Development Charge Exemption Program	68			
7.7.1	Purpose	68			
7.7.2	Description	68			
7.7.3	Eligibility Criteria and Program Requirements	69			
7.8	Urban Design Study Grant	69			
7.8.1	Purpose	69			
7.8.2	Description	70			
7.8.3	Eligibility Criteria and Program Requirements	70			
7.9	Environmental Site Assessment Grant	70			
7.9.1	Purpose	70			
7.9.2	Description	70			
7.9.3	Eligibility Criteria and Program Requirements	71			
7.10	Brownfields Tax Assistance Program	74			
7.10.1	Purpose	74			
7.10.2	Description	75			
7.10.3	Eligibility Criteria and Program Requirements	77			
8.0	Implementation	77			
8.1	Keys to Success	77			
8.2	Municipal Improvement Strategy	78			

**Appendices:**

A:	Recommended Community Improvement Policies	APP-1
B:	Commercial/Mixed Use Building Façade Grant Administration	APP-5
C:	Residential Conversion/Intensification Grant or Loan Administration	APP-7
D:	Property Revitalization (Tax Increment) Grant Administration	APP-11
E:	Development Charge Exemption Program Administration	APP-14
F:	Urban Design Study Grant Administration	APP-17
G:	Environmental Site Assessment Grant Administration	APP-20
H:	Brownfields Tax Assistance Program Administration	APP-23
I:	Regional Smart Growth Principles	APP-26
	Regional Development Charges By-law No. 62-2009	

## 1.1 History

The Town of Grimsby was originally known as “Township Number 6”, based on the numbering system for townships used in the Niagara Peninsula prior to 1791. Founded by United Empire Loyalists from the northeastern United States, who settled along Forty Mile Creek and the trails used by First Nations people in the area, the community became known as “The Forty” after 1791 based on its location alongside the watercourse. Ultimately, “Grimsby” was created based on the name of the surrounding Township, which was incorporated in 1876 and became a town in 1922.

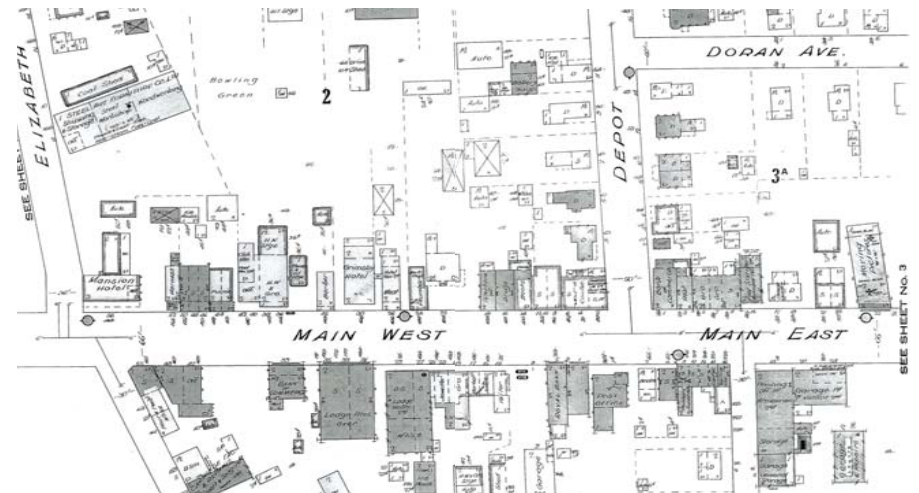
Grimsby has evolved over time from a small rural village including milling operations, to a farm-related manufacturing centre, to a service centre for the fruit growing industry in the Niagara Peninsula. This latter function was further strengthened with the completion of the Great Western Railway (Grand Trunk Railway) in 1857, which established Grimsby as a transportation centre between Hamilton and St. Catharines. Today, Grimsby is a relatively self-sufficient community with a range of housing choices, varied recreational opportunities, a healthy downtown, and a reasonable employment base, although with a large commuting proportion.



*Above: View of Main Street circa 1899.  
(Source: Hamilton Public Library, Local History and Archives)*

*Right: Many of the older buildings along Main Street, seen here in 1928, still exist.*

*(Source: Insurance Plan of the Town of Grimsby, Underwriters Survey Bureau Limited, 1928: Sheet 2)*



## 1.2 CIP Background

The Grimsby Downtown Improvement Area together with the Town of Grimsby, and other groups such as the Grimsby Chamber of Commerce, Grimsby Economic Development Advisory Committee, and the Grimsby Heritage Advisory Committee, initiated a Community Improvement Plan for Downtown Grimsby in December 2008 by retaining GSP Group and RCI Consulting to undertake the work. The community improvement plan is being undertaken as part of a series of efforts, "The Downtown Project: Next Steps", which is being funded to a large degree by a grant from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

A Community Improvement Plan (or "CIP") is a planning tool that establishes a long-term and comprehensive strategy for improvements within a defined area of a municipality, based on a defined need or set of needs. A CIP allows a municipality to undertake a number of actions, including acquiring, rehabilitating, and disposing of land; providing grants and loans to property owners and tenants; and undertaking infrastructure and public space improvements.

This "Downtown Grimsby Community Improvement Plan" report is the third and final report of the Downtown Grimsby CIP process, and represents a culmination of the work that has been undertaken. The first report, the "Existing Conditions Report", was finalized in May 2009 and provides the review of existing conditions affecting Downtown Grimsby, including physical conditions of the area and relevant policy and regulatory documents. The second report, the "Downtown Master Plan", was finalized in November 2009 and provides the overall physical design and improvements strategy for Downtown Grimsby, including both public sector and private sector improvements.

## 1.3 Rationale for a Downtown CIP

Downtowns are important to the day-to-day functioning of residents in a small town. They are typically the "heart" of a community and perform a broad range of functions for residents. A vibrant and healthy downtown provides a number of social and economic benefits to a community, including:

- Providing opportunities for residents to shop locally;
- Strengthening the experience of visitors to the area;
- Encouraging residents to live downtown;
- Providing visitors with a lasting impression of a community;
- Reflecting the character and history of a community;
- Providing employment in the municipality;
- Providing a social and civic focal point in the community; or
- Incubating the growth of local businesses.

While Downtown Grimsby is relatively healthy and stable from an economic perspective, improvements are needed to enhance its image, identity, and overall functioning. To this end, the need for a community improvement plan was identified in the "*Blueprint for Action*" document, a comprehensive action plan that outlined and prioritized a series of projects for the revitalization of Downtown Grimsby. This document sought to enhance the vibrancy and health of Downtown Grimsby, particularly in light of large format developments that were being proposed in the surrounding area.

Provincial land use policies, both the Provincial Policy Statement and Places to Grow legislation, support the revitalization efforts given their emphasis on protecting and enhancing downtown and main street areas in local municipalities. Such areas provide substantial opportunities for showcasing the Province's principal planning goal: vibrant, healthy, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly, and transit-oriented communities.

## 1.4 Study Area

The Study Area for the Downtown Grimsby CIP (see **Figure 1**) is the “Central Core Area” designation from the Town of Grimsby Official Plan. This area is generally bounded by Brierwood Avenue in the west, the CNR railline to the north, Robinson Street to the east, and Gibson Street to the south. As part of the CIP process, the existing conditions within the Study Area, and those properties immediately surrounding, were assessed to determine those areas most in need of improvement, in order to identify a recommended Community Improvement Project Area.

## 1.5 Goals and Objectives

The overall **goal** of the Downtown Grimsby CIP is to implement the long-term vision that was established for Downtown Grimsby. This vision identifies that over time Downtown Grimsby will:

- Be the vibrant, active and safe gathering place in the Town with a concentration of commercial, civic, and residential uses;
- Have a clear and definable identity that meshes the Town’s historic roots with contemporary improvements;
- Have a healthy and sustainable commercial environment that is supported by a strong downtown residential base;
- Capitalize on an integrated system of its natural heritage and cultural heritage assets;
- Have an visually attractive and clean public realm that is accommodating to all users;
- Accommodate new developments that complement the character of the area’s traditional form; and
- Offer a complete range of day-to-day uses and specialty uses that cater to both residents and visitors.

The **objectives** of the Downtown Grimsby CIP are:

- a) To establish the existing background conditions within Downtown Grimsby;
- b) To identify the key improvements necessary for revitalization in Downtown Grimsby;
- c) To outline the “vision” and key principles for Downtown Grimsby that form the basis of improvement efforts;
- d) To identify an appropriate community improvement project area where improvement efforts and incentive programs will be focused;
- e) To develop a strategy for improvements to the public realm, including parks and open spaces, gateway features, wayfinding signage, public parking areas, and streetscapes;
- f) To develop a package of incentive programs that seek encourage development and improvement by leveraging private sector investment through municipal funding; and
- g) To develop an strategy for the implementation of the recommended improvements and incentive programs





## Downtown Grimsby Community Improvement Plan

FIGURE 1  
Study Area

Base: Town of Grimsby, 2006 Imagery

This section summarizes the legislative authority for the preparation and adoption of community improvement plans throughout Ontario, including the Municipal Act, the Planning Act, and the Heritage Act.

## 2.1 Municipal Act

Ontario's *Municipal Act, 2001* (the "Municipal Act") is the principal statute governing the administration of municipalities in the Province and outlining municipal powers and duties, including the permission for community improvement.

The Municipal Act prohibits municipalities from assisting any manufacturing, industrial or commercial enterprises, either directly or indirectly, through the granting of bonuses. This assistance includes giving or lending any property of the municipality, including money; guaranteeing borrowing; leasing or selling any municipal property at below fair market value; and giving a total or partial exemption from any levy, charge or fee. This prohibition is generally known as the "bonusing rule". However, the Municipal Act does provide an exception to the bonusing rule for municipalities that are using powers under the community improvement provisions of Section 28 of the Planning Act (see subsection 2.2 of this report below) or the tax assistance provisions of Section 365 of the Municipal Act.

Section 365 of the Municipal Act allows local municipalities to establish "Heritage Relief Programs" that provide tax reductions or refunds for eligible heritage properties. This financial tool is designed to assist with the maintenance and restoration of these heritage properties. Eligible heritage properties are those designated under Part IV or Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* and that is subject to a

heritage agreement. The tax reduction or refund amount must be between 10 and 40 percent of the taxes for municipal and school purposes levied on the property that is attributable to building or structure on the eligible property; or the land used in connection with the eligible property.

Municipalities must pass a by-law to adopt the program. Tax assistance may be in the form of a deferral or cancellation of part or all of the taxes levied on that property for municipal and education purposes during the rehabilitation period and the development period of the property. A municipality with an approved community improvement plan in place that contains provisions specifying tax assistance will be permitted to provide said tax assistance for municipal purposes. Municipalities may also apply to the Province to provide matching education property tax assistance through the Province's Brownfields Financial Tax Incentive Program (BFTIP).

## 2.2 Planning Act

Ontario's *Planning Act, 1990* (the "Planning Act") is the principal statute governing how land use planning is undertaken in the Province and regulates how land uses may be controlled. Under the Planning Act, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing can issue statements on matters related to land use planning that are of provincial interest, such as the Provincial Policy Statement, which outlines matters of provincial interest as it relates to land use planning.

Section 28 of the Planning Act allows municipalities, if they have provisions in their official plans relating to community improvement, to designate by by-law a "community improvement project area" and prepare and adopt a community improvement plan (CIP) for such an area. 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.*

A “community improvement project area” is defined in the Planning Act as a portion of the municipality, or the entire municipality itself, where municipal council deems community improvement is needed given reasons of “*age, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement, unsuitability of buildings or for any other environmental, social or community economic development reason*”.

Once a CIP has been adopted by the municipality and comes into effect, the municipality may use the tax assistance powers afforded by the Municipal Act and by Section 28 of the Planning Act. In regard to the latter, the municipality may:

- a) acquire, hold, clear, grade or otherwise prepare land for community improvement;
- b) construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on land acquired or held by it in conformity with the community improvement plan;
- c) sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of any land and buildings acquired or held by it in conformity with the community improvement plan; and
- d) make grants or loans, conforming with the CIP, to registered owners, assessed owners, or tenants within the community improvement project area, and to any person to whom such an owner or tenant has assigned the right to receive a grant or

loan, to pay for the whole or any part of the CIP’s eligible costs.

The Planning Act specifies that for the grants or loans made under a CIP the eligible costs may include costs related to: environmental site assessment and remediation; development or redevelopment; construction and reconstruction of lands and buildings for rehabilitation purposes; and construction and reconstruction of lands and buildings for the provision of energy efficient uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements or facilities. The total value of all grants and loans made under the Planning Act and the tax assistance provided under the Municipal Act respecting the land and buildings cannot exceed the eligible cost of the CIP with respect to those lands and buildings.

### 2.3 Heritage Act

The Ontario Heritage Act, 1990 (the “Heritage Act”) is the provincial statute that gives municipalities and the provincial government powers to preserve heritage resources, principally the protection of heritage buildings and archaeological sites. The Heritage Act came into force in 1975 and was recently amended.

While the heritage property tax relief program under Section 365 of the Municipal Act is designed to assist property owners in maintaining and conserving heritage properties, Section 39 of the Heritage Act allows a municipal council to make grants or loans (up-front or tax-increment basis) to owners of designated heritage properties. These grants or loans may pay for all or part of the cost of alteration of a designated property on such terms and conditions as the council may prescribe. The municipality must pass a by-law in order to provide these grants and loans. Municipal council may add the amount of any loan (including interest) to the tax roll and collect the loan in the same way that taxes are collected, for a period of up to 5 years. This section

of the Heritage Act also allows the municipality to register the loan as a lien or charge against the land.

Section 39 of the Heritage Act can also be used to provide grants and loans for the undertaking of professional design studies as these can be considered "*part of the cost of alteration*". A design study is certainly an important precursor to, and key component of, any major heritage features alteration. As such, a professional design study is included as part of the grant/loan program described in this report.

Grants and loans for heritage restoration and improvement can also be provided under a CIP. One of the key administrative advantages of Section 39 of the Heritage Act is that it does not require Ministerial approval, as does a CIP under Section 28 of the Planning Act. Another advantage is that interpretation of Section 39 of the Heritage Act suggests that this section does not restrict grants and loans only to heritage features. Section 39 (1) of the Heritage Act refers to "*...paying for the whole or any part of the cost of alteration of such designated property on such terms and conditions as the council may prescribe.*" Consultations with provincial staff and legal experts have confirmed that this section of the Heritage Act does not restrict grants and loans only to heritage features. However, unlike the Planning Act, municipalities are not allowed to make grants or loans to assignees, such as tenants, who may wish to undertake heritage improvements.

This section summarizes the policy and regulatory context for the preparation of the Downtown Grimsby CIP, including both Provincial and Municipal policies and regulations. These documents need to be referenced for the complete policies and regulations, as below is only a summary and these documents may be amended from time to time.

### 3.1. Provincial Policy Statement

The Provincial Policy Statement (the “PPS”) provides direction on matters of provincial significance related to land use planning. The PPS is issued under the authority of the Planning Act, with the latest version coming into effect on March 1, 2005. The Planning Act requires that, “decisions affecting planning matters shall be consistent with policy statements issued under the Act”.

The vision for land use planning in Ontario in the PPS states that “the long-term prosperity and social well-being of Ontarians depends on maintaining strong communities, a clean and healthy environment and a strong economy”. To this end, the 2005 PPS promotes:

- The creation of “healthy, liveable and safe communities”, through efficient land use patterns, appropriate mixes of different land use types, cost-effective development standards, environmentally sensitive development practices, accessible neighbourhoods, and available infrastructure and public facilities (Section 1.1.1);
- That land use patterns be based on densities and mixing that efficiently use the land and existing or planned services and facilities (Section 1.1.3.2a);

- Opportunities for *intensification* and *redevelopment* where this can be accommodated taking into account existing buildings and areas and the availability of suitable existing or planned *infrastructure* and *facilities* (Section 1.1.3.3);
- An appropriate range of employment uses to meet the long-term needs of residents (Section 1.3.1.1);
- Long-term prosperity through the maintenance and enhancement of downtown and mainstreets (Section 1.1.7b);
- An appropriate range of housing types and densities that accommodate current and future users, that efficiently use the land, services and facilities, and that support alternative transportation modes to the automobile, such as public transit (Section 1.4.3);
- Healthy, active communities with streets and parks that are pedestrian and cyclist-friendly and contain a range of different recreation opportunities (Section 1.5.1);
- The development of transportation systems that are safe, accessible and efficient (Section 1.6.5.1); and
- Land use patterns that minimize vehicular dependence and maximize opportunities for public transit use (Section 1.6.5.4).

### 3.2 Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe

The 2006 Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (“Growth Plan”), released in 2006, is the Province of Ontario’s growth strategy for the Greater Golden Horseshoe region, which was completed under the “Places to Grow” program. The Niagara Region is included within the Growth Plan’s area.

The Growth Plan is identified as “a framework for implementing the Government of Ontario’s vision for building stronger, more prosperous communities by managing growth in the region to 2031”. The Growth Plan provides an overall growth strategy for the region that

complements the Provincial Policy Statement and is implemented primarily by municipal planning documents and other municipal tools.

Within the Growth Plan the majority of the land within the Town of Grimsby is located within the broader “Greenbelt Area” designation (from the Province’s Greenbelt Plan), which precludes urban development. Underlying this broad designation, however, the urban area of Grimsby, including Downtown Grimsby, is designated “Built-up Area” in the Growth Plan which permits urban development.

The Growth Plan in respect to land within the Built-up Area boundary generally promotes:

- Building “compact, vibrant and complete communities” (Section 1.2.2);
- Building complete communities with a diverse mix of land use types, a mix of housing and employment opportunities, and high quality open spaces (Section 2.2.2g);
- The development of a multi-modal transportation system that offers connectivity, efficiency, accessibility, and choice (Section 3.3.2.1);
- The planning of high density residential and employment uses to support public transit planning (Section 3.2.3a);
- The creation of pedestrian and cyclist-friendly environments in new communities, which are linked to other neighbourhoods and destinations (Section 3.2.4);
- The creation of a connected open space system (Section 4.2.1.4);
- Promotes the use of land use patterns and urban design standards that facilitate energy efficiency (Section 4.2.4.1b);
- The conservation of built and cultural heritage resources as the built up area intensifies (Section 4.2.4.1e).

The Growth Plan requires that at least 40% of all new residential growth in Niagara Region by 2015, and annually thereafter, is to be through intensification within the Built-up Area boundary in the Region, which includes Downtown Grimsby.

### 3.3 Regional Policy Plan

The Regional Niagara Policy Plan (the “Regional Policy Plan”) provides the strategic direction for all land use decisions in Niagara. The Regional Policy Plan outlines the Niagara Region’s planning goals and priorities for a vibrant and sustainable community, and outlines specific strategies and policies to help achieve that vision. The Regional Policy Plan was largely approved in 1978.

Downtown Grimsby is identified as an “Urban Area” in the Regional Policy Plan as part of the Grimsby urban area. Urban areas in the Region are intended to accommodate a broad range of urban uses that serve residents in the community, including commercial, residential, industrial, open space and institutional uses.

Section 3 of the Regional Policy Plan identifies seven strategic objectives for the Niagara Region. These objectives and their supporting principles are designed to preserve and enhance Niagara’s unique characteristics and quality of life, while achieving a balance between accommodating growth and development and conserving resources and protecting the environment. Four of these objectives are relevant to the Downtown Grimsby CIP’s preparation:

- To recognize the diversified opportunities and needs in Niagara by balancing both urban development and conservation of natural resources (development and efficient use of lands within urban boundaries first, and minimization of conflicts between incompatible uses);



- To facilitate and maintain a pattern of distinctive and identifiable urban communities (maintaining and developing integrated urban communities and the recognition of historical features);
- To improve regional self-reliance through long-range economic development planning and economic diversification (relating employment and residential areas to discourage commuting); and,
- To undertake and support those activities which improve the quality of life for the Niagara community (recognize importance of quality of life in community development through housing, employment, services, agriculture, and natural features).

Of particular relevance to the Downtown Grimsby CIP, the Forty Mile Creek corridor through Downtown Grimsby is identified as “Environmental Conservation Area” (Significant Woodland) as part of the Core Natural Heritage System in the Regional Policy Plan. The general objectives for the Core Natural Heritage System is the maintenance and restoration of its natural features, enhancements to the overall system’s health, and recognition of the linkages to water resources. Development and site alteration within the Environmental Conservation Area need to be in keeping with the policies of Section 7B of the Regional Policy Plan (as amended by Amendment No. 187), as they apply.

### 3.4 Region Growth Management Strategy

The Niagara Region initiated its Growth Management Strategy (“Niagara 2031”) in 2006 to provide an updated higher level direction for Niagara regarding issues of regional concern in keeping with the recent Provincial legislation for growth management. Niagara 2031 is a five-stage process, including background review, options, and amendment phases. The Growth Management Strategy’s goal is to

“examine land use and supporting infrastructure to set the stage for where and how Niagara will grow until 2031”, focusing on sustainable growth in planning for Niagara’s common future.

Regional Policy Plan Amendment # 2-2009 (“Niagara’s Sustainable Community Policies”) incorporates the direction of the Growth Management Strategy into the Regional Policy Plan. Generally, the Amendment reflects the revisions to the Provincial Policy Statement and the policies of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, but it also implements policies regarding intensification, greenfield development, transportation, sustainability, coordination of infrastructure, and brownfield redevelopment, among other elements.

Of particular interest to the Downtown Grimsby CIP process, the draft Amendment contains policies related to urban design and the public realm, which promotes:

1. Urban design and beautification efforts to ensure communities remain attractive and high quality places that encourage tourism.
2. Adoption of design guidelines to support the establishment of a strong sense of place.
3. Urban design analysis when preparing CIPs and public and private projects, including enhanced visualization techniques.
4. Site design that addresses public safety, landscaping, and human scale facing public spaces.
5. Public realms that support vibrant social and cultural gathering spaces, particularly for Niagara’s downtowns.

Adopted by Regional Council on May 28, 2009, Amendment #2-2009 is currently under appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board.

### 3.5 Grimsby Official Plan

The Town of Grimsby Official Plan (the “Grimsby OP”) is the comprehensive policy document which outlines the Town’s long term objectives and policies that govern growth management, land use planning, and the provision of municipal services. The Grimsby OP was adopted in 1987, approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs in 1988, and has been amended from time to time through individual amendments.

The Town initiated an OP Review, as per the Planning Act, in January 2008. The OP Review is intended to reflect the current policy, legislative and growth conditions in the Niagara Region and the Town of Grimsby that have changed since the OP was approved in 1988. Both the current Official Plan (1987) policies and the recently adopted Official Plan (May 2009) are summarized below, including discussion of the relevant land use, transportation and community improvement policies in each Official Plan.

#### 3.5.1 Official Plan (1987)

##### 3.5.1.1 Land Use and Urban Design

Downtown Grimsby is designated “Central Core Area” on the land use schedule of the Grimsby Official Plan (see **Figure 2**). The Grimsby Official Plan intends that the Central Core Area is *“to remain as the focus for office and retail and service facilities, as well as institutional uses, for the entire Town”*. The boundary of the designation is intended to reflect the existing central business district in Grimsby, comprised of commercial and town-wide functions.

The Central Core Area designation permits a full range of retail, office, and service commercial uses as main uses. The designation also permits mixed-use developments including residential uses and

residential uses in medium density forms, except on Main Street, Mountain Street and Elm Street. Buildings are limited a maximum 4 storeys in height.

Additionally, there are a series of special policy areas that apply to different areas in the Centre Core Area, given their specific nature and particular issues (see **Figure 3**). The general description and intent of these special policy areas are as follows:

1. Commercial Core: the main concentration of retail and service commercial uses in the Central Core with the intent of further pedestrian-oriented development;
2. Grimsby Square Plaza: the second concentration of retail and service commercial areas in the Central Core with encouragement of intensifying;
3. Arena Block: preference for the continuation of the community use, although any new development should be mixed-use allowing for commercial and residential
4. Commercial/Residential Block: area located on the fringes of the Central Core Area where intent is for residential building converted to be mixed-use or commercial uses;
5. Murray/Patton Residential Block: existing commercial on Main Street and residential to the interior, which new development should reinforce;
6. Elizabeth/Adelaide Residential Block: generally low density residential uses exist in this area New development to be generally residential in nature; and
7. Transition Area: a mixture of office, retail, institutional and residential uses exist in this area with new development intended to be commercial and institutional uses that don’t require Main Street exposure.

### 3.4.1.2 Transportation

Schedule D in the Grimsby Official Plan identifies the road hierarchy and functions within Downtown Grimsby. Main Street East, Main Street West, Livingston Avenue, Christie Street, and Mountain Street are identified as Regional Roads; Elm Street, Ontario Street, and Maple Avenue are identified as Collector Roads; and the remaining roads are identified as Local Roads. Regional Roads are intended to carry moderate traffic volumes through and within the Town, Collector Roads to carry traffic to specific areas and site, and Local Roads to provide access to individual sites.

### 3.4.1.3 Community Improvement

Section 6 of the Grimsby Official Plan contains policies for a Community Improvement Strategy. This strategy is intended to provide the mechanism for community improvement and provide a framework for identification and assessment of areas requiring improvement.

The goal of the Community Improvement Strategy is to *"improve living and working conditions in the Town by providing for the maintenance, rehabilitation and redevelopment of selected residential and commercial areas"*. The objectives supporting this goal are:

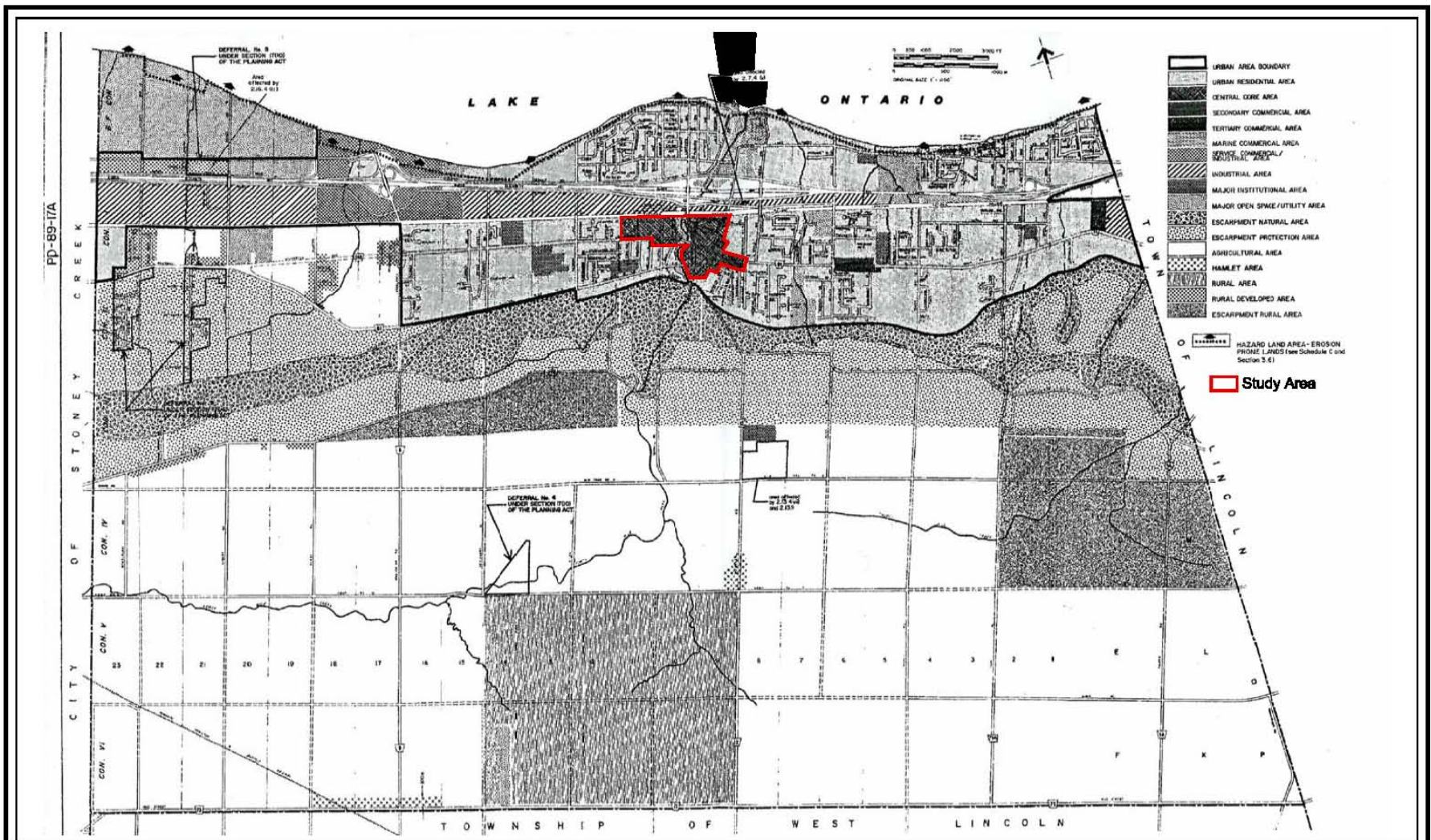
- i) to support private efforts to maintain and rehabilitate existing building and structures;*
- ii) to maximize the use of the existing public infrastructure by infilling or redeveloping vacant or underused land;*
- iii) to preserve and enhance the viability of existing commercial facilities;*
- iv) to upgrade or improve the existing level of physical services and facilities such as roads, street lights and sidewalks;*

- v) to upgrade or improve the existing quality and quantity of recreational and other community services and facilities;*
- vi) to make the most efficient use of all available resources, including funding from federal and provincial governments, to resolve local physical, social and economic deficiencies.*

The Grimsby Official Plan identifies the criteria for identifying a community improvement area. Schedule C-1 of the Official Plan identifies five community improvement areas within the Town (see **Figure 4**). The Central Core Area community improvement area (Area A), corresponding to the Central Core Area designation, is identified as a high priority. This boundary was used from the outset of the CIP process as the Study Area boundary (see **Figure 1**).

Section 6 also provides a series of methods for implementing the community improvement policies. The identified methods include:

- Designation of a community improvement project area for one or part of the identified community improvement areas;
- Acquisition, improvement and disposal of land in the community improvement project area;
- Participation in available Federal and Provincial funding for the preparation of CIPs;
- Encouragement of "private initiatives that meet the objectives of a CIP"; and
- Application of the Ontario Heritage Act.



## Downtown Grimsby Community Improvement Plan

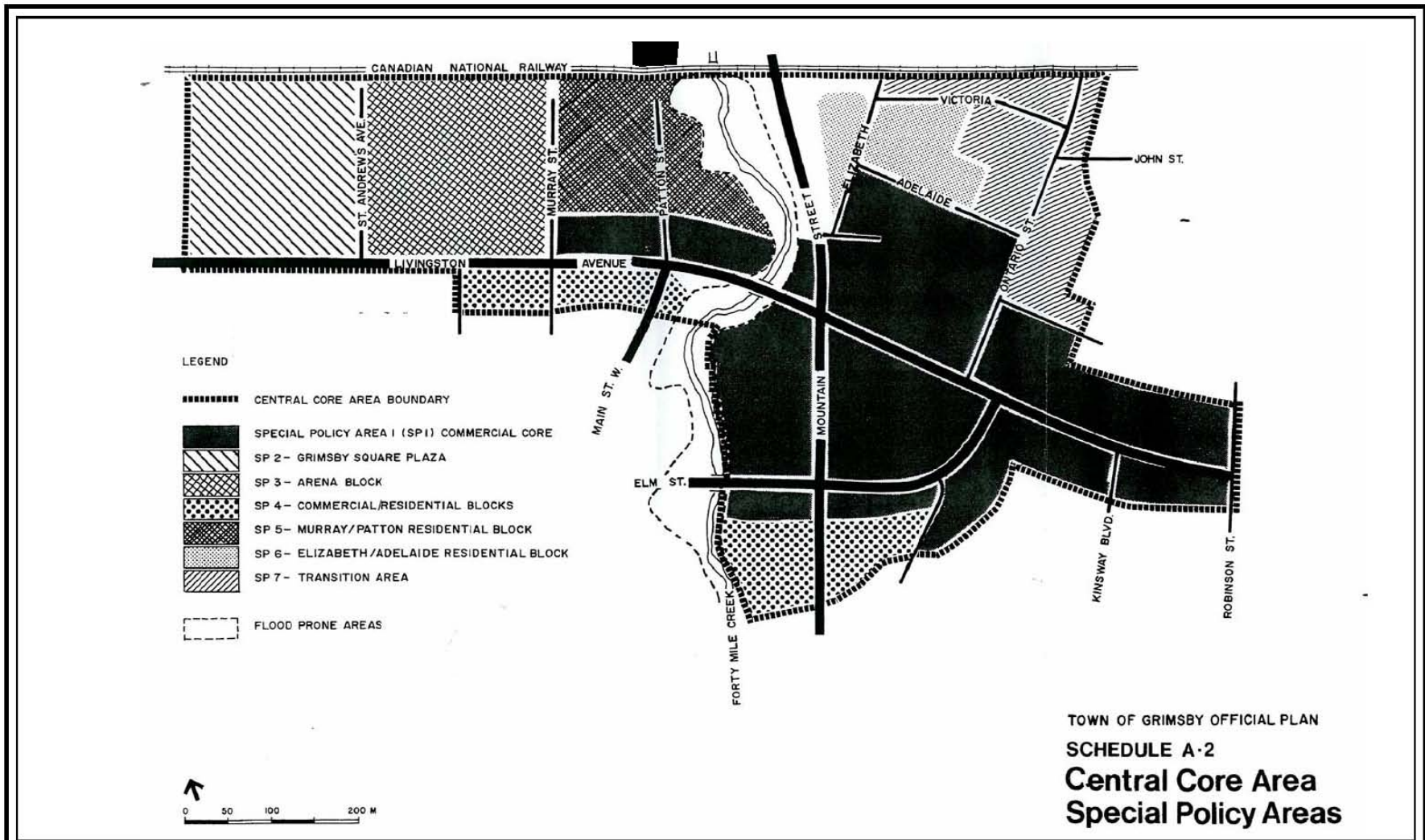


FIGURE 2

Land Use Schedule

Base: Town of Grimsby Official Plan (1987)



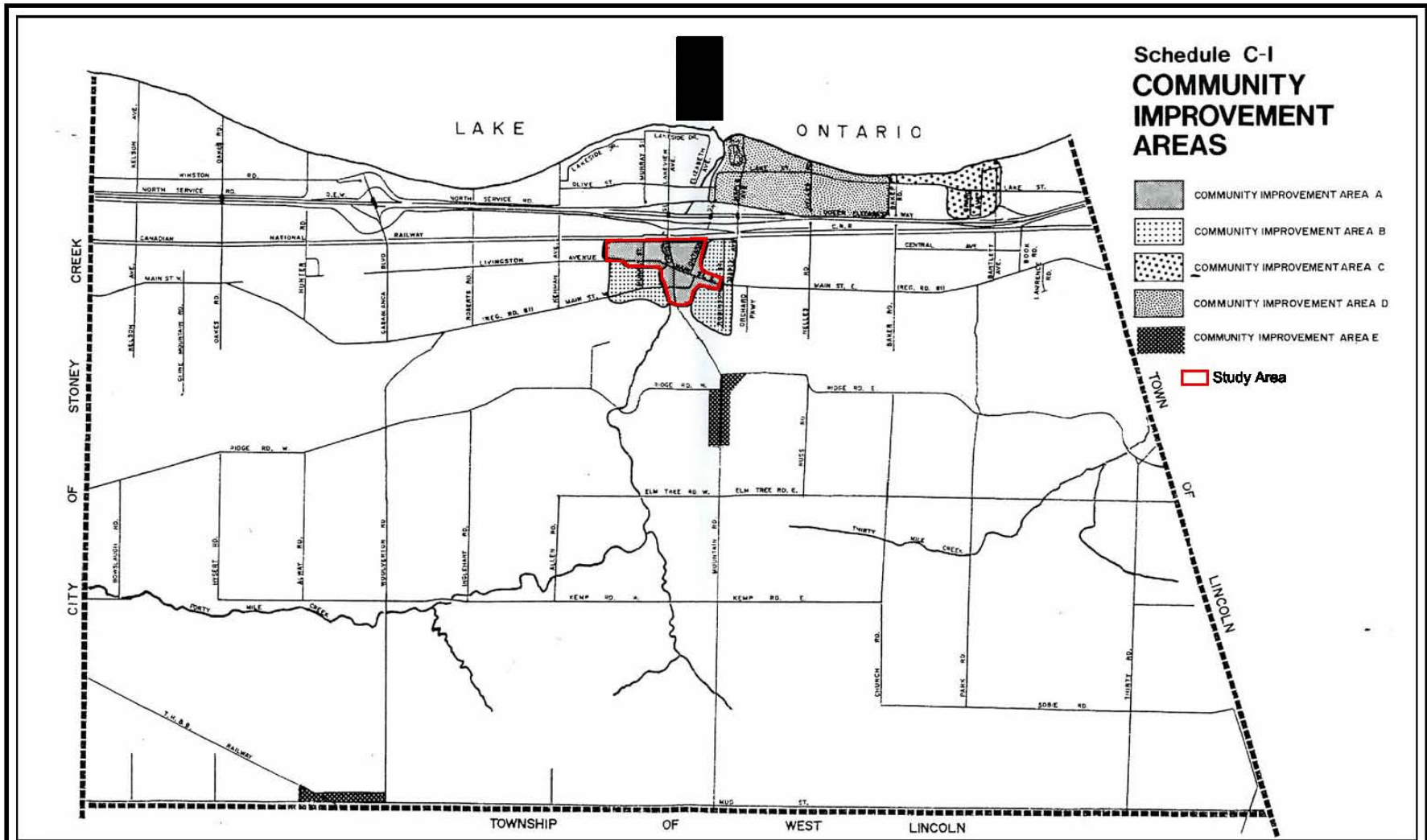


**Downtown Grimsby  
Community Improvement Plan**



**FIGURE 3**  
Central Core Special Policy Areas

Base: Town of Grimsby Official Plan (1987)



## Downtown Grimsby Community Improvement Plan



FIGURE 4

Community Improvement Areas

Base: Town of Grimsby Official Plan (1987)

### 3.5.2 Official Plan (2009)

The Town of Grimsby in November 2009 adopted a new Official Plan to replace the existing Official Plan from 1987. The Official Plan Review process was initiated in 2008 and included a visioning session in April 2008, a public workshop in June 2008, and a public open/workshop in November 2008. The adopted Official Plan has not yet been approved by the Niagara Region.

#### 3.5.2.1 Land Use

Downtown Grimsby is designated "Downtown District" on the land use schedule of the new Official Plan (see Figure 5). The new Official Plan identifies the expectations for improvement to the "viability and attractiveness of Downtown Grimsby as a focus for investment in the years to come". The following objectives are identified for the Downtown District:

1. *To protect and enhance the character of the historic "main street".*
2. *To promote new intensified development in appropriate locations.*
3. *To ensure that new development is compatible with existing development patterns.*
4. *To create new programs, policies and/or financial mechanisms for ensuring a high standard of urban design in the Downtown District.*
5. *To enhance the appearance and encourage maintenance of commercial and residential buildings and areas.*
6. *To encourage the provision of sufficient parking to accommodate new growth.*

The Downtown District is comprised of three different sub-designations: the Downtown-Main Street designation, the Downtown-

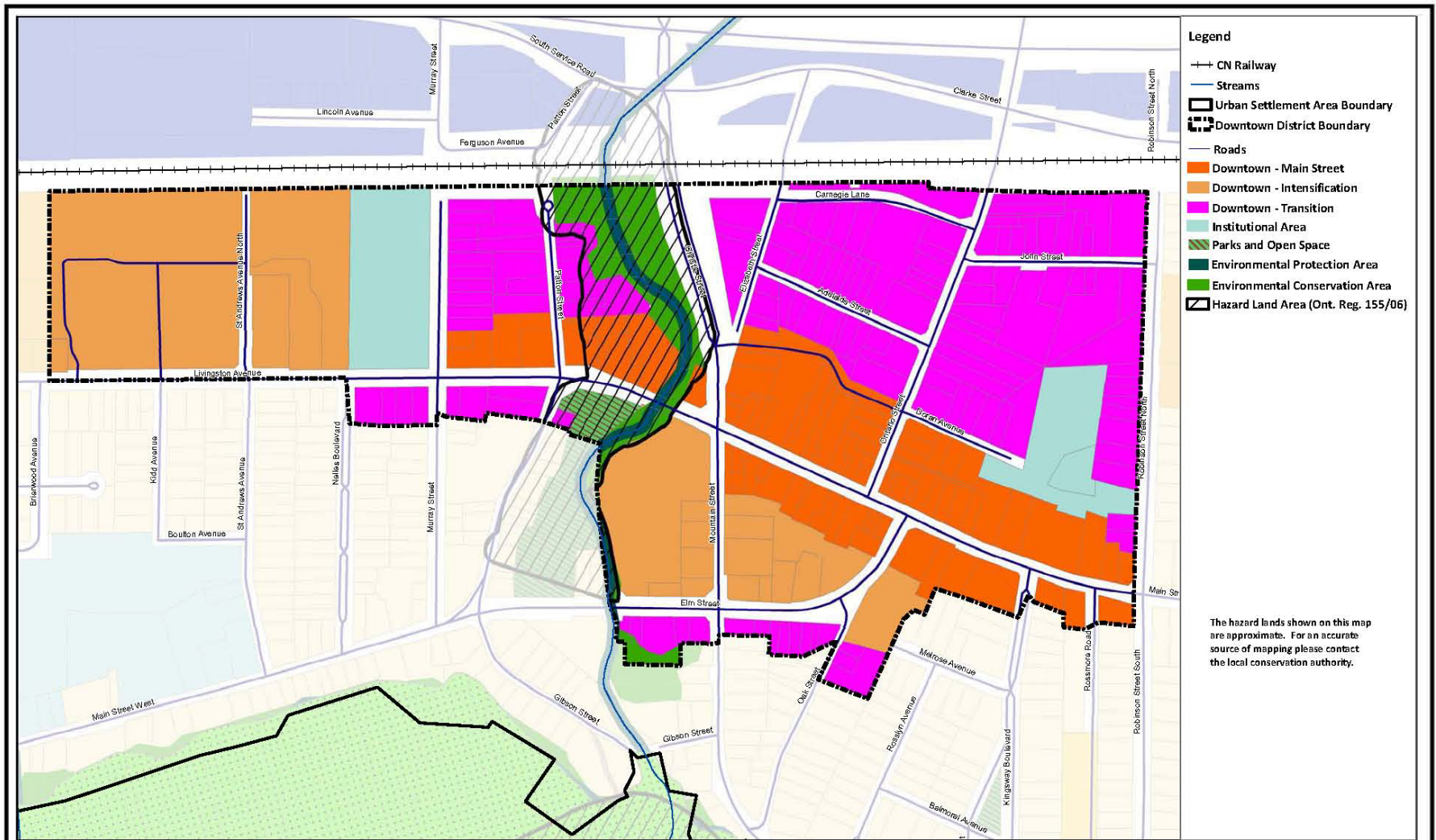
Transition designation, and the Downtown-Intensification designation. These three sub-designations are discussed below.

The Downtown-Main Street designation corresponds to the Main Street corridor from Robinson Street to Murray Street. The general intent of this designation is to extend the character and built form of the historic core to the fringes of the designation at the ends of the street corridor. The designation permits a broad range of retail and service commercial uses, offices, and residential apartments above the first storey, among other uses. Drive through facilities, automobile-oriented uses, and single, semi-detached and townhouse dwellings are specifically prohibited. Building heights are to be between 2 and 4 storeys.

The Downtown-Transition designation corresponds generally to the areas north and south of the Downtown-Main Street designation. The general intent of this designation is to facilitate conversion and intensification in this area while respecting the transition to the surrounding stable neighbourhoods. The designation permits a broad range of residential types, from single and semi-detached dwellings to low-rise apartments, in addition to small offices, retail and service commercial uses. Drive through facilities, automobile-oriented uses, and service or retail commercial uses over 500 square metres in size are specifically prohibited. Building heights are to be between 2 and 3 (south) or 4 storeys (north).

The Downtown-Intensification corresponds generally to the two large scale commercial developments in Downtown Grimsby (Village Inn Plaza and Grimsby Square Plaza), together with surrounding properties. The general intent of this designation is to accommodate opportunities for mixed-use development and residential intensification in addition to larger commercial developments. Building heights are to be between 2 and 4 storeys, the minimum which can be provided through design features that give the appearance of 2 storeys.





- Legend**
- +— CN Railway
  - Streams
  - ▭ Urban Settlement Area Boundary
  - ▭ Downtown District Boundary
  - Roads
  - Orange Downtown - Main Street
  - Light Orange Downtown - Intensification
  - Pink Downtown - Transition
  - Light Green Institutional Area
  - Dark Green Parks and Open Space
  - Light Green with Dots Environmental Protection Area
  - Light Green with Dots Environmental Conservation Area
  - White with Black Outline Hazard Land Area (Ont. Reg. 155/06)

The hazard lands shown on this map are approximate. For an accurate source of mapping please contact the local conservation authority.



## Downtown Grimsby Community Improvement Plan



FIGURE 5

Downtown Land Use Schedule

Base: Town of Grimsby Official Plan (2009)



### 3.5.2.2 Urban Design

The new Official Plan contains a detailed urban design direction for the Downtown District designation. The objectives of the urban design direction for Downtown Grimsby are:

1. *To enhance the livability and physical appeal of the Town through the quality, layout and attractiveness of its public and private spaces and buildings.*
2. *To provide development proponents with an understanding of the design intent of the Town.*
3. *To create a built environment, which provides:*
  - a) *Visual diversity, interest and beauty;*
  - b) *A well-defined public realm, including an interconnected open space network;*
  - c) *Sensitive integration of new development with existing development;*
  - d) *A transit supportive and pedestrian oriented development pattern; and*
  - e) *A road system which recognizes and preserves the historic character of the Downtown District.*

The new Official Plan contains a much stronger emphasis on urban design for Downtown Grimsby, and the Town as a whole, as compared to the existing Official Plan. This emphasis includes a comprehensive set of urban design policies for the Downtown District (see summary to the right), including all three sub-areas, which speak to a range of different elements, including building orientation and design; building façade design; parking and service areas; streetscape elements; and open spaces. The inclusion of these policies gives the Town a strong position for requiring high quality urban design as part of all new development within Downtown Grimsby.

The urban design policies of the new Town of Grimsby Official Plan support:

- Maintenance of the existing fine-grained street and block pattern;
- Gateway features that highlight the entrances to Downtown;
- Inclusion of small village squares in new developments;
- Compatibility with the existing architectural styles, materials and scale;
- Development review that considers character, scale, colour, building materials, and design features;
- Barrier-free building design;
- Streets without monotonous and repetitive façades;
- Ground floors with windows and doors opening onto the street;
- Provision of a pedestrian weather protection system along the sidewalk edge;
- Variation in three-dimensional elements along a façade;
- Screening of mechanical equipment;
- Articulation of both visible sides of corner buildings;
- Angular planes abutting low profile residential properties;
- A relatively consistent building edge adjacent to the street;
- Maximization of building frontage along the street edge;
- Exemption from parking requirements for new non-residential development or uses within an existing building;
- Reductions in parking requirements within 150 metres of an existing public facility;
- Prohibition of surface parking, loading areas, drive-through lanes and servicing facilities in front yards;
- Access to parking and servicing areas off side streets;
- Landscaping features that divide large surface parking areas;
- Provision of bicycle parking facilities for commercial uses; and
- Encroachments into the public realm for awnings or cafes.

### 3.5.2.3 Transportation

Schedule C of the new Official Plan identifies the classification of roads within the Town based on their function. The majority of the principal roads in Downtown Grimsby are classified “Regional Arterial” roads: Main Street East, Main Street West, Livingston Avenue, Mountain Street, and Christie Street are all classified as “Regional Arterial” roads, while Elm Street and Ontario Street are classified as “Collector” roads and all other roads are classified as “Local” roads.

Regional Arterial Roads are those under the jurisdiction of the Niagara Region that are to be the principal routes for traffic through Downtown Grimsby. In terms of design, the new Official Plan identifies that Main Street itself must be given special consideration given its existing right-of-way width and its importance, including decorative lighting, special furnishings such as benches and trash receptacles, enhanced paving, street tree planting and public art. Similarly, Livingston Avenue, Mountain Street and Christie have distinct characteristics that should be enhanced with streetscape improvements, including sidewalks between the curb edge and building faces; alternative materials for pedestrian paving; street trees along the curb edge; pedestrian scale decorative lighting; and planted boulevards where space permits. Consideration on all Regional Arterial Roads should be given to reducing the number of driveway accesses along the street.

Collector Roads are those under the jurisdiction of the Town of Grimsby that are intended to promote traffic circulation at reduced speeds while encouraging traffic to use the Regional Arterials Roads as the principal movers of traffic. While Ontario Street and Elm Street are considered lower order roads, they are still to be walkable, tree-lined, and safe, including sidewalks along to the curb edge on both sides of the street; and standard streetlights for the vehicular and pedestrian realms. Consideration on all Regional Arterial Roads is to

be given to appropriate measures to reducing or discouraging excessive vehicular traffic in developed areas.

Local Roads are those under the jurisdiction of the Town of Grimsby that are intended to provide access to abutting properties and limit through traffic. For all Local Roads in Downtown Grimsby, sidewalks are typically to be located curb-side on both sides of the street, while street lighting should light both the pedestrian and vehicular realms.

### 3.5.2.4 Community Improvement

Section 9.13 of the new Official Plan contains policies on community improvement. These policies are based on the recommended policies provided to the Official Plan Review process through the Downtown Grimsby CIP consulting team (see **Appendix A of this report**). The policies in the new Official Plan represent a substantial improvement over the dated policies within the existing Official Plan, although the recommended policies were not incorporated in their entirety.

The community improvement policies identify the objectives upon which a community improvement plan may be prepared and adopted. Generally, these objectives include:

- Encouragement of private sector investment;
- Improvement to municipal services and infrastructure;
- Encouragement of intensification and redevelopment;
- Restoration or improvement of greenspaces and recreation;
- Preservation, restoration, and reuse of historical or architecturally significant buildings;
- Improvements to the traffic network;
- Improvements to the streetscape;
- Elimination or relocation of incompatible uses; and
- Improvement of environmental, social, cultural, economic development, safety, or affordable housing conditions.

The policies also identify the relevant criteria for an area to be designated as a community improvement project area, which include a broad range of various conditions and situations. Relevant criteria for the establishment of a community improvement project area for Downtown Grimsby include:

- Older stable commercial uses that are in need of rehabilitation, maintenance, or redevelopment;
- Commercial areas with poor built form visual quality;
- Vacant lots or underutilized properties and buildings with the potential for infill, redevelopment or expansion;
- Preservation, restoration and maintenance of heritage and/or architectural significance;
- Deficient sidewalks, curbs and/or roads;
- The existence of a business improvement area;
- Known or suspected environmental contamination; and
- Other significant environmental, social or community economic development reasons.

### 3.6 Grimsby Zoning By-law

The Town of Grimsby Zoning By-law 71-74 (the "Grimsby Zoning By-law") was passed by Town Council in 1971 and implements the policies of the Grimsby OP by specifically regulating the use of land. There are several zones that apply to the properties within Downtown Grimsby, including:

- Local Commercial (C1);
- Designed Shopping Centre Commercial (C2);
- General Commercial (C3);
- Deferred Commercial (C6);
- Institutional (I);
- Transitional Multiple Residential (TRM);

- Residential Multiple 2 (RM2);
- Public (P); and
- Preferred Industrial (M1).

The majority of Downtown Grimsby is commercially zoned in the Grimsby Zoning By-law. The C3 Zone is the most common zone in the Central Core Area, occupying the majority of the frontage along Main Street East and Livingston Avenue, while the remaining zones include the C1, C2, and C6 Zones. The C1 Zone permits convenience retail commercial, offices, and accessory residential uses; the C2 Zone permits a broad range of commercial uses, including retail and office; the C3 Zone provides a broad range of commercial uses, including retail and office, and accessory residential uses; and the C6 Zone is limited to existing dwellings with no conversion.

The principal residential zone that is within Downtown Grimsby is the Transitional Residential Multiple (TRM) Zone. The TRM Zone permits the conversion of an existing single detached unit to a multiple unit, up to a fourplex.

The Zoning By-law sets out the parking requirements for various land use and building types within the Town. In respect to the uses within the Central Core Area, the following parking standards are relevant:

- Commercial (retail and office): 1 space/28 m<sup>2</sup> of ground floor space plus 1 space per 69.5 m<sup>2</sup> of remaining space;
- Professional/medical offices: 1 space/28 m<sup>2</sup> of ground floor space plus 1 space per 69.5 m<sup>2</sup> of remaining space;
- Residential: 1 space per residential unit; and
- Restaurant: 1 space per 4.5 m<sup>2</sup> of floor space (minimum 10 spaces).

Additionally, the Zoning By-law requires loading spaces for commercial uses, at a rate of 1 space between 186m<sup>2</sup> and 929m<sup>2</sup> of floor space, and 2 spaces in excess of 929m<sup>2</sup> of floor space.

### 3.7 Model Urban Design Guidelines

The Model Urban Design Guidelines for the Regional Municipality of Niagara were finalized in April 2005, completed by a consulting team led by Brook McIlroy Planning + Urban Design. The document, in part, implements the Region's "smart growth" agenda. These Design Guidelines provide a series of smart growth principles and a number of design guidelines to be implemented during the planning and development review and approval process.

The Design Guidelines are principally oriented to new developments or neighbourhoods in greenfield areas. However, Section 4b provides design guidance for main street environments, including guidelines for renovations and preservation and for infill developments. Section 3c provides design guidance for sidewalks and streetscaping in the public realm, including commentary on commercial area sidewalks.

### 3.8 Grimsby Character Study

The Grimsby Character Study was completed in 1992 as a joint project between the Town of Grimsby and the Grimsby Historical Society. The Character Study was not adopted by Council as a policy document, but is referenced by Town Staff for general design guidance on built form and heritage issues.

The Grimsby Character Study had the following objectives:

1. Retention of Grimsby's small town identity.
2. Preservation of Grimsby's historic and architecturally significant buildings.

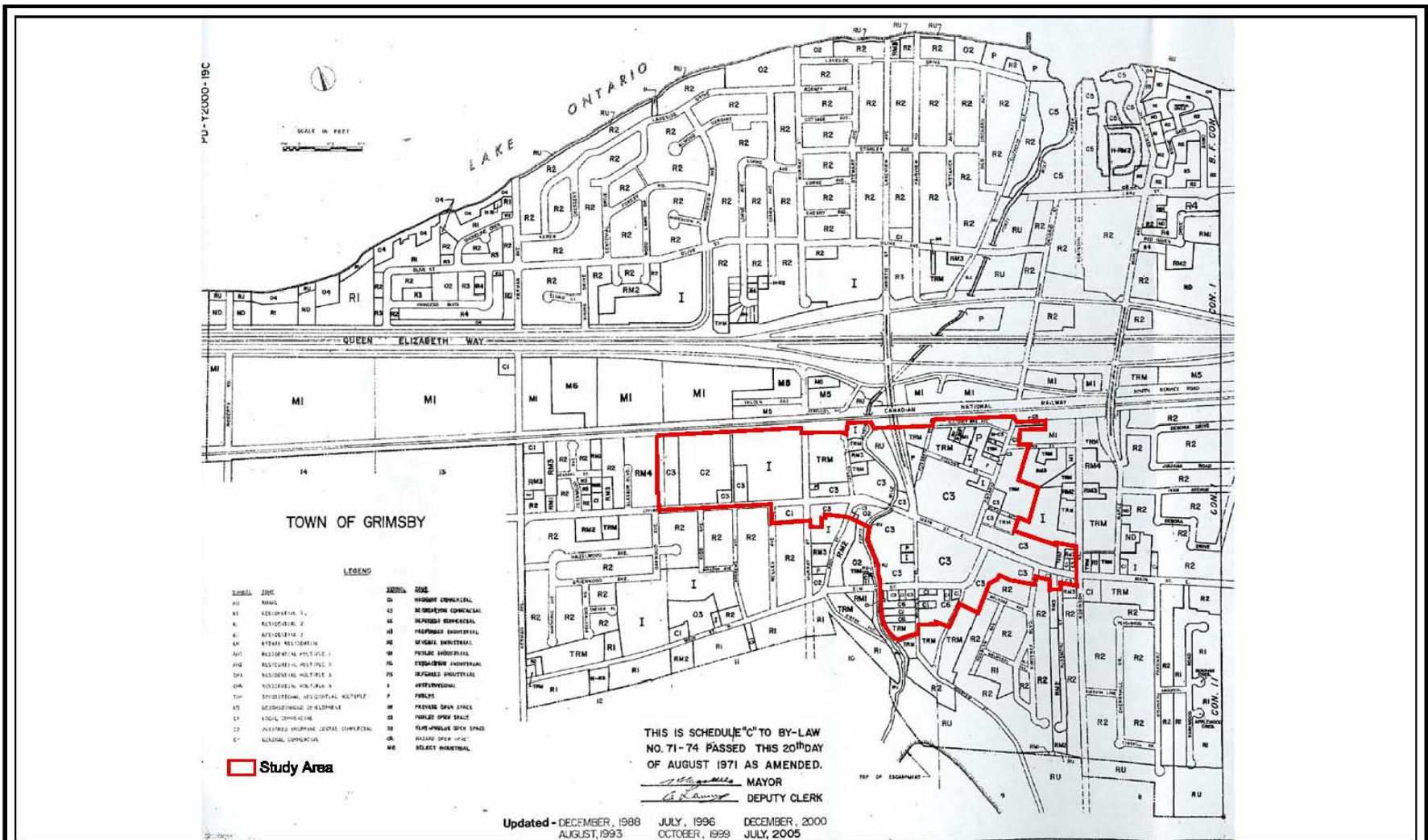
3. Preservation of existing open space and the area's natural beauty.
4. Preservation of existing residential neighbourhoods.
5. Revitalization of the central business district.
6. Revival of the community's historic link to Lake Ontario.
7. Improvement of the east-west traffic flow through the Town.

The Grimsby Character Study is generally comprised of six principal components:

1. A comprehensive review of the historical background of the Town and an inventory of the existing heritage buildings;
2. An analysis of the issues and opportunities affecting the Town regarding a number of considerations;
3. Fundamental principles providing urban design guidance for the guidelines within the document;
4. A "Townscape Plan" outlines a series of targeted actions to enhance the Town's character;
5. Guidelines for the design of new building and the restoration and renovation of existing buildings; and
6. A series of development concepts for the redevelopment or restoration of particular sites and properties within the Downtown area.

The Study's overall general conclusion was that the *"continued development that is unsympathetic to the existing fabric of the area could result in the destruction of the character that makes Grimsby a unique community"*.





# Downtown Grimsby Community Improvement Plan



FIGURE 6  
Zoning Schedule

Base: Zoning By-law No. 71-74

### 4.1 Consultation

Community consultation was a significant component of the Downtown Grimsby CIP process. Five consultation events were held throughout the process, to gather input from the public on the vision, ideas and improvements put forward for Downtown Grimsby. These five consultation events are described below:

a) Introductory Open House

The introductory open house was held on March 27, 2009 inside Coffee Culture on Main Street East. The purpose of this event was to introduce the scope, content and timeline of the Downtown Grimsby CIP. Approximately 50 to 60 people visited the open house.

b) Walking Tour

The walking tour was held on March 28, 2009, beginning from the Carnegie Commons. The purpose of this event was to walk the extent of Downtown Grimsby with participants to identify opportunities and generate ideas for improvement. Approximately 20 participants attended the walking tour.

c) Visioning Workshop

The visioning workshop was held on March 28, 2009 at the Carnegie Commons, following the walking tour. The purpose of this event held on March 28, 2009 was to present the overall goal and objectives of the Downtown Grimsby CIP; identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats affecting Downtown Grimsby; and to develop a vision for

Downtown Grimsby. Approximately 15 participants attended the visioning workshop.

d) Festival Open House

The festival open house was held on August 15, 2009 during the outdoor venue of the Festival at the Forty along Main Street East. The purpose of this event was to display the draft ideas for improvement being identified for Downtown Grimsby. Between 150 and 200 people visited the open house panels to view the material.

e) Public Information Session

The public information session was held on August 25, 2009 at the Carnegie Commons. The purpose of this event was to present the ideas for improvement and preliminary financial incentive programs, and to answer any comments or questions from attendees. Approximately 100 people attended the public information session.

The Project Team was guided throughout the CIP process by the Downtown Revitalization Steering Committee (DRSC), a committee comprised of representatives from the DIA, the Town, the Region, Economic Development Advisory Committee, Heritage Advisory Committee, and Town Council. The Project Team met with the DRSC six times throughout the course of the CIP process.



## 4.2 Vision

The Vision for Downtown Grimsby consolidates the visions established in the existing studies and plans completed for the Town and the public consultation undertaken as part of the Downtown Grimsby CIP, discussed above, which focuses on physical improvement within the area. This Vision for Downtown Grimsby builds on the well-established strong character of the area and its traditional role as the focal point for the Town of Grimsby.

This Vision identifies that over time Downtown Grimsby will:

- a) Be the vibrant, active and safe gathering place in the Town with a concentration of commercial, civic, and residential uses;
- b) Have a clear and definable identity that meshes the Town's historic roots with contemporary improvements;
- c) Have a healthy and sustainable commercial environment that is supported by a strong downtown residential base;
- d) Capitalize on an integrated system of its natural heritage and cultural heritage assets;
- e) Have a visually attractive and clean public realm that is accommodating to all users;
- f) Accommodate new developments that complement the character of the area's traditional form; and
- g) Offer a complete range of day-to-day uses and specialty uses that cater to both residents and visitors.

## 4.3 Principles

Based on Vision and the critical needs identified through the visioning session, the following nine principles will be the foundation of the recommended improvements in the Downtown Grimsby CIP.

### 1. Character:

Downtown Grimsby's existing character should be built on to create a clear and definable identity for the area to which all users can embrace. This includes enhancing the Downtown's heritage assets and heritage character; providing a high quality "main street" type of environment; and blending between the old and contemporary forms and styles of development. The area needs to create a memorable and enjoyable experience for users, both residents and visitors.

### 2. Accessible:

Downtown Grimsby should be accessible for all users in order to establish a true focal point for the entire community. This includes users with particular needs, including persons with a disability, seniors or children, or for different modes of transportation, including active transportation (walking and cycling). Accessibility affects both the public realm (streets) and the private realm (buildings) within Downtown Grimsby, and is both physical and visual in nature.

### 3. Districts:

Downtown Grimsby needs to be seen as coherent and legible entity comprised of different districts. These "districts" may differ in terms of the predominant land use, the scale or massing of buildings, the type of buildings, or the scale of uses. There are opportunities to build on the character of these existing districts, by further strengthening the particular land uses, activities, landmarks, and interrelationships that currently

make, or potentially could make, these areas unique within Downtown Grimsby.

**4. Connected:**

Downtown Grimsby should be connected for all modes of transportation in order to establish an area that is user-friendly for residents and visitors. This includes larger scale connections (such as between different downtown “districts”) and smaller scale connections (between main street and rear parking areas); but this also includes both physical connections (a continuous walkway system) and visual connections (wayfinding signage or consistent street plantings).

**5. Green:**

Downtown Grimsby should build on its strong natural context. This includes incorporating natural amenities and features within (Forty Mile Creek) and surrounding (Niagara Escarpment and Lake Ontario) the downtown. Additionally, public realm improvements that contribute to greening the streetscape and private realm improvements that include sustainability practices can contribute to a healthier and greener community.

**6. Active streets:**

Downtown Grimsby should contain “active” streets with vibrant edges and a high quality public realm. This includes a comfortable walking environment, with pedestrian-scaled building façades, visibility to and from retail spaces, and lively public spaces. Design elements along the streetscape, such as street trees and plantings, that reinforce the experience of walking are important.

**7. Mixed & Varied:**

Downtown Grimsby should be mixed-use and varied in terms of the land uses and activities to provide a more diverse and

vibrant downtown. This includes providing a variety and range of opportunities for specialty shopping, services, employment, public services, and living downtown. The area should be a complete neighbourhood, accommodating all aspects of life. This mixed-use form can occur either horizontally or vertically, depending on the scale and intensity of the specific district.

**8. Flexible & Creative:**

Downtown Grimsby should have design controls that provide general design direction yet which can accommodate creativity on a site-by-site basis. Zoning should contain the built form regulations which can accommodate the creation of a traditional main street environment. In new development, distinction and uniqueness needs to be encouraged for those developments that can complement the overall theme and character of Downtown Grimsby.

**9. Visual interest:**

Downtown Grimsby should be visually interesting to all users, including both pedestrians and drivers. This includes interesting horizontal and vertical elements throughout the Downtown. Focal points need to be created and emphasized, while vistas and viewlines need to be appropriately utilized. Gateway design should identify a sense of arrival, while public art can demonstrate Grimsby’s local context and character. Building façades need to be articulated and oriented to the pedestrian scale. Creating an identifiable “sense of place” for Downtown Grimsby is the goal.



# 5.0

## AREA ASSESSMENT

### 5.1 Purpose and Method

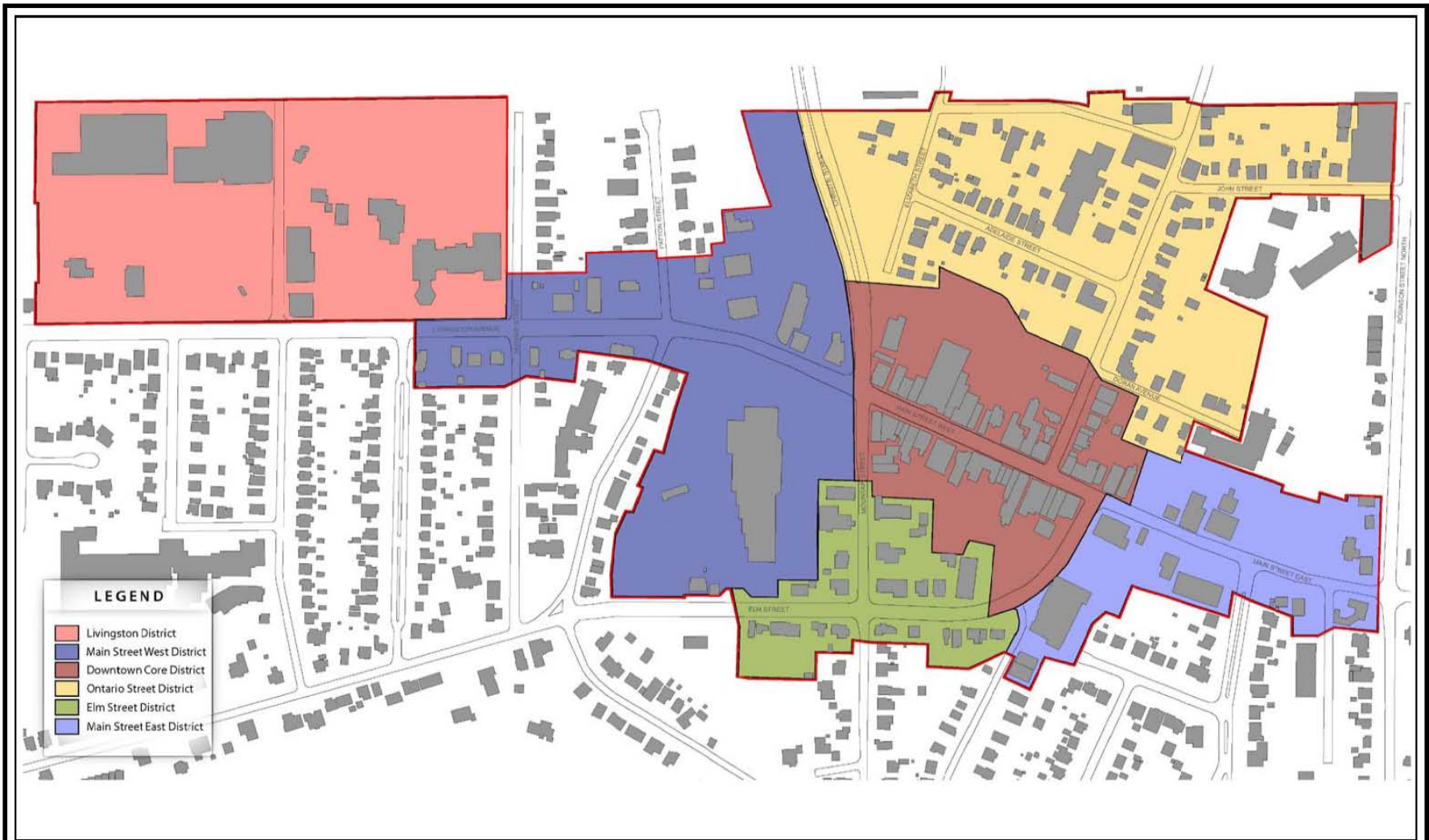
A comprehensive assessment of the study area was undertaken in the initial phase of the Downtown Grimsby CIP. The assessment was completed through a review of existing policy and background documents (such as the Blueprint for Action and Town Character Study) and extensive walking tours of Downtown Grimsby. Collectively, this assessment provides the basis for the SWOT Analysis and the determination of critical needs for Downtown Grimsby, which forms the basis for the recommendation of the Community Improvement Project Area boundary for Downtown Grimsby.



### 5.2 Characteristics

There are six districts in Downtown Grimsby (see Figure 7), each with a unique combination of land use, character, building form, and design considerations. Sections 4.1.1 through 4.1.6, respectively, discuss the assessment of the characteristics of each of the six districts. Three themes are discussed in the assessment for each district:

1. Land Use:
  - Type and mix of land uses
  - Scale of land uses
  - Vacancies
2. Built Form
  - Type and scale of buildings
  - General height of buildings
  - Physical condition of buildings
  - Massing and siting of buildings
  - Location and quantity of parking areas
  - Heritage buildings
3. Urban Design:
  - Overall character
  - Street edge presence
  - Façade conditions
  - Streetscape conditions and amenities
  - Pedestrian connections
  - Other design features



## Downtown Grimsby Community Improvement Plan



FIGURE 7

### Downtown Districts

Base: Town of Grimsby, 2006 Imagery



### 5.1.1 Core District

The Core District is the traditional core of Downtown Grimsby. Centred on Main Street, the Core District extends from Christie Street and Mountain Street to the west and generally Elm Street to the east.

The Core District is almost exclusively commercially-oriented at the ground level, including a broad range of small and larger scale retail commercial uses, restaurant and food establishments, and service commercial uses. A number of buildings have second floors which appear to contain additional commercial or residential spaces. The tenancies are principally smaller with narrower unit frontages, as is expected with a traditional main street area.

Buildings in the Core District are generally a mixture of 1 and 2 storey buildings in a characteristic commercial form. Buildings are generally located tight to the street edge and provide a comfortable, pedestrian-scaled sense of enclosure. Eight buildings within the area are identified on the heritage inventory, principally surrounding the Main Street and Ontario Street intersection. Generally, buildings appear to be in good condition and well maintained, although façade improvements are warranted for most buildings.

There is both on-street parking along Main Street and portions of Ontario Street as well as public off-street parking areas behind the Main Street. The north block contains in the order of 250 parking spaces and the south block contains in the order of 140 spaces.

The following observations are noted for the design character:

- Strong built form character generally with 2 storey buildings “framing” the street and rear parking areas;
- A number of character buildings with heritage features;
- Multiple pedestrian connections to rear parking areas, although informal in nature;

- Undefined pedestrian routes in rear parking areas;
- Steps along south side of Main Street create hard street edge;
- Few vehicular disruptions pedestrian realm from driveways;
- No defined mid-block pedestrian crossings of Main Street;
- Terminating viewline (Post Office) along Ontario Street is lacking;
- Street trees along Main Street are limited and inconsistent;
- Generous sidewalk width along both sides of Main Street;
- Multiple pavement treatments along sidewalks and around trees;
- Inconsistent pattern and location of streetscape amenities;
- Certain façades and signage out of character for a traditional main street in terms of location, type and size;
- Relatively non-descript character lighting standards along street;
- Some façade proportions that are out of character with the street;
- Key intersection at Christie/Mountain Street lacks built presence;
- Downtown gateway signage on Christie Street setback and dominated by surrounding commercial signage; and
- No overhead wires along Main Street, only along Ontario Street and Mountain Street in this area.



## 5.1.2 Main West District

The Main West District is the area immediately to the west of the Core District. The area extends from Christie Street to Murray Street (north of Livingston Avenue) and Nelles Boulevard (south of Livingston Avenue) Patton Street, and forms part of the northern entrance to Downtown Grimsby along Christie Street.

The Main West District is mixed-use in terms of the type and scale of uses. The Village Inn Plaza contains a range of retail and service commercial uses within a shopping plaza form, and a number auto-related commercial uses. There are a number of smaller multi-unit commercial buildings on the north side of Livingston Avenue through the area which include a range of both service commercial and retail commercial uses. There are a number of residential conversions to commercial uses along Livingston Avenue. The Main West District also contains Downtown Grimsby's only public park, Coronation Park.

Buildings in the Main West District are generally a mixture of 1 and 2 storey buildings. Residential to commercial conversions west of Main Street West are generally in 2 storey buildings and have a consistent, reasonable setback from the street edge. Buildings along the north side of Livingston Avenue corridor are generally 1 storey in height and have varying setbacks from the street edge. The Village Inn Plaza is 1 storey in height and does not have any street presence along Mountain Street and Livingston Avenue.

Overall, buildings appear to be in good condition. The Village Inn Plaza recently had façade improvements along the length of building. There is one building identified on the heritage inventory along Livingston Avenue.

The following general observations are noted for the design character:

- Auto-dominated corridor in terms of uses and function and relatively uncomfortable pedestrian realm;
- Extensive hard edge to street with unconstrained vehicular access to properties along north side of Livingston Avenue;
- A number of gas stations setback from the street edge;
- Relative absence of greenery along north side of Livingston;
- Street light style continues from Core District;
- Presence of Forty Mile Creek not emphasized in the area;
- Coronation Park connection with street limited by topography, fence treatment along Creek, and interface with rear of Village Inn Plaza;
- Contemporary, non-descript built form character throughout area;
- No definition of key intersection of Christie/Mountain Streets and Main Street given parking areas as edges to the street; and
- Conversions of residential to commercial further west along Livingston provide some character to the area.



### 5.1.3 Main East District

The Main East District is the area immediately to the east of the Core District. The area extends from Elm Street in the west to Robinson Street in the east, and is located along both sides of Main Street East and along the southern side of Elm Street. This area forms the eastern entrance to Downtown Grimsby along Main Street East.

The Main East District contains a variety of retail commercial and service commercial uses that are generally of a small to medium scale. There are a number of auto service-related uses on the south side of Main Street near Robinson. Additionally, there are a number of undeveloped properties and a large vacant building (former grocery store) that provide significant infill and redevelopment potential in this area.

The built form character of the Main East District is generally a contemporary strip commercial form of development. Buildings are principally 1 storey in height, although with some 2 and 3 storey buildings near the Robinson Street intersection, and are set back from the street edge with off-street parking areas in the front of the building. Generally, buildings in the Main East District appear to be in good condition and well maintained, although façade improvements are warranted. There are no buildings identified on the heritage inventory

The following general observations are noted for the design character:

- Mountain Street has a strong residential built form presence, close to the street and with significant heritage character;
- Poor gateway at the eastern entrance along Main Street given current land uses, built form, and lack of signage;
- Only limited on-street parking areas along Main and Elm Streets;
- Stand-alone cobra head light standards in the area;
- Vacant sites along Main Street create gap in streetscape but provide opportunity for continuation of traditional core character;

- Extensive hard edge to streetscape along south side of Main Street uncomfortable for pedestrians;
- Varying sidewalk and boulevard treatment and maintenance along Main Street;
- Streetscape amenities relatively absent and not consistent; and
- Opportunity to add built form along north and south sides of Elm Street through infill and redevelopment to add building presence.





### 5.1.4 Ontario District

The Ontario District is the area north of the Core District. With Ontario Street as its principal street, the Ontario District extends from Christie Street to the west, the CNR rail line to the north, and properties along the east side of Ontario Street to the east, and contains one of the two northern entrances to Downtown Grimsby along Ontario Street.

The Ontario District is a residential area, with a mixture of detached dwellings and multiple residential dwellings, including a recent industrial-to-residential conversion (Carnegie Lofts). The area does contain a number of institutional uses (new public library, Carnegie Commons) and a number of small scale service commercial uses in converted residential buildings that are draws to the area.

Buildings in the Ontario District are generally a mixture of 1 and 2 storey buildings generally in a residential or institutional form. Setbacks for buildings are characteristic of an urban residential neighbourhood, with buildings relatively close to the street and providing a sense of enclosure. Generally, buildings appear to be in good condition and well maintained. The Carnegie Building is designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, while four other buildings are identified on the heritage inventory.

With the exception of the public lots associated with the library and Carnegie building, off-street parking in the area is generally limited to that provided by individual properties. There are no on-street parking spaces along Ontario Street but there is on-street parking along sections of Adelaide Street, Carnegie Lane and Elizabeth Street.

The following general observations are noted for the design character:

- Characteristically a residential area with building relatively close to the street edge;

- No On-street parking along Ontario Street, only along Adelaide Street, Elizabeth Street and Carnegie Lane;
- Library and Carnegie Commons provide civic function to area;
- No defined pedestrian crossings of Ontario Street;
- Overhead wires and street trees along east side of Ontario Street;
- No overhead wires along west side of Ontario Street;
- Limited extension of banner materials and no streetscape amenities along Ontario Street;
- Cobra head light standards on hydro poles along east side of Ontario Street;
- Front-access driveways predominately along Ontario Street;
- Lack of screening of commercial and institutional front yard parking areas throughout area; and
- Poor gateway function from the north along Ontario Street.



### 5.1.5 Elm District

The Elm District is the area to the south of the Core District and is a mixed-use area in character and form. Centred on the Mountain Street and Elm Street intersection, the area includes properties along Main Street East, Mountain Street, Elm Street and Oak Street. The Elm District contains the southern entrance to Downtown Grimsby along Mountain Street.

The Elm District contains a mixture of single detached residential uses as well as service and retail commercial uses and restaurants which are principally within converted residential buildings. Buildings are principally 2 stories in a residential form, although there are a number of purpose-built commercial buildings along Mountain and Elm Street. One building is designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, while four others are listed on the heritage inventory. Generally, buildings appear to be in very good condition and are well maintained.

The following general observations are noted for the design character:

- Mountain Street has a strong residential built form presence, close to the street and with significant heritage character;
- Poor gateway at the eastern entrance along Main Street given current land uses, built form, and lack of signage;
- Only limited on-street parking areas along Main and Elm Streets;
- Stand-alone cobra head light standards in the area;
- Vacant sites along Main Street create gap in streetscape but provide opportunity for continuation of traditional core character;
- Extensive hard edge to streetscape along south side of Main Street uncomfortable for pedestrians;
- Varying sidewalk and boulevard treatment and maintenance along Main Street;
- Streetscape amenities relatively absent and not consistent; and
- Opportunity to add built form along north and south sides of Elm Street through infill and redevelopment to add building presence.





### 5.1.6 Livingston District

The Livingston District is comprised of the retail commercial area of the Grimsby Square Plaza as well as surrounding institutional and recreational uses. Exclusively on the north side of Livingston Avenue, the area extends from Murray Street in the east to the extension of Brierwood Avenue in the west. This area forms the principal western entrance to Downtown Grimsby along Livingston Avenue and provides a significant proportion of the retail commercial space in Downtown Grimsby.

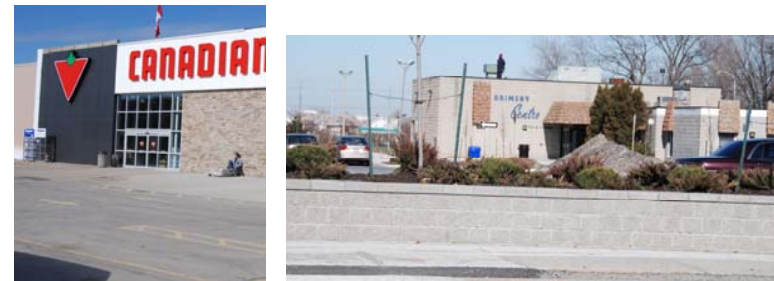
The Livingston District principally contains retail commercial uses, however, there are institutional uses (seniors centre, elementary school) and recreational uses near the area's eastern edge (tennis club, lawn bowling). Retail commercial uses are medium to large-scale in nature including both single tenant and multi-tenanted buildings. Recently there has been a number of new infill buildings added to the Grimsby Square Plaza

The Livingston District reflects a contemporary retail commercial form of development with large format buildings setback significantly from the street edge and with considerable off-street parking areas. Buildings are almost exclusively 1 storey buildings with minimal building street presence along Livingston Avenue. The site of the previous arena leaves a further gap along Livingston Avenue.

Overall, buildings appear to be in good condition and are well maintained. Recently, significant façade changes and changes to building envelopes for the larger format buildings (Canadian Tire and Sobey's) have been made on the Grimsby Square Plaza. There are no buildings in the Livingston District that are identified on the heritage inventory.

The following general observations are noted for the design character:

- Contemporary large format retail design for the Grimsby Square Plaza site in terms of built form placement, parking area treatment, and signage scale and location;
- Overhead wires on both sides of Livingston Avenue present aesthetic impacts and limitations on streetscape treatment;
- No consistency in terms of edge landscape treatment along north side of Livingston Avenue;
- Stand-alone cobra head light standards in the area;
- Relatively undefined pedestrian routes through the plaza;
- Lack of greenery and plantings internal to the plaza; and
- Former arena block presents potential infill opportunity to fill in the street edge along Livingston Avenue.





## 5.3 SWOT Analysis

An analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (a “SWOT” Analysis) was undertaken in the initial phase of the CIP process to identify the “critical needs” for improvement in Downtown Grimsby. Critical needs are those elements that are in most need of improvement, and form the cornerstone of a successful Community Improvement Plan. A fulsome description of the SWOT Analysis can be found in the “Existing Conditions Report” prepared for the Downtown Grimsby CIP.

The SWOT analysis was based on a number and variety of sources including:

- The SWOT analysis within the Blueprint for Action document;
- The physical characteristics assessment developed from the site walks;
- Input from the CIP’s visioning workshop;
- Issues identified in the Grimsby Character Study;
- The Retail Market Study for Downtown Grimsby;
- The “First Impression Community Exchange” findings from the Town of Erin’s report; and
- Input from the Downtown Revitalization Steering Committee.

### 5.3.1 Strengths and Opportunities

In terms of strengths and opportunities, Downtown Grimsby was identified as having:

- 1. A relatively healthy and self-sufficient downtown with a broad base of uses to build upon.**

Downtown Grimsby has a broad range of retail commercial, service commercial uses, restaurants, and public and institutional uses (i.e. public library, post office) that appear to meet the day-to-day needs of residents in the Town. There is a low vacancy rate through the Downtown for commercial uses. Also, there is a mixture of small scale and larger scale commercial users throughout the Downtown area. Although it was identified that retail commercial and restaurants in Downtown Grimsby should be strengthened, at least the current condition of the Downtown provides a good foundation to build upon.

- 2. A traditional core area with a strong built form character and a small town atmosphere.**

The traditional core area of Downtown Grimsby, generally between Christie Street and Elm Street, defines the character of the Downtown, with buildings located tight to the street to frame the street, a pedestrian scale and orientation of building façades, heritage features and elements on buildings, and rear area parking area. This traditional core is the primary contributor to the perception of Downtown Grimsby as “unique” and “quaint”. While surrounding areas along Main Street/Livingston are typically more contemporary in terms of design, there is the opportunity for extending the general

character of core through a combination of infill development, redevelopment, and streetscape efforts.

**3. A central location within the Town with good regional access.**

The Downtown is centrally located within the urban area of the Town, along Main Street/Livingston Avenue (Highway No. 81), which represents the western entrance to a well-travelled route through the region. There is very good, direct access to the QEW through the Christie Street, Ontario Street, and Maple Street, and access to the south through Mountain Street. Although traffic volumes are identified as an issue by residents, there is a fine balance between maintaining traffic flows for commercial uses and maintaining a pedestrian orientation for streets in the Downtown.

**4. A number of unique areas, or “districts”, that offers different opportunities for users.**

The Downtown is not a uniform area in terms of character and built form patterns: it has a number of characteristically different areas suited to different uses and types of buildings. These include the traditional core area identified above; the “shoulder” areas on the edges of the traditional core; the contemporary retail spaces of Grimsby Square Plaza and Village Square Inn; and the residential areas along Ontario Street and Mountain Street experiencing some conversion. This diversity presents an opportunity to appeal to a range of different business owners/users looking for different building forms (i.e. contemporary, purpose-built retail spaces or residential conversions to commercial uses). Ultimately this presents an opportunity to tailor the available incentive programs to the particular character of the area.

**5. A number of undeveloped and vacant sites in key areas available for redevelopment.**

The Downtown has a number of undeveloped sites and vacant buildings that present immediate opportunities for infill development and redevelopment along principal streets. For instance, these include 25 Main Street (across from TD Canada Trust), 40 Elm Street (former Price Chopper/IGA), and 55 Main Street (former car sales lot). These sites, among others, present short-term opportunities for filling in the streetscape along the Downtown’s streets with new buildings that follow the Town’s character and that set quality precedents for future developments.

**6. A number of surrounding residential areas that support the downtown area.**

The Downtown is surrounded by a number of established and stable residential areas within a comfortable walking distance to the stores and services. These areas include a number of taller multiple residential buildings, such as Robinson Street North, John Street, and Slessor Boulevard. These areas provide both a customer base arriving by foot and also the opportunity for intensification through small scale, low-rise residential building in keeping with the Town’s character to further support the Downtown businesses and functions.

**7. A very good supply of off-street and on-street parking.**

The Downtown as a whole has a significant supply of parking for users, both on-street and off-street parking spaces depending on the particular area. The traditional core area contains a very good supply (i.e. in the order of 400 spaces on both north and south parking areas) of accessible and

coordinated rear parking areas that have multiple connections to Main Street, in addition to numerous on-street parking spaces along Main Street generally extending between Ontario Street and Christie Street. Other areas throughout the Downtown generally rely on private off-street parking areas as on-street parking is more limited. Opportunities for providing on-street parking or smaller municipal lots in transitioning areas, such as Ontario Street, are possible.

#### **8. A relatively compact area for pedestrians.**

The Downtown is relatively compact in terms of its spatial extent. With the exception of the Grimsby Square Plaza, the entire Downtown is generally within 400 metres (a 5 minute walking distance) of the traditional core block between Christie and Elm Street. This presents the opportunity for a single parking stop for multiple locations or shops for downtown users. However, some areas outside the traditional core are not conducive to comfortable pedestrian environments, given the lack of built form presence, sidewalk maintenance issues, and multiple vehicular access interruptions. There are opportunities to enhance the level of comfort for pedestrians in these areas.

### **5.3.2 Weaknesses and Threats**

In terms of weaknesses and threats, Downtown Grimsby was identified as having:

#### **1. A weak presence at the “gateways” to the downtown.**

The Downtown has two gateways from the north (Christie Street and Ontario Street), one gateway from the east (Main Street East at Robinson Street), and two gateways from the west (Livingston Avenue and Elm Street). Currently these gateway locations provide a poor announcement of arrival for visitors to the Downtown. Downtown-specific signage is only located at the Christie Street entrance, however, it is setback and visually dominated by other commercial signage. Built form at the Christie/Mountain Street and Main Street intersection does not create the desired enhancement at this key intersection, due to either single storey buildings, overwhelming commercial signage, or parking areas located next to the street. Other gateways feature uses (i.e. gas stations) that are not ideal uses for a gateway function.

#### **2. A weak transition between the traditional core and the surrounding commercial areas.**

The Downtown’s character focuses on the traditional core area, as identified above, but transitions poorly as it extends outwards along Main Street. The areas between Elm Street and Robinson Street in the east and Christie Street and Murray Street in the west present a number of conditions that disconnect it from the traditional core: a predominance of single storey buildings; surface parking areas adjacent to the street right-of-way; a number of gas and service stations; and unconstrained vehicle access along site frontages. Christie

Street/Mountain Street to the west and Elm Street to the east currently present themselves as hard edges between the traditional core area and the shoulder areas, instead of a softer transition line. The current conditions of such areas jeopardize the overall character that is desired for Downtown Grimsby.

**3. An inconsistent pattern and theme of streetscape amenities.**

The Downtown has a number of streetscape amenities (such as street trees, benches, garbage receptacles, planter boxes) throughout its different areas, however, there is not a coherent and consistent pattern of where they are located and their design style. There is a general lack of greenery through the Downtown, particularly street trees and landscaped areas, which contribute to perceived amount of asphalt/concrete in some areas. Streetscape design and amenities is an important tool for coordinating the different areas of the Downtown as a single entity by enhancing the visual connection between the areas. The recent addition of Grimsby DIA banners throughout the Downtown are a good first step at visually unifying the different areas of Downtown Grimsby.

**4. The absence of a public open space that is a focal point for downtown users.**

The Downtown lacks the high quality, visible public open space that acts a central public civic space, or "gathering" space, for downtown users as is found in other successful downtowns. Such a space could either be a more "green" central public parkette or a more "hardscaped" central public square, either that acts as another draw to the Downtown and

can encourage longer stays in the Downtown. Coronation Park is the only similar type of space in the Downtown, although there are number of design constraints that currently prevent it from such a function, such as its lack of visibility, grade changes, and interface with the rear area of the Village Inn Plaza.

**5. A lack of well-defined pedestrian crossings of principal streets.**

The Downtown has a number of key intersections and potential crossings of principal streets, however, there are no clearly defined crossing points. Physical definition of pedestrian crossing points, whether it is at an intersection or mid-block, enhances the pedestrian accessibility and comfort within the Downtown and visually announces pedestrian crossings to drivers in the interest of traffic calming and safety.

**6. Significant traffic volumes through the downtown area, particularly increasing truck traffic.**

The Downtown's principal street, Main Street/Livingston Avenue, accommodates significant traffic volumes travelling within and through the area. The inconvenience factor for downtown users was identified as a key factor through the Retail Market Study and the Blueprint for Action exercises. Although identified as a weakness, the congestion and streetscape design (i.e. buildings close to street and on-street parking) do assist as traffic calming features in the Downtown. As stated above, there is a balance amongst accommodating traffic flows to support commercial uses, maintaining a pedestrian orientation for streets in the Downtown, and limiting the inconvenience factor for potential consumers.

**7. A general lack of “unique” retail shopping opportunities to draw visitors.**

The Downtown is principally oriented in terms of retail commercial uses to convenience type uses for the day-to-day needs of residents of the Town and surrounding areas. With this in mind, the Downtown lacks the “unique” retail shopping opportunities that provide specialty retail that could accommodate a greater draw to visitors, both existing and new, to the Downtown.

**8. External retail commercial pressures from new large format uses.**

The Downtown is, and has been for some time, facing retail commercial pressures from large format commercial development, both within the community (new stores at Casablanca at the QEW) and external to the community in adjacent municipalities. The Retail Market Study for Downtown Grimsby identified that a large number of consumers already fulfill their retail commercial needs outside of Downtown Grimsby. Convenience type commercial uses (grocery stores, drug stores) are generally the predominant type of retail shopping that respondents identified they did in Downtown Grimsby. With this in mind, Downtown Grimsby needs to capitalize on the elements that make small town downtowns competitive, including service, friendliness, high quality spaces, unique retail opportunities, and the overall quality of the experience for shoppers.

**9. Façade conditions and signage that are dated and tired and are not consistent with the downtown’s character.**

The Downtown in its traditional core possesses a typical main street character in its built form in terms of heritage nature and pedestrian scale, however, generally façades and signage appear dated and need improvements. This includes renovation of existing heritage features, recovery of existing heritage façades, new “main street” type signage, façade lighting, and breaking up larger unit facades into smaller portions. Other, the Downtown would also benefit by making similar efforts for contemporary areas within the Downtown regarding a consistent theme and character.

## 5.4 Recommended Project Area

A Community Improvement Project Area, as identified by the Planning Act, is an area within a municipality deemed by a municipal council to need community improvement, given any variety of reasons whether physical, social, economic or environmental. One of the key tasks of the Downtown Grimsby CIP process was to identify a Community Improvement Project Area boundary where improvements efforts will be focused and in which financial incentive programs will be offered.

The Downtown Grimsby study area at the outset of the CIP process was the boundary of the Central Core Area as defined by the Town's Official Plan. This study area was assessed to determine the properties most in need of improvement, in order to identify a recommended Community Improvement Project Area boundary. Considerations in this boundary assessment included:

- Current land use patterns;
- Future land use policies;
- Current zoning;
- Streetscape conditions;
- Site conditions;
- Building physical conditions;
- Building façade conditions;
- Evidence of transitioning land uses;
- Intensification opportunities; and
- Consultation with Town staff.

Properties in and surrounding the Study Area that were deemed to require community improvement were included within the recommended Community Improvement Project Area boundary. The recommended Community Improvement Project Area Boundary for Downtown Grimsby CIP (see **Figure 8**) is generally bounded by the northerly extension of Brierwood Avenue in the west, the rail line to

the north, Robinson Street to the east, and Elm Street to the south. The Project Area is focused on the principal street corridors in the area (i.e. Main Street, Livingston Avenue, Christie/Mountain Street, Ontario Street, and Elm Street), which are principally commercial in nature. However, the Project Area also includes areas that are principally residential in nature (i.e. area to the east and west of Ontario Street corridor) but which appear to be transitioning to other uses or have significant opportunities for intensification.

There are three differences between the initial Study Area boundary and the recommended Community Improvement Project Area boundary, which are identified on Figure 9 with lettering. These are described below.

- "A": An established, stable residential area along Patton Street that was identified to be in very good physical condition and where improvements were not deemed necessary. This area was excluded from the Community Improvement Project Area boundary.
- "B": An established, stable residential area along Mountain Street that was identified to be in very good physical condition and where improvements were not deemed necessary. This area was excluded from the Community Improvement Project Area boundary.
- "C" A mixed residential and industrial area that was deemed to be in transition, with potential presented brownfield redevelopment opportunities and where improvements were warranted. This area was included in the Community Improvement Project Area boundary.





## Downtown Grimsby Community Improvement Plan

FIGURE 8

Recommended Community Improvement  
Project Area Boundary

Base: Town of Grimsby, 2006 Imagery



## 6.0

# LAND USE AND DESIGN STRATEGY

The Downtown Master Plan provides the overall land use and design strategy for Downtown Grimsby. Building on the vision and principles for Downtown Grimsby, the Downtown Concept (see **Figure 9**) in the Downtown Master Plan provides the general direction for improvements in Downtown Grimsby, including considerations for land use, urban design and streetscape elements. The Downtown Concept illustrates the principal elements that are recommended to structure the future development of Downtown Grimsby, at a high-level and conceptual level of detail. The specific locations of public realm improvements that are being recommended for Downtown Grimsby are also identified (see **Figure 10**).

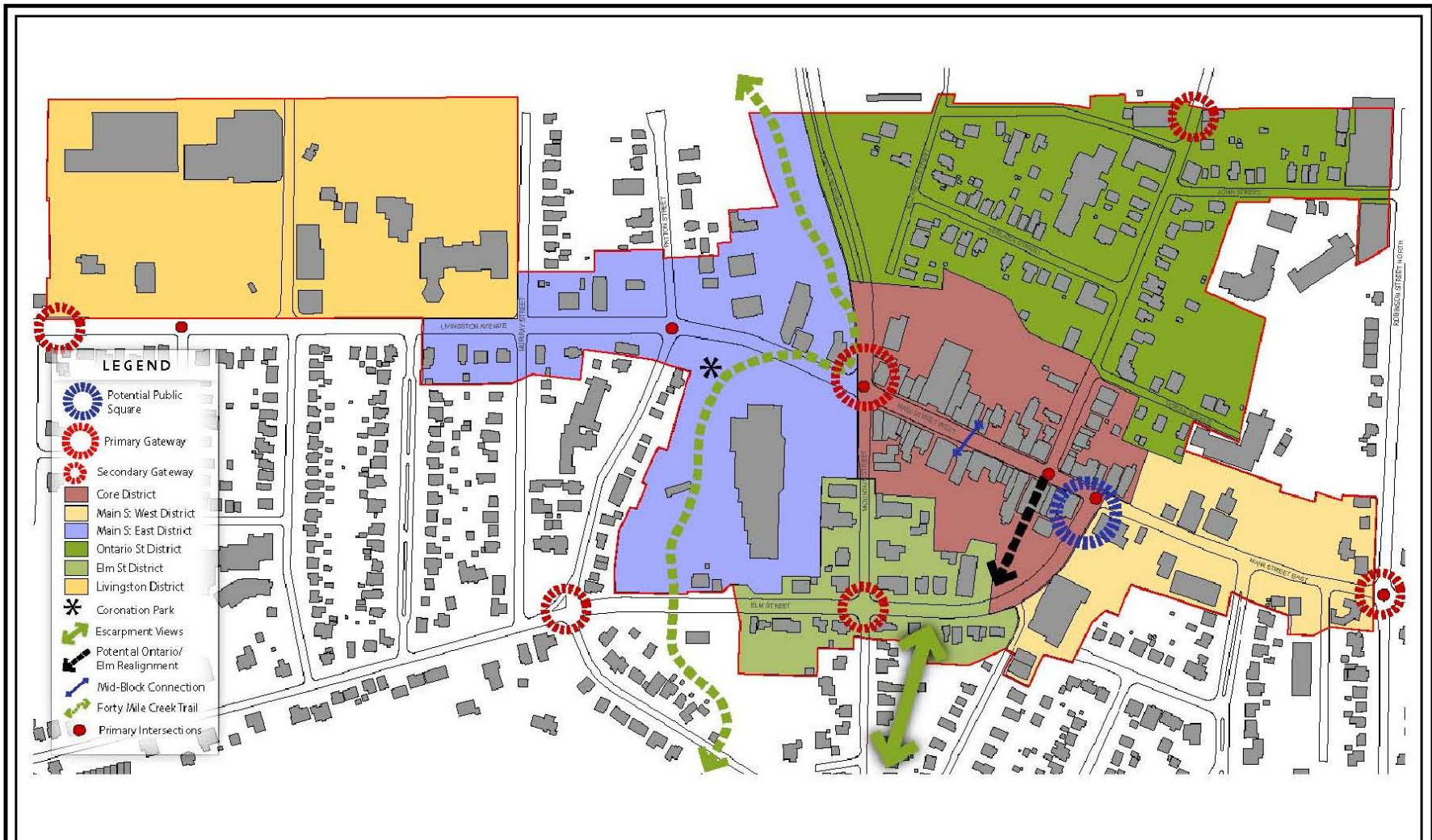
There are 11 principal components to the Master Plan Concept for Downtown Grimsby:

1. Gateway features;
2. Wayfinding signage;
3. Districts;
4. Streetscape improvements;
5. Pedestrian crossings;
6. Ontario/Elm Street realignment;
7. Public square;
8. Coronation Park;
9. Forty Mile Creek and Trail;
10. Municipal Parking Areas; and
11. Public art.

Sections 6.1 through 6.11 of this CIP, respectively, discuss these components by providing a summary of the rationale, intent and

description of each of the recommended improvements or actions. For a detailed discussion of the design recommendations for each of the components, the Downtown Master Plan should be consulted.





## Downtown Grimsby Community Improvement Plan

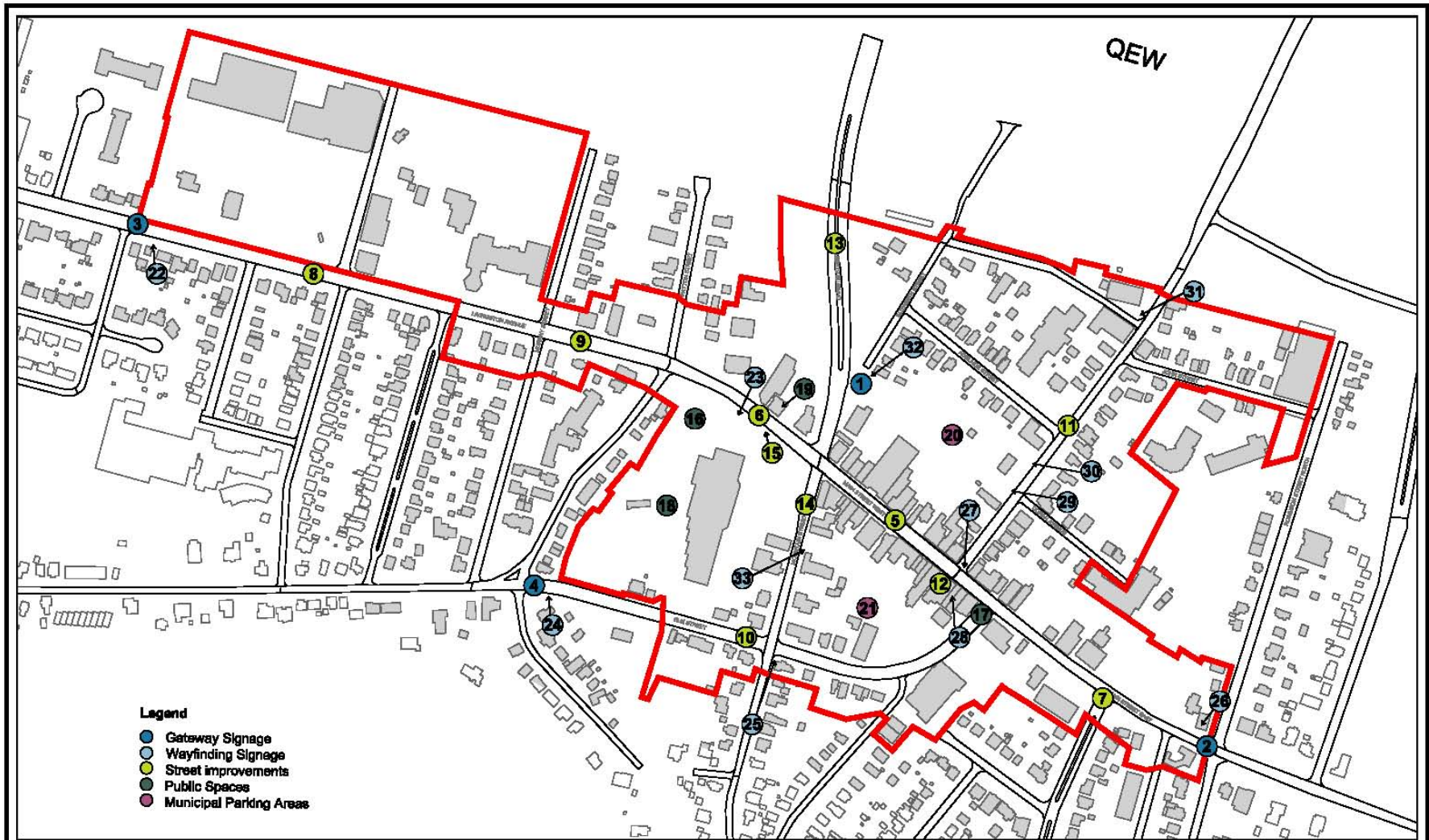


FIGURE 9

### Downtown Concept

Base: Town of Grimsby, 2006 Imagery





- Legend**
- Gateway Signage
  - Wayfinding Signage
  - Street Improvements
  - Public Spaces
  - Municipal Parking Areas



## Downtown Grimsby Community Improvement Plan



FIGURE 10

### Public Realm Improvements

Base: Town of Grimsby, 2006 Imagery

## 6.1 Gateway Features

“Gateways” to a downtown are located at principal entrances and present an opportunity to announce arrival to the area. Given the importance of this function considering the current state of entrances to Downtown Grimsby, a system of gateway features should be installed at these locations to create an enhanced first impression of Downtown Grimsby to visitors while providing additional visual interest along the streetscape. There are recommended locations for a primary gateway feature and also secondary gateway features.

### 6.1.1 Primary Gateway Feature

The primary gateway to Downtown Grimsby is located at Christie Street and Main Street intersection, near the location of the existing “Welcome to Grimsby” feature. This should be the principal gateway feature in terms of scale and design treatment, given its prominent location at the entrance from the QEW. The primary gateway feature should be located close to the street edge to reinforce its prominence and complemented by appropriate planting and lighting to emphasize its presence.

### 6.1.2 Secondary Gateway Features

There are three secondary gateways to Downtown Grimsby located in the east (Main and Robinson), the south (Main and Elm), and the west (Livingston). These secondary gateway features should follow the design treatment of the primary gateway feature, in terms of materials and colours although with a smaller scale and possibly a different form (vertical vs. horizontal), in order to establish a consistent and complementary system of gateway entrances.

### 6.1.3 Other Gateways

Two other entrances to Downtown Grimsby could be considered as gateway locations in the future, once the other four gateway features were established: one at the Ontario Street entrance south of the railline and the other at the Mountain Street and Elm Street intersection. These features in terms of design and scale should be considered secondary gateway features.



Conceptual designs for the primary (left) and secondary (right) gateway features for Downtown Grimsby, containing a symbolic representation of Forty Mile Creek, durable local materials, and contemporary signage.



## 6.2 Wayfinding Signage

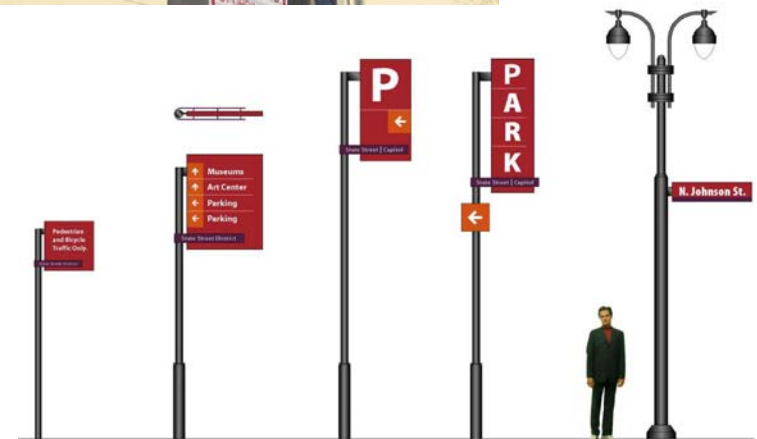
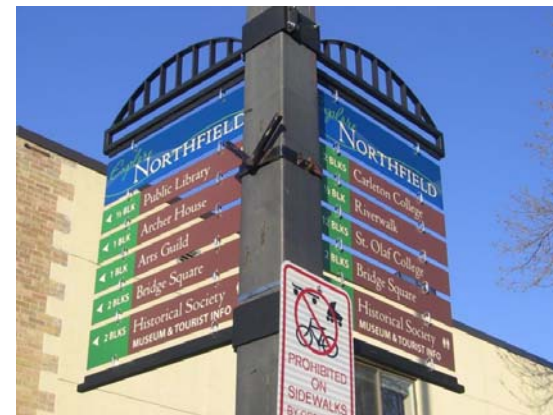
Downtown visitors need to be able to easily, safely and comfortably navigate throughout the area. Wayfinding signage performs such a function by directing visitors in a downtown area, whether arriving by foot, by bicycle, or by car, to civic or public buildings, parking areas, open spaces and trails, and other significant destinations or features. While Downtown Grimsby has a number of significant features that help in creating a vibrant downtown, such as large municipal parking lots, there is no system to direct visitors to such features.

A coordinated and comprehensive system of wayfinding signage within Downtown Grimsby should be developed. The system should include simple and universally readable signs with a consistent design template which complements the design of the gateways features. The type of wayfinding signage can vary, but those affixed to light standards or pole mounts are typically the most utilized and likely the most appropriate for Downtown Grimsby.

There are three principal areas where wayfinding signage should be located in Downtown Grimsby: at the gateways, at the entrances to municipal parking areas, and at key intersections. Key destinations that should be considered for wayfinding signage include:

- Ontario and Balsam Lane parking lot;
- Public Library, Carnegie Commons and Museum;
- Coronation Park, Forty Mile Creek and Trail;
- Major shopping plazas;
- Municipal offices and Post Office;
- Lake Ontario and Beamer Conservation Area.

Other locations outside of Downtown Grimsby should also include wayfinding signage directing visitors to Downtown Grimsby, such as routes above the Niagara Escarpment and from the QEW.



Above: examples of wayfinding directional signage in other municipalities.

## 6.3 Districts

The six districts in Downtown Grimsby (see **Figure 7**), as discussed in Section 5.0, each contains a different combination of land uses, character, activities, and building forms. These districts are comprised principally of privately-owned properties; the public right-of-ways running through these districts are discussed in the other components of the Downtown Concept. These districts present the opportunity for private sector (property owners and business owners) involvement in the improvement to Downtown Grimsby, including development, redevelopment and façade improvements. Given the differing characteristics of the districts, each district has different opportunities for improvement and may play different functions within Downtown Grimsby.

The general intent and land use and design direction for each of the districts is discussed below.

### (a) Core District

The Core District is the “heart” of Downtown Grimsby, centrally located between Christie Street and Elm Street along Main Street. Currently the Core District contains a broad mixture of smaller scale retail, service and office commercial, and has a strong heritage presence and inventory of buildings. The Core District’s pedestrian-scaled main street environment provides the general identity for Downtown Grimsby.

The intent for improvement in the Core District should be the strengthening its heritage and built form character and the preservation of the fine-grained nature of storefronts in the area. Improvement potential in the Core District should primarily be focused on the preservation and enhancement of heritage buildings and features, the maximization of the use of

upper stories in buildings, façade and sign improvements, and potential intensification through vertical additions.

### (b) Main West District

The Main West District is located to the west of the Core District, generally bounded by Christie Street and Nelles Boulevard. The Main West District contains a mixture of retail, service and office commercial uses, both smaller and larger scale in nature, including one of Downtown Grimsby’s commercial plaza development. The character of the Main West District is a contemporary strip form of commercial development, with a number buildings and uses oriented principally to automobiles with large setbacks and front yard parking areas.

The focus in the Main West District should be the transition over time to a more pedestrian-scaled built form that frames the street edge, in keeping with the precedent set by the Core District. Improvement potential in the Main West District is focused on the redevelopment of existing underutilized buildings and sites, improvements to the edge treatment of properties along the street frontage, capitalizing on infill development opportunities, and establishing more of a mixed-use character through development and redevelopment.

### (c) Main East District

Located to the east of the core extending generally from Elm Street to Robinson Street, the Main East District contains a range of retail, service and office commercial uses, which are small to medium scale in nature. Similar to the Main West District, the Main East District features a contemporary strip form of commercial development, although there are more immediate opportunities for development and redevelopment on vacant sites and buildings in this area.

Improvement potential in the Main East District is focused on the development of vacant sites, redevelopment of existing vacant buildings, improvements to the edge treatment of properties along the street frontage, and establishing more of a mixed-use character through development and redevelopment.

**(d) Livingston District**

Located at the western boundary of Downtown Grimsby generally between Murray Street and Brierwood Avenue, the Livingston District contains larger scale retail and service commercial uses (Grimsby Square Plaza) and institutional uses (Seniors Centre, public school). The area's character is that primarily of a large format commercial development with large scale service and retail commercial users.

Improvement potential in the Livingston District is focused on intensifying and infilling over time the street frontage of the large commercial plaza and improvements to the edge treatment of properties along the street frontage.

**(e) Elm District**

Located to the south of the core centred on the Elm Street and Mountain Street intersection, the Elm District is a small area that contains a mixture of service, retail and office commercial uses, institutional uses, and residential uses. The character of the Elm District is mixed in use, with a number of residential buildings converted to other uses.

Improvement potential in the Elm District is focused on the continued conversion of the area to commercial uses and sensitive infilling on potential redevelopment sites in the area.

**(f) Ontario District**

Located to the north of the core extending on both sides of Ontario Street to the rail line, the Ontario District contains the broadest range of land uses including retail, service and office commercial uses, residential uses, institutional and public uses (community centre, Public Library, Art Gallery), and some industrial uses on John Street. The Ontario District has a unique character associated with a transitional residential neighbourhood with strong cultural uses as anchors.

Improvement potential in the Ontario District is focused on residential intensification within existing buildings, residential intensification through consolidation of separate properties, residential intensification through brownfield sites, conversions to small scale commercial uses, home-base businesses, and arts and culture uses.



Left and below: various opportunities exist throughout the districts of Downtown Grimsby for development, redevelopment and intensification.



## 6.4 Streetscape Improvements

Streets represent significant municipal assets in any downtown area and their design and character should reflect their significant role in creating a vibrant downtown. The “streetscape” is the visual image created by its many elements, including amenities, on-street parking, landscaping, and public spaces, and including building faces and storefronts. Currently, however, Downtown Grimsby’s streetscape environment lacks visual interest, uniformity, and coherency, thus improvements are warranted. Improvements in Downtown Grimsby need to be oriented to the pedestrian: the streetscape should be comfortable, clean, safe, visually interesting, and easily and universally accessible environments.

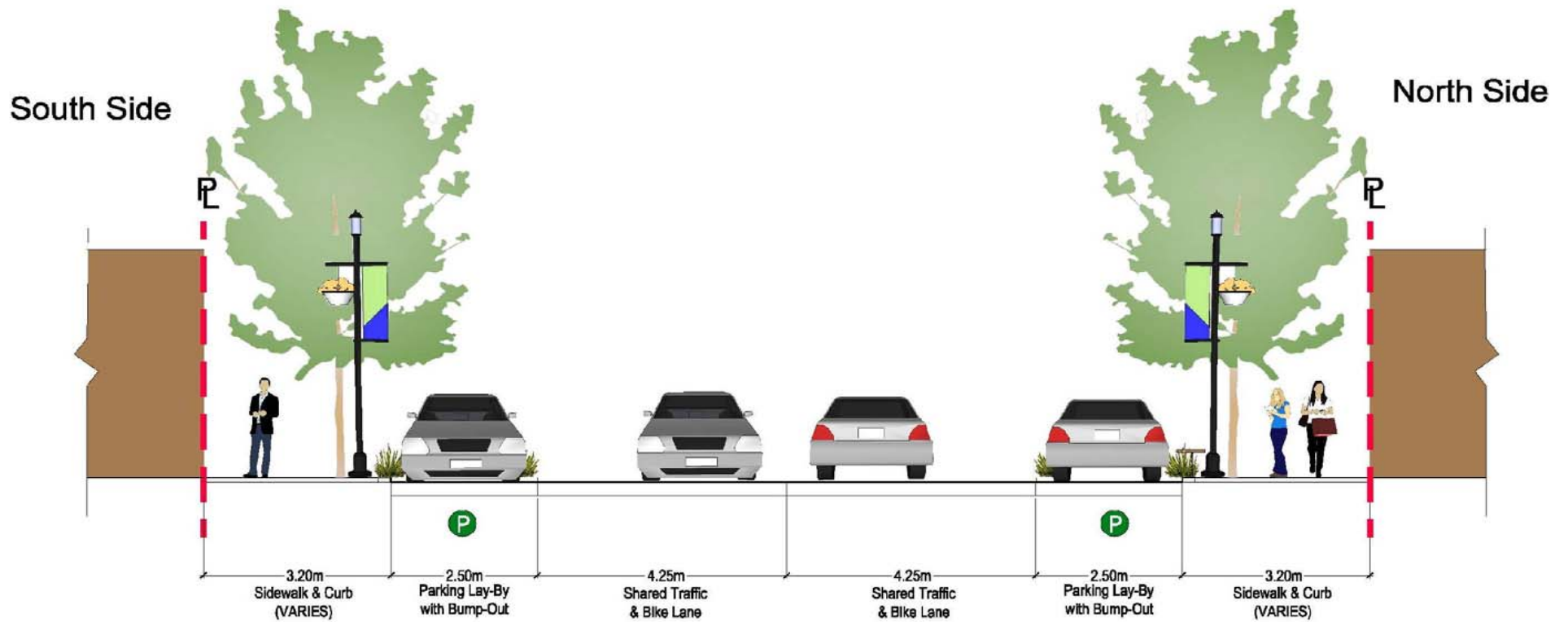
Downtown Grimsby has both primary and secondary streets in terms of importance. There are three primary streetscapes within Downtown Grimsby: Main Street (East and West), Livingston Avenue, and Christie Street. There are two secondary streetscapes within Downtown Grimsby: Ontario Street and Elm Street. While the treatment for all streetscapes should be similar in terms of amenities and design, the primary streetscapes are given a higher priority in terms of staging of improvements in the Downtown Grimsby CIP given their prominent location and function.

The recommended improvements to the streetscapes in Downtown Grimsby are discussed below, divided by those improvements that are recommended for all streetscapes (Section 6.4.1) and those that are specifically recommended for particular streets (Section 6.4.2). As a note, both the 3D and cross-section “demonstration” graphics are intended to provide a general guide for streetscape improvements in Downtown Grimsby. Detailed streetscape design plans would be required for any reconstruction efforts, at which time the details would need to be confirmed in keeping with any Town/Region standards and best practices for right-of-way elements.

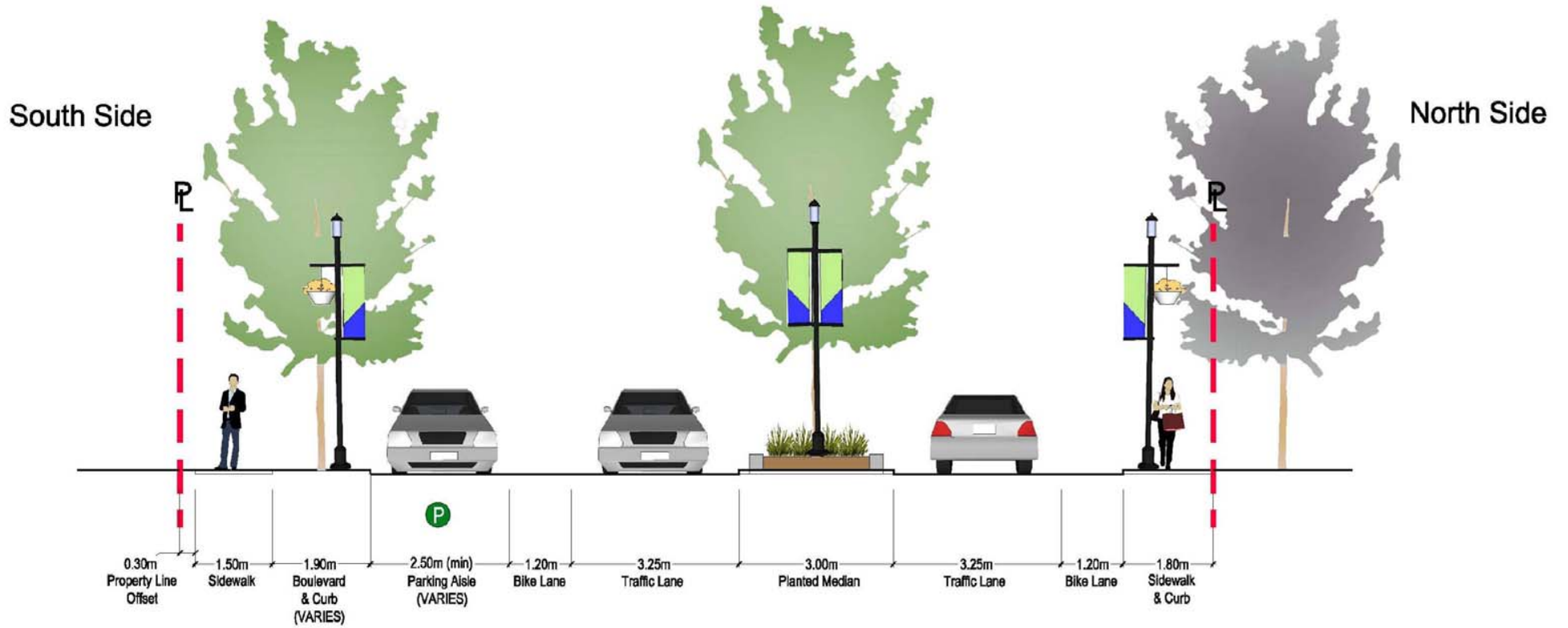
### 6.4.1 General Streetscape Improvements

The following general considerations should be part of all streetscape improvements throughout Downtown Grimsby:

- A consistent pattern of street tree planting within central medians and outer boulevards throughout all streets, as space permits.
- Different textured materials for crosswalks of principal intersections and gateway entrances to differentiate pedestrian routes and announce arrival.
- Utilize bump-outs into right-of-way space to provide tighter pedestrian crossings at intersections and to accommodate planting materials or further pedestrian activity space along sidewalk.
- Ensure that all elements of the streetscape design utilize universal design standards (such as the “Facility Accessibility Design Standards” from the City of London that have been adopted by the Town of Grimsby), including considerations for:
  - Curb ramps at intersections and mid-block crossings;
  - Stairs and handrails, particularly along the south side of Main Street;
  - Accessibility to public spaces;
  - On-street parking spaces for specialty vehicles, coordinated with accessible ramps to the sidewalk;
  - Connections to municipal parking areas;
  - Design and placement of street furniture and amenities; and
  - Design and location of wayfinding signage.
- Choose tree, shrub and other planting species that are native, non-invasive and salt tolerant, in order to ensure they thrive in a downtown environment.



Above: a cross-section view of the streetscape improvements within a typical section of Main Street East and West.



Above: a cross-section view of the streetscape improvements within a typical section of Livingston Avenue.



- Choose tree species that create a tree canopy at its ultimate height which provides unobstructed views to the storefronts of buildings, including the fascia and projecting signage on the buildings.
- Use poured concrete for public sidewalks and sidewalk boulevards, given the durable and accessible nature of this material.
- Temper the use of differentiated paving materials along streets, focusing such materials at points of emphasis and pedestrian points within the Downtown.
- Choose and install streetscape furniture and amenities (benches, trash and recycling receptacles, bicycle racks, tree guards and grates, banners and banner standards, hanging basket standards, and planters) that are of a consistent style and material, in keeping with the desired character of Downtown Grimsby.
- Ensure that cyclists are appropriately accommodated through lane markings where possible, signage identifying bicycle routes where necessary, and adequate bicycle parking near storefronts.



Above: demonstration of the reconfiguration of steps on the south side of Main Street, as envisioned in the Downtown Master Plan.

## 6.4.2 Specific Streetscape Improvements

Together with the general streetscape improvements identified for all streets in Section 6.4.1, the following considerations should be part of the improvements for specific streets in Downtown Grimsby.

### (a) Main Street “core” block

For Main Street East and West between Elm Street and Christie Street the following should be considered:

- The core block should have the highest concentration of streetscape amenities (benches, bicycle racks, trash receptacles).
- Redesign of the south side of the street to physically divide the continuous steps to provide more defined pedestrian access while providing more area for planting and street trees.
- The potential for a defined pedestrian crossing near the mid-point of the block.
- On-street parking spaces for specialty transit vehicles that are connected directly universally accessible routes to the sidewalk and storefronts.
- Signage, potentially on the surface and free standing, identifying shared-use of travel lanes for both vehicles and bicycles.

### (b) Main Street East

For Main Street East between Elm Street and Robinson Street the following should be considered:

- Incorporation of benches and related streetscape amenities at points on the upward slope of Main Street East to provide resting areas for those with mobility challenges.

- Choosing street tree species with full grown canopies that will have minimal interference with overhead hydro wires.
- Designation of dedicated on-street bicycle lanes, where space permits, or signage identifying shared-use of travel lanes for both vehicles and bicycles.

### (c) Main Street West

For Main Street West between Christie Street and Patton Street the following should be considered:

- Incorporation of benches and related streetscape amenities at points on the upward slope of Main Street East to provide resting areas for those with mobility challenges.
- Extension of greenery from Coronation Park into central median along Main Street West where it passes by Coronation Park.
- Visual differentiation of pavement materials and colours for symbolic reflection where Forty Mile Creek crosses under Livingston Avenue.
- Designation of dedicated on-street bicycle lanes in both directions, where space permits, or signage identifying shared-use of travel lanes for both vehicles and bicycles.
- Incorporation of benches and related streetscape amenities at points on the upward slope of Main Street West to provide resting areas for those with mobility challenges.
- Redevelopment or redesign of the bridge railing overlooking Forty Mile Creek to provide better interface with water course.
- Coordination of municipal streetscape improvements with any private streetscape efforts along the edge of Village Inn Plaza.

### (d) Livingston Avenue

For Livingston Avenue between Main Street West and Brierwood Avenue the following should be considered:

- Continuation of the street design established for the western sections of Livingston Avenue, with central medians and on-street bicycling lanes.
- Designation of dedicated on-street bicycle lanes in both directions.
- Extension of the lighting standards from the core block along Main Street.
- Choosing street tree species with full grown canopies that will have minimal interference with overhead hydro wires.
- Coordination of any municipal streetscape improvements with any private streetscape efforts along the edge of Grimsby Square Plaza.



Above: demonstration of streetscape improvements along Livingston Avenue, looking eastward towards the core area.

**(e) Christie Street**

For Christie Street, between Main Street West and the QEW off ramp, the following should be considered:

- Tree and foundation plantings within the central median on Christie Street to frame the views to the Niagara Escarpment.
- Extension of the lighting standards from the core block along Main Street.
- Designation of dedicated on-street bicycle lanes in both directions, where space permits, or signage identifying shared-use of travel lanes for both vehicles and bicycles.

**(f) Ontario Street**

For Ontario Street between Main Street East and the rail line the following should be considered:

- Extension of the lighting standards from the core block along Main Street.
- Choosing street tree species with full grown canopies that will have minimal interference with overhead hydro wires.
- Signage identifying shared-use of travel lanes for both vehicles and bicycles.

**(g) Elm Street**

For Elm Street between Main Street East and Main Street West the following should be considered:

- For a roundabout at the Elm Street realignment (see Section 6.6 for discussion), plant the interior with tree, shrub and other planting species that are native, non-invasive and salt tolerant, in order to ensure they thrive in an downtown environment.

- Extension of the lighting standards from the core block along Main Street.
- Choosing street tree species with full grown canopies that will have minimal interference with overhead hydro wires.
- Signage identifying shared-use of travel lanes for both vehicles and bicycles.

*Below: demonstration of median tree planting along Christie as one descends into Downtown Grimsby*



*Above: demonstration of the streetscape improvements along Ontario Street looking south towards Ontario/Elm realignment through Main Street.*



## 6.5 Pedestrian Crossings

Pedestrian comfort and safety are key considerations for creating a safe and vibrant downtown. There are a number of key intersections along Main Street and Livingston Avenue that accommodate heavier pedestrian volumes and thus deserve special treatment as pedestrian crossing points. Enhancements to these intersections should provide a more comfortable pedestrian environment with defined pedestrian crossing routes.

There are five to six locations along Livingston Avenue and Main Street should be treated as pedestrian priority crossing areas, including Robinson Street, Elm Street, Ontario Street, Christie Street, Patton Street, and Kidd Avenue. Additionally, there is the potential for a defined mid-block pedestrian crossing of Main Street through the Core District that should be considered during detailed streetscape design of that section.

Surface treatment for these pedestrian crossings should provide both a visual and physical differentiation that identifies the pedestrian route to both pedestrians and drivers, which may include a range of different materials and treatments (such as brick pavers, imprinted asphalt, coloured asphalt, or textured asphalt). Universal accessibility, durability and ease of maintenance, and visual interest should be key considerations for identifying a suitable surface treatment.



**Top:** the Downtown Master Plan's conceptual demonstration of pedestrian crossing at the Robinson Street intersection.

**Left and Above:** examples of differentiated surface treatment for pedestrian crossings in other municipalities.

## 6.6 Ontario/Elm Realignment

The existing intersections of Elm Street and Ontario Street with Main Street present a challenge for both pedestrian and vehicular movements in Downtown Grimsby. The offset arrangement of Elm Street and Ontario Street prevents traffic control lights at Ontario Street, thus making turning movements to and from Ontario Street difficult and uncomfortable pedestrian movements at this intersection, a primary intersection in Downtown Grimsby. Through the CIP process, several conceptual options of reconfiguring of Elm Street were contemplated to alleviate this issue.

The recommended option has Ontario Street routing across Main Street, through the current site of the Post Office, connecting with Elm Street at a roundabout (or another traffic control measure). This option was deemed to provide a number of clear benefits in addition to the principal reason of more efficient traffic flow and movements, including the creation of some reconfigured development blocks and an opportunity for civic space in the remnant Elm Street right-of-way.

A number of actions do need to be undertaken prior to undertaking any detailed designs for this improvement. First, this option is dependent on the acquisition (and demolition) of the Post Office building, which requires consultation with Canada Post to determine their long-term plans, the potential for acquisition, and the feasibility of a potential relocation within Downtown Grimsby. Second, a traffic impact study is necessary prior to investigating the detailed design of this option to assess the feasibility from a traffic perspective and whether the action constitutes a significant improvement over the current situation. Lastly, property owners would need to be consulted regarding reconfiguration of the entrances to the Balsam Lane lot and properties on the east side of Elm Street.



**Above:** the preferred option for realignment of Elm Street to connect directly with Ontario Street.  
**Below:** the Downtown Master Plan's conceptual demonstration of the realignment.



## 6.7 Public Square

Downtowns are key areas within a town for gathering, socialization and passive recreation purposes, thus they need spaces that can accommodate such functions. Currently, Downtown Grimsby does not have such a space, which could provide a multi-purpose focal point the community. Such a space should be established in Downtown Grimsby to provide a range of opportunities for socialization, resting and community events or functions within the area.

The recommended location for the establishment of a public square is the remnant portion of the right-of-way of Elm Street fronting Main Street, provided the realignment identified in Section 6.6 is undertaken. This space provides a desired central location within Downtown Grimsby, which is currently under municipal ownership and which could act as a catalyst to redevelopment east along Main Street East and façade improvements surrounding. The addition of a centrally located civic space with a hard surface (rather than grass) can further strengthen Downtown Grimsby as the central focus in the Town.

Should the realignment of Elm Street identified in Section 6.6 above not be possible or feasible, an alternative location for a public square should be investigated, whether on public land or through acquisition of private property by the Town. Any such space should be in a central location near the Heritage Block as much as possible.



**Above and Left:** examples of public squares in other municipalities.  
**Below:** the Downtown Master Plan's conceptual demonstration of a public square in Downtown Grimsby.



## 6.8 Coronation Park

Greenspaces are significant elements in the principally hard-surfaced urban environment of a downtown area. The sole greenspace in Downtown Grimsby, Coronation Park, however does not relate well to the Main Street streetscape, given its sunken and nature, and is not well utilized. Enhancement to this greenspace is warranted to better incorporate it within the surrounding urban fabric.

The focus of the recommended improvements for Coronation Park is to provide a stronger interface and relationship with Main Street West. Improvements to Coronation Park should include:

- Raising the Main Street edge closer up to grade to provide a more inviting interface;
- Incorporating more opportunities for casual recreation (i.e. sitting areas) and for structured recreation (i.e. band shell);
- Landscaping and planting along Main Street frontage to strengthen the visual interest; and
- Coordinating with the plantings in the Main Street West right-of-way to represent the feeling of “driving through” the Park.

The design of any improvements to Coronation Park needs to be coordinated with any improvements to Forty Mile Creek and Forty Mile Creek Trail, as identified in Section 6.9.



Left: the Downtown Master Plan's conceptual demonstration of the improvements to the street edge of Coronation Park and to Forty Mile Creek.

## 6.9 Forty Mile Creek

Forty Mile Creek is the historic reason for settlement in Grimsby, yet remains “hidden” and is not a prominent feature within the Downtown Grimsby. Forty Mile Creek Trail running along the Creek provides an important regional linkage through Downtown Grimsby, between the Bruce Trail and the Waterfront Trail. Together both the Creek and the Trail should be improved to better incorporate and celebrate the historical and recreational relevance of Downtown Grimsby.

Improvements to Forty Mile Creek and Trail should include the following:

- Naturalization of Forty Mile Creek itself with native plantings on the west, public side of the Creek;
- Encouragement of native plantings on the east, private side of the Creek to screen rear loading and service areas;
- Addition of wayfinding signage as per Section 6.2;
- A symbolic representation of Forty Mile Creek in the Main Street West right-of-way with special surface treatment; and
- Redesign and reconstruction of the bridge railing over Forty Mile Creek to provide better viewing.



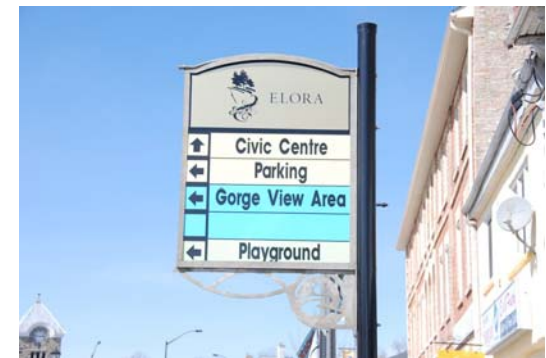
Above: the Downtown Master Plan's conceptual demonstration of coloured and textured surface treatment of Main Street West to symbolically represent Forty Mile Creek.

## 6.10 Municipal Parking Lots

The provision of an adequate quantity of convenient, safe and inviting parking is important for the establishment of pedestrian-oriented, accessible, and vibrant downtowns. Downtown Grimsby currently has a very good supply of off-street municipal parking lots for visitor, in addition to the supply of on-street parking on the primary streets throughout the area. The four municipally-owned parking lots within Downtown Grimsby (Balsam Lane, Ontario, Ontario and Elizabeth) provide in the order of 400 parking spaces to visitors.

While the quantity is good, the quality of these parking lots could be improved to enhance the pedestrian and user experience. Improvements to the municipal parking lots should include:

- Adding greenery to the edges of the parking areas where they are visible to the public right-of-way;
- Improving the universal accessibility of rear parking areas;
- Defining pedestrian routes through the parking areas;
- Establishing landscaped parking islands at the end of rows to break the surface area into smaller components;
- Formalizing mid-block connections from the parking areas to the Main Street, including consideration for accessibility and universal design standards as per Section 6.4.1; and
- Providing wayfinding signage to parking lots from the street as per Section 6.2.



Left and Above: examples of design treatment for parking areas in other municipalities.

## 6.11 Public Art

Public art is original artwork that is accessible to members of the public. It can assist in formulating a sense of place for a downtown by creating, or adding to, a unique or distinct identity for an area. It can serve a number of functions, including enhancing public awareness and interest in the visual arts; providing a mechanism of resident involvement in the design of their downtown; and, most importantly from a design perspective, enhancing the visual interest and vibrancy of the downtown environment. It may be located either within a public street right-of-way or other publicly-owned space, or on a private property where it has an interface and connection with the public realm, such as a courtyard facing adjacent to a public street.

Public art should be considered and encouraged as part of all development and redevelopment projects, streetscape improvements, and public spaces within Downtown Grimsby. Public art may range in size from small scale to large scale; may include a range of artistic mediums; can take a variety of different forms; and may serve a number of different purposes (such as functional, interpretive, abstract, or historical). Regardless, the design of public art should:

- Be durable to last as long as the related building or structure;
- Be easily visible from the public right of way, whether on public or private property;
- Be located to limit any conflicts with vehicular, bicycle, or pedestrian transportation circulation; and
- Have the primary function of providing visual interest without any commercial advertising function.



Right and Above: examples of different forms of public art in other municipalities.



# 7.0

## INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

### 7.1 Critical Community Improvement Needs

In order to support and encourage the realization of the Vision identified for Downtown Grimsby in the “Blueprint for Action”, the critical needs identified during the review of existing conditions and the SWOT Analysis need to be addressed and overcome. The following are the critical community improvement needs in Downtown Grimsby that can be addressed through the development and implementation of incentive programs:

- a) Need to improve the condition and appearance of dated and tired building facades and the quality and attractiveness of commercial signage and storefronts/display areas;
- b) Need to recover/upgrade heritage facades/features;
- c) Need more residences in the Downtown;
- d) Need new development and investment in underutilized buildings and on vacant sites; and,
- e) Need to remediate and redevelop several potential brownfield sites.

### 7.2 Approach

The financial incentive programs contained in this CIP represent a comprehensive tool kit of programs specifically designed to address the above noted critical needs, and over time, help achieve the Vision for Downtown Grimsby. These financial incentive programs are designed to encourage private sector investment, rehabilitation, adaptive reuse, redevelopment, and construction activity in Downtown Grimsby.

The programs contained in this CIP are referred to as a “toolkit” because once the CIP is adopted and approved, the incentive programs in the CIP can be activated by Council, one or more at a time, based on Council approval of the implementation of each program, subject to the availability of funding. The programs are also referred to as a “toolkit” because once activated, these programs can be used individually or together by an applicant. General requirements that apply to all the programs contained in this CIP and program specific requirements have been included in this CIP to help ensure that the Vision for the Downtown will be achieved while protecting the financial interests of the Town of Grimsby.

The balance of this section provides a description of each of the financial programs, including the program purpose, type, description, eligibility criteria and requirements. **Table 1** provides a summary of each incentive program contained in this CIP. Administrative Guidelines for each of the incentive programs contained in this CIP are provided in Appendices B to I. These appendices do not form part of the CIP, and therefore may be changed from time to time, as required, without amendment to this Plan.

### 7.3 General Program Requirements

All of the financial incentive programs contained in this CIP are subject to the following general requirements as well as the individual requirements specified under each program. The general and program specific requirements contained in this CIP are not necessarily exhaustive and the Town reserves the right to include other requirements and conditions as deemed necessary on a property specific basis:

- a) Application for any of the incentive programs in this CIP can be made only for properties within the Downtown Grimsby Project Area boundary as shown on Figure 8 of this CIP;

Table 1(a) Summary of Incentive Programs

Program	Description	Regional Participation (current as of date of CIP)	Critical Needs Addressed (see Section 7.1)	Recommended Program Duration <sup>1</sup>
7.4 Commercial/Mixed Use Building Facade Improvement Grant Program	Grant equal to 50% of the cost of eligible facade and storefront improvement/ restoration works to commercial, institutional and mixed use buildings to a maximum grant per property/project of \$12,500. At discretion of Council, the maximum grant can be increased by \$7,500 per property/project for properties designated under the <i>Ontario Heritage Act</i> .	Region will match Town grant to a maximum of \$5,000 from the Region.	a) and b)	Approximately ten (10) years, subject to availability of funding as approved by Council.
7.5 Residential Conversion / Intensification Grant / Loan Program	Grant equal to \$15 per sq.ft. of residential space rehabilitated or created to a maximum grant of \$15,000 per unit and a maximum of 5 units per property/project (maximum grant per property/project is \$75,000); OR  Loan equal to \$20 per sq.ft. of residential space rehabilitated or created to a maximum loan of \$20,000 per unit and a maximum of 5 units per property/project (maximum loan per property/project is \$100,000).	Region will match Town grant to a maximum of \$5,000 per unit.  Region will match Town loan to a maximum of \$10,000 per unit.	c) and d)	Approximately five (5) years, with an option to extend for five (5) years, subject to availability of funding as approved by Council.
7.6 Property Revitalization (Tax Increment) Grant Program	Annual grant equal to 70% of the increase in Town property taxes for up to 10 years after project completion. The project must result in an increase in assessment and property taxes. Annual grant is equal to 100% of the increase in Town property taxes for up to 10 years after project completion for projects on brownfield sites requiring environmental remediation/risk management. A Record of Site Condition must be filed and acknowledged for such projects on brownfield sites.	Region will match the percentage of the Town grant for the same time period.	a) through e)	Approximately ten (10) years.



Table 1(b) Summary of Incentive Programs

Program	Description	Regional Participation (current as of date of CIP)	Critical Needs Addressed (see Section 7.1)	Recommended Program Duration <sup>1</sup>
7.7 Development Charge Exemption Program	Exemption from 50% of Town development charge payable on commercial, residential or mixed use projects that create additional commercial space and/or residential units. Additional grant equal to remaining 50% of Town development charge payable with grant paid after project completion only if project obtains LEED certification or incorporates at least 3 of the 5 Regional Smart Growth principles.	Region provides reduction of 50% of Regional development charge payable.  Region provides additional reduction of 50% of Regional development charge for projects that incorporate at least 3 of the 5 Regional Smart Growth principles.	c), d) and e)	Approximately five (5) years, subject to availability of funding as approved by Council.
7.8 Urban Design Study Grant Program	Grant equal to 50% of the cost for an urban design study and/or professional architectural/design drawing(s) to a maximum grant of \$2,500 per property/project.	N/A	a) and b)	Approximately five (5) years, subject to availability of funding as approved by Council.
7.9 Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) Grant Program	Grant equal to 50% of the cost of an eligible environmental site assessment, remedial action plan or risk assessment. Maximum grant of \$12,000 per environmental study. Maximum of two (2) studies per property/project. Maximum total grant of \$20,000 per property/project.	Region will match Town grant to a maximum of \$5,000.	e)	Approximately five (5) years, subject to availability of funding as approved by Council.
7.10 Brownfields Tax Assistance Program	Cancellation of the municipal property tax increase and the education property tax increase for up to 3 years.	Region will match the Town's cancellation of the property tax increase for the same time period.	e)	Approximately ten (10) years.

- b) An application for any financial incentive program contained in this CIP must be submitted to the Town prior to the commencement of any works or studies to which the financial incentive program will apply, and prior to application for building permit;
- c) If the applicant is not the owner of the property, the applicant must provide written consent from the owner of the property to make the application;
- d) An application for any financial incentive program contained in this CIP must include plans, estimates, contracts, reports and other details as required by the Town to satisfy the Town with respect to costs of the project and conformity of the project with the CIP;
- e) Unless otherwise noted in the program description or the Administrative Guidelines, the review and evaluation of an application and supporting materials against program eligibility requirements will be done by Town staff, which will then make a recommendation to Town Council or Council's designate. The application is subject to approval by Town Council or Council's designate;
- f) Each program in this CIP is considered active if Council has approved implementation of the program, and Council has approved a budget allocation for the program (as applicable);
- g) As a condition of application approval, the applicant may be required to enter into a loan or grant agreement with the Town. This Agreement will specify the terms, duration and default provisions of the incentive to be provided. This Agreement is also subject to approval by Town Council or Council's designate;
- h) Where other sources of government and/or non-profit organization funding (Federal, Provincial, Municipal, CMHC, Federation of Canadian Municipalities, etc...) that can be applied against the eligible costs are anticipated or have been secured, these must be declared as part of the application. Accordingly, the loan/grant may be reduced on a pro-rated basis;
- i) The Town reserves the right to audit the cost of any and all works that have been approved under any of the financial incentive programs, at the expense of the applicant;
- j) The Town is not responsible for any costs incurred by an applicant in relation to any of the programs, including without limitation, costs incurred in anticipation of a grant and/or loan;
- k) If the applicant is in default of any of the general or program specific requirements, or any other requirements of the Town, the Town may delay, reduce or cancel the approved grant and/or loan, and require repayment of the approved grant and/or loan;
- l) The Town may discontinue any of the programs contained in this CIP at any time, but applicants with approved grants and/or loans will still receive said grant and/or loan, subject to meeting the general and program specific requirements, and applicants with approved loans will still be required to repay their loans in full;
- m) All proposed works approved under the financial incentive programs and associated improvements to buildings and/or land must conform to any Downtown Design Guidelines put in place by the Town, and all other Town guidelines, by-laws, policies, procedures, and standards;
- n) All works completed must comply with the description of the works as provided in the application form and contained in the

program agreement, with any amendments as approved by the Town;

- o) Existing and proposed land uses must be in conformity with applicable Official Plan(s), Zoning By-law and other planning requirements and approvals at both the local and regional level;
- p) All improvements made to buildings and/or land shall be made pursuant to a Building Permit, and/or other required permits, and constructed in accordance with the Ontario Building Code and all applicable zoning requirements and planning approvals;
- q) When required by the Town outstanding work orders, and/or orders or requests to comply, and/or other charges from the Town must be satisfactorily addressed prior to grant and/or loan approval/payment;
- r) Property taxes must be in good standing at the time of grant or loan payment and throughout the entire length of the grant/loan commitment;
- s) Town staff, officials, and/or agents of the Town may inspect any property that is the subject of an application for any of the financial incentive programs offered by the Town; and,
- t) Eligible applicants can apply for one, more or all of the incentive programs contained in this CIP, but no two programs may be used to pay for the same eligible cost. Also, the total of all grants and loans provided in respect of the particular property for which an applicant is making application under the programs contained in this CIP and any other applicable CIPs, shall not exceed the eligible cost of the improvements to that property under all applicable CIPs.

## 7.4 Commercial / Mixed-use Building Façade Grant

### 7.4.1 Purpose

To promote the rehabilitation, restoration and improvement of the front and side facades of commercial, institutional and mixed use buildings, including retail storefront display areas and signage.

### 7.4.2 Description

This program will provide a grant equal to 50% of the cost of eligible front, rear and side facade and storefront improvement and restoration works to commercial, institutional and mixed use buildings up to a maximum grant per property/project of \$12,500. At the discretion of Council, the grant can be increased by up to \$7,500 per property/project (maximum grant of \$20,000 per property/project) for properties/projects that are also designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

The Town may accept applications all year round for this program or the Town may issue a Request for Applications (RFA) for this program once or twice per year depending on program interest and availability of funding.

### 7.4.3 Eligibility Criteria and Program Requirements

Applicants are eligible to apply for funding under this program, subject to meeting the general program requirements, the following program requirements, and subject to the availability of funding as approved by Town Council:

- a) The following types of façade restoration and improvement works on commercial, institutional and mixed use buildings

are considered eligible for a matching grant under this program:

- i) repair or replacement of storefront, including repair or replacement of storefront doors and windows;
  - ii) repair or repointing of facade masonry and brickwork;
  - iii) repair or replacement of cornices, parapets, eaves and other architectural details;
  - iv) repair or replacement of awnings or canopies;
  - v) facade painting and cleaning/treatments;
  - vi) addition of new lighting/upgrading of existing fixtures on exterior facade and in entrance and storefront display areas;
  - vii) installation/improvement of signage (as permitted by the Sign By-law);
  - viii) landscaping, including plant materials (to a maximum of 15% of the approved grant amount);
  - ix) architectural/design fees required for eligible works (to a maximum of 10% of the grant amount);
  - x) other similar repairs/improvements as may be approved; and
  - xi) items i) to x) above as they apply to side facades and as they apply to rear facades that face public parking areas and/or public open spaces.
- b) In addition to the eligible costs specified in a) above, the following types of building façade improvement works on commercial, institutional and mixed use buildings designated under the Ontario Heritage Act are also considered eligible for a grant under this program:
- i) works that conserve or enhance elements specified in the Reasons for Designation accompanying the designating by-law under the Ontario Heritage Act;
  - ii) original siding and roofing materials including repair and replacement where necessary of wood clapboard

or board-and-batten, repair and repointing of masonry buildings, stucco repair, repair or replacement of original roofing materials (slate, wood shingles, tile, etc.);

- iii) removal of modern materials and replacement with documented original materials;
  - iv) reconstruction or construction of former and significant architectural features for which the appearance can be clearly determined from documentary sources (photographs, drawings, etc.);
  - v) cleaning of masonry buildings if it is necessary for the building's preservation;
  - vi) all final finishes, such as paint and masonry are eligible for funding subject to approval; and,
  - vii) works required to maintain or preserve significant architectural features.
- c) For commercial, institutional and mixed use buildings designated under the Ontario Heritage Act, the facade restoration and improvement works should be supported by documentation in the form of historic photographs or drawings clearly showing the feature(s) to be restored or reconstructed. Eligible works will be guided by the Town's Downtown Design Guidelines, as amended from time to time, and appropriate reference material as determined by Town staff.
- d) As a condition of grant application, the municipality may require the applicant to submit for approval professional design/ architectural drawing(s) which shall be in conformity with the Downtown Design Guidelines.



## 7.5 Residential Conversion / Intensification Grant or Loan

### 7.5.1 Purpose

To promote the construction of residential units through conversion of excess commercial and vacant space on upper stories of commercial and mixed use building to residential units; residential intensification; and the infilling of vacant lots with new residential units.

### 7.5.2 Description

This program may be offered in the form of a grant or a loan. The Town may accept applications all year round for this program or the Town may issue a Request for Applications (RFA) for this program once or twice per year depending on program interest and availability of funding.

#### 7.5.2.1 Grant Program

The Residential Conversion/Intensification Grant Program will provide a grant equal to 50% of the cost of rehabilitating and/or expanding existing residential units and/or constructing new residential units on the basis of \$15 per square foot of habitable floor space rehabilitated or constructed, to a maximum grant of \$15,000 per unit, and a maximum of 5 units per property/project (total maximum grant of \$75,000 per property/project).

The Residential Conversion/Intensification Grant Program can be used for rental or ownership units. If used for ownership units, the grant may apply to buildings that fall under the *Condominium Act*. The Grant will be paid once all construction is complete and the Town has conducted all final inspections.

#### 7.5.2.2 Loan Program

The Residential Conversion/Intensification Loan Program will provide a 0% interest loan on the basis of \$20 per square foot of habitable floor space rehabilitated or constructed, to a maximum loan of \$20,000 per unit, and a maximum of 5 units per property/project (total maximum loan of \$100,000 per property/project). The loan will be repayable in equal monthly payments over 5 years and a lump sum payment of outstanding funds at the end of the 5-year term.

The Residential Conversion/Intensification Loan Program can be used for rental or ownership units. If used for ownership units, the loan may apply to buildings that fall under the *Condominium Act*. If the loan is used for ownership units, upon closing of the sale of any unit, the loan for that unit will be due in full. If the unit is a rental unit, the loan term is the full 5 years, but the loan may be repaid early without penalty.

#### 7.5.3 Eligibility Criteria and Program Requirements

Only property owners (and their assignees) are eligible to apply for funding under this program, subject to meeting the general program requirements, the following program requirements, and subject to the availability of funding as approved by Town Council:

- a) The following types of projects are considered eligible for a grant under this program:
  - i) renovations to existing residential units in a mixed use building to bring these units into compliance with the Building Code, Property Standards By-law and the Fire Code;
  - ii) existing commercial or mixed use building where two or more net residential units are created; and,

- iii) vacant lot (including parking lots) converting to mixed use or residential use where two or more net residential units are created.
- b) As a condition of grant approval, the Town may require the applicant to submit for approval professional design/architectural drawing(s) which shall be in conformity with the Town's Downtown Design Guidelines, as well as impact studies such as traffic studies and studies of microclimatic conditions (sun, shadow, wind).
- c) As a condition of loan approval, the Town may require the applicant to:
  - i) post such security as may be required to secure a commercial loan, including registration of such security against title of the property; and,
  - ii) meet specific insurance terms to protect the municipality's interests.
- d) If during the loan period, a building receiving a residential conversion/intensification loan is demolished, all loan advances from the Town shall cease, and all loan advances already made by the Town will be repayable to the Town; and,
- e) If during the loan period, a building designated under the Ontario Heritage Act receiving a residential conversion/intensification loan is demolished or any of the heritage features are altered in any way that would compromise the reasons for designation, all loan advances from the Town shall cease, and all loan advances already made by the Town will be repayable to the Town.

## 7.6 Property Revitalization (Tax Increment) Grant

### 7.6.1 Purpose

To encourage and support rehabilitation, redevelopment, infill and intensification projects by providing a financial incentive that reduces the property tax increase that can result from these various types of development. This incentive is also designed to assist in securing project financing.

### 7.6.2 Description

This program will provide a tax increment based grant equivalent to 70% of the municipal (Town and Region) property tax increase for up to 10 years following completion of an eligible project where that project creates an increase in assessment, and therefore an increase in property taxes. For projects as defined above on brownfield sites, where a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) has been conducted, and that as of the date the Phase II ESA was completed, did not meet the required standards under subparagraph 4i of Section 168.4(1) of the *Environmental Protection Act* to permit a Record of Site Condition (RSC) for the proposed use to be filed in the Environmental Site Registry, the program will provide a tax increment based grant equivalent to 100% of the municipal (Town and Region) property tax increase for up to 10 years following completion of the project.

The grant will be paid annually once the eligible project is complete, building inspection has taken place, the property has been reassessed, and the new property taxes have been paid in full for the year. Pre-project Municipal taxes will be determined before commencement of the project at the time the application is approved. For purposes of the grant calculation, the increase in Municipal taxes will be calculated as the difference between pre-project Municipal

taxes and post-project Municipal taxes that are levied as a result of re-valuation of the property by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) following project completion. The grant will be recalculated every year based on post-project Municipal taxes in that year. Grant payments will cease when the total grant along with all other grants and loans provided equals the cost of rehabilitating the lands and buildings, or after 10 years, whichever comes first.

### 7.6.3 Eligibility Criteria and Program Requirements

Applicants are eligible to apply for funding under this program, subject to meeting the general program requirements and the following program requirements:

- a) The following types of projects are considered eligible for this program:
  - i) existing commercial, residential and mixed use buildings, vacant properties and parking lots where the redevelopment or rehabilitation project results in an increase in the assessed value and taxes on the property<sup>1</sup>;
- b) As a condition of grant application, the Town may require the applicant to submit a Business Plan, with said plan to the municipality's satisfaction;
- c) As a condition of grant application, the Town may require the applicant to submit for approval professional design/architectural drawing(s) which shall be in conformity with the Town's Downtown Design Guidelines, as well as impact studies such as traffic studies and studies of microclimatic conditions (sun, shadow, wind);

- d) If during the grant period, a building receiving a revitalization grant is demolished, all grant payments shall cease and the Town reserves the right to require repayment of the grant payments; and,
- e) If during the grant period, a building/property designated under the Ontario Heritage Act receiving a revitalization grant is demolished or any of the heritage features are altered in any way that would compromise the reasons for designation, all grant payments shall cease and the Town reserves the right to require repayment of the grant payments.

For projects on brownfield sites, the following additional program requirements apply:

- f) The application must be accompanied by a Phase II ESA, Remedial Work Plan or Risk Assessment Plan prepared by a qualified person that contains:
  - i) an estimate of the cost of actions that will be required to reduce the concentration of contaminants on, in or under the property to permit a record of site condition (RSC) to be filed in the Environmental Site Registry under Section 168.4 of the Environmental Protection Act; and
  - ii) a work plan and budget for said environmental remediation, and/or risk management actions;
- g) The owner shall file in the Environmental Site Registry a Record of Site Condition (RSC) for the property signed by a qualified person, and the owner shall submit to the Town proof that the RSC has been acknowledged by the Ministry of Environment (MOE).

---

<sup>1</sup> This program does not apply to any residential project that creates less than two net residential units.

## 7.7 Development Charge Exemption Program

### 7.7.1 Purpose

Downtown Grimsby is already serviced with adequate water and sewer services and road network capacity is adequate. Redevelopment in the Community Improvement Project Area may result in incremental increases in demand for both hard and soft services. However, it is recognized that the costs to provide these incremental services will be substantially lower than to provide new infrastructure to greenfield areas. Therefore, there is a financial rationale for a significantly lower development charge for redevelopment projects in Downtown Grimsby.

### 7.7.2 Description

In an effort to promote new residential and commercial development in downtowns and brownfield areas, the Region passed a development charge waiver/exemption program in 2002 (Regional Report CSD 151-2002/DPD 131-2002). This was followed in 2003 with a report that outlined the administrative procedures for implementation of the development charge waiver/exemption program (Regional Report CSD 39-2003/DPD 48-2003). The Region's most recent Development Charges By-law (No. 62-2009) came into effect on September 1, 2009. This By-law reduces the Regional development charge payable by 50% for development located within the boundaries of designated central urban areas as set out in Schedule D of Regional By-law No. 62-2009, or on a brownfield site. The Region provides a further 50% reduction of Regional development charges payable for development located within designated central urban areas or on a brownfield site where said development includes three or more of the five Regional Smart Growth principles (see **Appendix I**).

The Downtown Grimsby Community Improvement Project Area is wholly within the Grimsby Central Area where the Region provides a

50%/+50% exemption from Regional development charges. The reduction of local municipal development charges is not required by the Region as a condition of the Regional program, but it is encouraged by the Region. Combined with the Regional development charge reduction, a reduction of the Town's development charges will likely prove to be a significant upfront financial incentive to promote redevelopment in the Downtown Grimsby Community Improvement Project Area.

The Town's Development Charge Exemption Program will automatically exempt residential, commercial, and mixed use development and redevelopment projects that create additional commercial space and/or residential units in the Community Improvement Project Area from 50%<sup>2</sup> of the Town's development charge. This 50% exemption will be applied at the time Town development charges are normally paid.

Furthermore, an applicant may apply to the Town for a grant equivalent to the remaining 50%<sup>3</sup> of Town development charges for any eligible project that:

- a) obtains Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification; or,
- b) incorporates at least 3 of the 5 Regional Smart Growth principles.

If approved, this grant will be paid after project completion.

As the amendments to the Town's Development Charges By-law required to implement the initial 50% exemption are outside the scope

---

<sup>2</sup> This 50% exemption from Town development charges does not form part of this CIP.

<sup>3</sup> The grant equivalent to the remaining 50% of Town development charges payable forms part of this CIP.



of the *Planning Act*, this initial 50% component of the Development Charge Exemption Program has only been referenced in this Plan, and does not form part of this Plan. Therefore, it is recommended that the initial 50% component of the Development Charge Exemption Program be forwarded to Town Council as a separate recommendation and implementing amendment to the Town's Development Charges By-law.

### 7.7.3 Eligibility Criteria and Program Requirements

Applicants are eligible to apply for a grant under this program, subject to meeting the general program requirements, the following program requirements, and subject to the availability of funding as approved by Town Council:

- a) The following types of projects are considered eligible for the program:
  - i) new commercial, residential or mixed use development on vacant lots, including parking lots;
  - ii) expansions to existing commercial and mixed use buildings;
  - iii) conversion of non-commercial space to commercial space; and,
  - iv) redevelopment of mixed use buildings that creates additional commercial space and/or residential units.

## 7.8 Urban Design Study Grant

### 7.8.1 Purpose

To help offset the costs to developers and property owners of preparing professional urban design studies and architectural/design drawings required by the Town.

### 7.8.2 Description

This program will provide a matching grant of 50% of the cost of preparing professional urban design studies and architectural/design drawings required by the Town to a maximum grant per property/project of \$2,500. Only one Urban Design Study Grant application per property/project will be allowed.

Review and evaluation of an application and supporting materials against program eligibility requirements will be done by Town staff and a decision on the grant application will be made by Town staff. Applications will be processed and approved on a first come, first serve basis, subject to availability of funding as approved by Council.

Grants approved under this program will be paid once the professional urban design study/ drawings funded by the grant have been submitted to the Town along with proof that the architect who prepared the study/drawings have been paid in full. The grant will be paid on the lesser of a cost estimate provided by the architect conducting the study or the actual cost of the study.

The submitted urban design study/drawings must also be to the satisfaction of the Town and must meet any municipally issued Downtown Design Guidelines. The grant may be reduced or cancelled if the study/drawings are not to the satisfaction of the Town, or if the architect who prepared the study/drawings has not been paid in full.

The applicant will agree to provide the Town with permission to provide the study/drawings to subsequent owners and interested parties, should the applicant decide not to proceed with the project.

### 7.8.3 Eligibility Criteria and Program Requirements

Applicants are eligible to apply for funding under this program, subject to meeting the general program requirements, the following program requirements, and subject to the availability of funding as approved by Town Council:

- a) All studies/drawings must be submitted to the Town in electronic and hard copy format for the Town's review and retention; and,
- b) All studies/drawings must be to the satisfaction of the Town and must meet the Town's Downtown Design Guidelines.

## 7.9 Environmental Site Assessment Grant

### 7.9.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) Grant Program is to promote the undertaking of environmental studies so that more and better information is available with respect to the type of contamination and potential remediation costs on brownfield properties in the Downtown Grimsby Community Improvement Project Area.

### 7.9.2 Description

A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) has become a standard requirement of most financial institutions. A Phase I ESA does not provide detailed information with respect to the type of contamination and cost of remediation. Therefore, Phase I ESA's are not eligible for funding under this program. To be eligible to apply for the ESA Grant Program, a Phase I ESA must have been completed on the property and must show that the property is suspected of environmental contamination.

The ESA Grant Program will provide a matching grant of 50% of the cost of an eligible environmental study to a maximum grant of:

- a) \$12,000 per study;
- b) two studies per property/project; and,
- c) \$20,000 per property/project.

Eligible environmental studies include a Phase II ESA, Designated Substance and Hazardous Materials Survey, Remedial Work Plan, and a Risk Assessment. Environmental site assessment grants will only be offered on eligible properties where there is potential for rehabilitation and/or redevelopment of the property.



program applies only to properties requiring environmental remediation and/or risk assessment/management.

### 7.10.2 Description

The legislative authority for the Brownfield TAP is established under Sections 365.1 (2) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* which allows municipalities to pass a by-law providing tax assistance to an eligible property in the form of cancellation of all or part of the taxes levied on that property for municipal (Town and Region) and education purposes during the “rehabilitation period” and the “development period” of the property, as defined in Section 365.1 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*.

An “eligible property” for the Brownfields TAP is a property within the community improvement project area where a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) has been conducted, and that as of the date the Phase II ESA was completed, did not meet the required standards under subparagraph 4i of Section 168.4(1) of the *Environmental Protection Act* to permit a Record of Site Condition (RSC) for the proposed use to be filed in the Environmental Site Registry.

“Rehabilitation period” means, with respect to an eligible property, the period of time starting on the date on which the by-law under subsection 365.1(2) providing tax assistance for the property is passed and ending on the earliest of:

- a) the date that is 18 months after the date that the tax assistance begins to be provided,
- b) the date that a record of site condition for the property is filed in the Environmental Site Registry under section 168.4 of the *Environmental Protection Act*, and
- c) the date that the tax assistance provided for the property equals the sum of,

- i) the cost of any action taken to reduce the concentration of contaminants on, in or under the property to permit a record of site condition to be filed in the Environmental Site Registry under section 168.4 of the *Environmental Protection Act*, and
- ii) the cost of complying with any certificate of property use issued under section 168.6 of the *Environmental Protection Act*, (“période de réhabilitation”).

“Development period” means, with respect to an eligible property, the period of time starting on the date the rehabilitation period ends and ending on the earlier of:

- a) the date specified in the by-law made under subsection 365.1(2), or
- b) the date that the tax assistance provided for the property equals the sum of,
  - i) the cost of any action taken to reduce the concentration of contaminants on, in or under the property to permit a record of site condition to be filed in the Environmental Site Registry under section 168.4 of the *Environmental Protection Act*, and
  - ii) the cost of complying with any certificate of property use issued under section 168.6 of the *Environmental Protection Act*, (“période d’aménagement”).

“Eligible costs” for the Brownfields TAP are the costs of any action taken to reduce the concentration of contaminants on, in or under the property to permit a record of site condition (RSC) for the proposed use to be filed in the Environmental Site Registry under Section 168.4 of the *Environmental Protection Act*. This includes the cost of:

- a) a Phase II ESA, Designated Substances and Hazardous

Materials Survey, Remedial Work Plan, and Risk Assessment not disbursed by the ESA Grant Program;

- b) environmental remediation, including the cost of preparing a RSC;
- c) placing clean fill and grading;
- d) installing environmental and/or engineering controls/works as specified in the Remedial Work Plan and/or Risk Assessment;
- e) monitoring, maintaining and operating environmental and engineering controls/works, as specified in the Remedial Work Plan and/or Risk Assessment; and,
- f) environmental insurance premiums.

In no case will the total amount of tax assistance provided under the Brownfields TAP exceed the total of these eligible costs.

The municipal property tax assistance provided will cease:

- a) when the total tax assistance provided equals the total eligible costs as specified above; or,
- b) after three (3) years, whichever comes first.

The matching education property tax assistance will cease:

- a) when the total tax assistance provided equals the total eligible costs as specified above; or,
- b) after such time period as is approved by the Minister of Finance<sup>4</sup>, whichever comes first.

---

<sup>4</sup> Generally, matching education property tax assistance will last for a maximum of three (3) years. Extensions are subject to the approval of the Minister of Finance.

As part of the tax assistance provided to the applicant, the Town may also seek participation from the Regional Municipality of Niagara (Region) in order to provide for a cancellation of the municipal (Town and Region) property tax increase. The matching Regional portion of the property tax increase to be cancelled is subject to approval by Regional Council. The tax assistance provided by the Region may be delivered on a different schedule than the tax assistance provided by the Town and may be subject to additional conditions.

Matching education property tax assistance for eligible properties under the provincial Brownfields Financial Tax Incentive Program (BFTIP), or through any other replacement programs administered by the Province, is subject to approval of the Minister of Finance on a case by case basis, may be provided on a different schedule from the tax assistance provided by the Town and the Region, and may be subject to additional conditions.

If a property that has been approved for brownfields tax assistance is severed, subdivided, sold or conveyed prior to the end of the tax assistance period specified above, both the education property tax assistance and the municipal property tax assistance will automatically end.

Any property approved for tax assistance will be subject to passing of a by-law by the Town that authorizes the provision of the tax assistance. This by-law will contain conditions required by the Town as well as conditions required by the Region and the Minister of Finance. In order for the by-law to apply to Regional taxes, before it is passed by the Town, the Town must supply a copy of the proposed by-law to Regional Council. Regional Council must by resolution agree that the by-law will also provide for a matching equivalent cancellation of the Regional property tax increase for up to 3 years. In order for the by-law to apply to education property taxes, before it is passed by the



Town, the by-law must be approved in writing by the Minister of Finance.

Applications will be processed and approved on a first come, first serve basis, subject to availability of funding as approved by Council, with a higher priority being placed on applications for sites where planning approvals are not required or sites where planning applications have been submitted. Review and evaluation of an application and supporting materials against program requirements will be completed by Town staff, which will then make a recommendation to Town Council or Council's designate.

### 7.10.3 Eligibility Criteria and Program Requirements

Applicants are eligible to apply for funding under this program, subject to meeting the general program requirements and the following program requirements:

- a) An application must be submitted to the Town prior to the start of any remediation works to which the tax assistance will apply;
- b) The application must be accompanied by a Phase II ESA prepared by a qualified person that shows that the property does not meet the standards under subparagraph 4i of Section 168.4(1) of the *Environmental Protection Act* to permit a Record of Site Condition (RSC) for the proposed use to be filed in the Environmental Site Registry;
- c) The application must be accompanied by a Phase II ESA, Remedial Work Plan or Risk Assessment prepared by a qualified person that contains:
  - i) an estimate of the cost of actions that will be required to reduce the concentration of contaminants on, in or under the property to permit a record of site condition (RSC) for

the proposed use to be filed in the Environmental Site Registry under Section 168.4 of the *Environmental Protection Act*; and

- ii) a work plan and budget for said environmental remediation and/or risk management actions;
- d) As a condition of the application, the Town may require the applicant to submit a Business Plan for redevelopment of the property (as applicable), with said Plan to the Town's satisfaction;
- e) The property shall be rehabilitated such that the work undertaken is sufficient to at a minimum result in an increase in the assessed value of the property;
- f) The total value of the tax assistance provided under this program shall not exceed total eligible costs. This includes the eligible costs of:
  - i) a Phase II ESA, Designated Substances and Hazardous Materials Survey, Remedial Work Plan, and Risk Assessment not disbursed by the ESA Grant Program;
  - ii) environmental remediation, including the cost of preparing a RSC;
  - iii) placing clean fill and grading;
  - iv) installing environmental and/or engineering controls/works as specified in the Remedial Work Plan and/or Risk Assessment;
  - v) monitoring, maintaining and operating environmental and engineering controls/works, as specified in the Remedial Work Plan and/or Risk Assessment;
  - vi) environmental insurance premiums;
- g) All property owners participating in this program will be

required to enter into an agreement with the Town that will specify the terms, duration and default provisions of the tax assistance;

- h) All Brownfields TAP applications and agreements must be approved by Council or Council's designate;
- i) Should the owner of the property default on any of the conditions in the by-law, the tax assistance provided (plus interest) will become payable to the Town and Province;
- j) The owner shall file in the Environmental Site Registry a RSC for the property signed by a qualified person, and the owner shall submit to the Town proof that the RSC has been acknowledged by the Ministry of Environment (MOE).

# 8.0

## IMPLEMENTATION

### 8.1 Key to Success

The following principles are key considerations for the successful implementation of the Community Improvement Plan:

(1) *Downtown Grimsby must play to its strengths.*

Downtown areas are special districts that provide unique opportunities that one cannot necessarily find in other, more contemporary shopping districts. Downtown Grimsby needs to play to this strength to differentiate it from other areas. This includes enhancing and building on its heritage characteristics, its pedestrian friendliness, its small scale shops, its personality and friendliness, its accessibility, and its surrounding residential neighbourhoods.

(2) *The downtown experience is paramount.*

The overall experience of downtown visitors, shoppers and residents is paramount to the success of downtown revitalization efforts. Therefore, enhancing the quality of the pedestrian experience along main streets and the sense of place in the downtown is a principal method in which a downtown can remain vibrant and competitive with contemporary shopping areas.

(3) *A CIP is a long-term strategy for improvement.*

Small, short-term improvements are desirable and necessary in addition to larger, long-term improvements in order to meet the overall objective of an attractive and healthy downtown. A

number of downtown improvements can be implemented and evaluated in short, manageable steps in a phase progression over the long-term.

(4) *A CIP is a coordinated effort among many participants.*

The downtown vision can only be achieved through a combination of public sector (Town of Grimsby, Regional Municipality of Niagara) and private sector (property and business owners) efforts. Both the public and private sectors have important and interconnected roles to play, and therefore need to communicate and coordinate their efforts and actions, particularly regarding street and streetscape improvements.

(5) *A CIP is an investment in the downtown.*

While the identified public realm enhancements and financial incentives programs of the CIP will involve significant capital expenditures at the municipal level (both Town and Region), these expenditures need to be viewed as an investment in the community, and not necessarily just a cost. This investment is intended to leverage private sector investment and re-investment to achieve the vision for a stronger, more comfortable, and healthier Downtown Grimsby.



**Above:** The Downtown Grimsby CIP, a comprehensive, long-term, and coordinated strategy aimed at improvement to the area, including efforts such as recent façade improvements in the Downtown.

## 8.2 Municipal Improvement Strategy

### 8.2.1 Basis

Sections 28(3) and 28(6) of the Planning Act identify that once a Community Improvement Project Area has been designated and a CIP is approved, a municipality may undertake a number of different actions, including:

- a) Acquire, hold, clear, grade or otherwise prepare land for community improvement;
- b) Construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on land acquired or held by it in conformity with the community improvement plan; and,
- c) Sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of any land and buildings acquired or held by it in conformity with the community improvement plan.

Once adopted, the Downtown Grimsby CIP enables the Town of Grimsby to engage in any of these activities and use its powers under the *Municipal Act, 2001* to promote the undertaking of the Land Use and Design Strategy in Section 6.0 of this CIP. The Land Use and Design Strategy is comprised of both public sector and private sector roles and responsibilities, the former most notably including improvements to the public realm (see **Figure 11**) but also the provision of the financial incentive programs to encourage appropriate development in Downtown Grimsby.

### 8.2.2 Priorities

Generally speaking, enhancements to a downtown's public realm represent the largest investment of a CIP and are the longest in terms of timing and achievement. While challenges associated with capital costs and timing are evident, public realm improvements and high quality urban design are important elements for fulfilling the role of

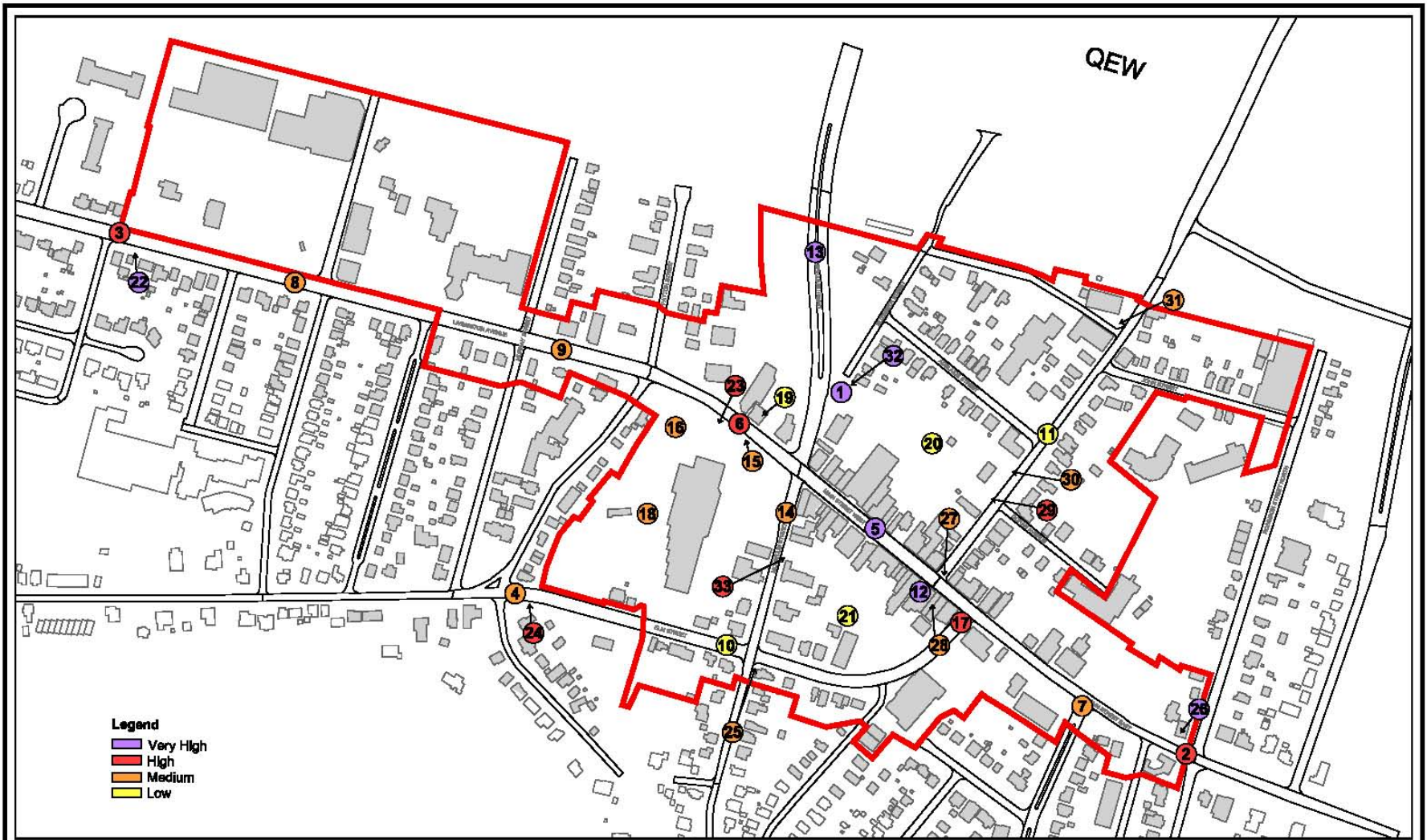
Downtown Grimsby as a safe, comfortable, attractive, and interesting space. Given this importance, the Town and Region will have significant roles and responsibility in designing and building the envisioned public realm to support this type of environment.

**Table 2** below together with **Figure 12** provides a general framework for prioritizing the various public realm improvements that have been recommended in this CIP. These priorities are organized according to the five general categories of improvements: gateway features; street improvements; public spaces; municipal parking areas; and wayfinding signage.

This priority framework is intended to be a recommended sequence representing the particular improvement's importance to Downtown Grimsby's improvement overall (i.e. the biggest impacts sooner rather than later). The prioritization is intended to be a general guide for the preparation of a long-term capital program for the identified improvements in Downtown Grimsby, which will provide more detail in terms of specific costs, phasing and priorities. It is not based on physical needs for rehabilitation or reconstruction of any of the identified elements, and needs to be coordinated with timing of capital planning processes at both Town and Regional levels.

### 8.2.3 Public Domain Incentives Program

The Niagara Region currently offers a "Public Domain Incentives Program" as part of their "Smarter Niagara Incentives Program", which seeks to foster distinct and attractive communities with a strong sense of place. The Public Domain Incentives Program offers grants to local municipalities to undertake infrastructure projects and public realm improvements that are identified, or comply with municipal planning documents including community improvement plans.



**Legend**  
 Very High  
 High  
 Medium  
 Low



## Downtown Grimsby Community Improvement Plan



FIGURE 11  
Public Realm Improvement Priorities



Table 2

## Public Realm Improvement Priorities

Element		Priority	Responsibility
<b>GATEWAY FEATURES</b>			
1	Christie Street gateway feature (central gateway)	Very High	Town with DIA and property owners (as needed)
2	Main Street East gateway feature (east gateway)	High	Town with DIA
3	Livingston Avenue gateway feature (west gateway)	High	Town with DIA
4	Main Street West gateway feature (south gateway)	Medium	Town with DIA
<b>STREET IMPROVEMENTS</b>			
5	Main Street improvements (Christie to Elm/Ontario)	Very High	Region with Town
6	Main Street improvements (Patton to Christie)	High	Region with Town
7	Main Street improvements (Elm/Ontario to Robinson)	Medium	Region with Town
8	Livingston Avenue improvements (Brierwood to Nelles Blvd.)	Medium	Region with Town
9	Livingston Avenue improvements (Nelles Blvd. to Patton)	Medium	Region with Town
10	Elm Street (Main Street West to Ontario/Elm)	Low	Town
11	Ontario Street (rail line to north of Main Street intersection)	Low	Town
12	Elm Street realignment	Very High (requires Traffic Impact Study)	Town with Region
13	Christie Street central median	Very High	Region with Town
14	Christie/Mountain Street (central gateway to Elm)	Medium	Region with Town
15	Forty Mile Creek bridge	Medium	Town and Region with community groups
<b>PUBLIC SPACES</b>			
16	Coronation Park	Medium (coordinated with Trail)	Town
17	Public Square	High (dependent on Elm realignment)	Town
18	Forty Mile Creek Trail improvements	Medium	Town with recreation and/or natural heritage groups
19	Property acquisition and naturalization (72 Main Street West)	Low (dependent on property availability)	Town

Table 2 (cont'd) Public Realm Improvement Priorities

Element		Priority	Responsibility
<b>MUNICIPAL PARKING AREAS</b>			
20	Ontario Street Lot improvements	Low	Town with DIA
21	Balsam Lane Lot improvements	Low (coordinated with Elm realignment)	Town with DIA
<b>WAYFINDING SIGNAGE</b>			
22	@ west gateway	Very High	Town with DIA
23	@ Coronation Park	High	Town with DIA
24	@ south gateway	High	Town with DIA and community groups
25	@ Mountain and Elm	Medium	Town with DIA and community groups
26	@ east gateway	Very High	Town with DIA and community groups
27	@ north side Ontario and Main	Medium (dependent on Elm realignment)	Town with DIA and community groups
28	@ south side Ontario and Main	Medium (dependent on Elm realignment)	Town with DIA and community groups
29	@ Ontario Street Lot (north)	High	Town with DIA and community groups
30	@ Ontario Street Lot (south)	Medium	Town with DIA and community groups
31	@ Ontario and railine	Medium	Town with DIA and community groups
32	@ central gateway	High	Town with DIA and community groups
33	@ Balsam Lane Lot (west)	High	Town with DIA and community groups
34	@ Balsam Lane Lot (east)	Medium (dependent on Elm realignment)	Town with DIA and community groups

Once the CIP is adopted, the Town of Grimsby can make an application for any of the public realm improvement actions identified in Section 6.0 of this CIP. Grant applications must meet certain eligibility requirements and a competitive process supported by a business case justification is used to evaluate the applications. Funds are based on a matching basis with the Region's share, and may not exceed 50% of the overall project cost to a maximum grant for any individual project of \$100,000.

### 8.3 Policy and Regulatory Amendments

This section identifies the amendments to the Town's policy and regulatory documents that are recommended in order to successfully implement and facilitate the improvements identified in this CIP.

#### 8.3.1 Official Plan

The Town's Official Plan is dated, given it was approved in June of 1988 and has been amended from time to time since its approval. Given the changes to the policy and regulatory context in the last 20 years, particularly regarding Provincial legislation and plans, the Town commenced a review of its Official Plan in 2007 as per the Planning Act. This Official Plan review includes updated land use and design policies and provides a long term planning framework for the Town.

Of particular relevance to the preparation of the Downtown Grimsby CIP, the Project Team reviewed the existing Community Improvement policies in the existing Official Plan and put forward recommendations for revised Community Improvement policies in the Town's Official Plan, which was submitted as part of the Official Plan Review process. The primary concern is that the existing Community Improvement policies are dated and may not allow the Town to undertake all of the actions afforded by the Municipal Act.

**Appendix A** to this CIP contains the recommended policies. These policies have been incorporated into the Official Plan, although as indicated above, not in their entirety.

#### 8.3.2 Zoning By-law

The Town's Zoning By-law No. 71-74, a primary planning tool for implementing the vision of the Official Plan, is dated since it was adopted in 1971 and it does not reflect the new direction of the Official Plan. The Town's intent is to undertake a comprehensive review of its zoning by-law following adoption of the new Official Plan to mesh it with the new policy direction.

As part of the Downtown Master Plan report, Zoning By-law 71-74 was reviewed and assessed to determine any impediments to achieving the Vision for Downtown Grimsby. The General observations regarding Zoning By-law 71-74 as it relates to this Vision for Downtown Grimsby are as follows:

- The four different commercial zones (C1, C2, C3, C6) within Downtown Grimsby present an overly and unnecessarily complicated approach;
- The regulations for the principal commercial zone (C3) in Downtown Grimsby generally do not support the desired "urban" environment;
- The residential zone (TRM) in Downtown Grimsby does not permit conversion to commercial uses within existing buildings or intensification to denser residential types (i.e. townhouses or low rise apartments); and
- The general parking requirements do not allow for exemptions or reductions for off-street parking within Downtown Grimsby considering the municipal parking facilities that exist.

The comprehensive zoning by-law project intended for the Town of Grimsby should incorporate a clearer zoning framework for Downtown Grimsby that is simpler to administer for the Town, is more supportive of the downtown vision and built form and design objectives, is more flexible for property owners and developers, and reduces the need for zoning amendments in order to encourage development. For reference purposes, a draft zoning approach for consideration is contained in Appendix B of the Downtown Master Plan report.

### 8.3.3 Sign By-law

The Town's Sign By-law (By-law No. 97-45) regulates the design and placement of signs throughout the Town. The Sign By-law, however, is principally concerned with regulating the type, location, and size of signs, and does not speak to the character and details of signs. Although the Downtown Design Guidelines provides guidance on appropriate signage scale, character, materials and details of signage in Downtown Grimsby, they are a guidance tool for the review and approval process, and are not legal tools enforced by municipal by-law as is the Sign By-law.

There are three general issues with the Sign By-law in respect to implementing the Vision for Downtown Grimsby:

1. The Sign By-law permits a number of signs that are not appropriate for a main street environment (such as pole signs and roof signs);
2. The Sign By-law permits signs that are generally much larger in size and scale than what is desired for a main street environment; and
3. The Sign By-law restricts the placement and location of certain signs (such as portable signs and projecting signs) that are desirable in a main street environment

Given these issues, it is recommended that the Town's Sign By-law No. 97-45 be amended to include a special "Downtown District" which acknowledges and enables the unique nature of signage that is desired for Downtown Grimsby. At a minimum, the following specific provisions are recommended for this "Downtown District" within the Sign By-law:

- Reduction of the maximum sign area and height by sign type in keeping with the Downtown Design Guidelines (alternatively, size and height limits within Downtown Grimsby could remain the same as the remainder of Grimsby, with encouragement of desired signage through the application of the Downtown Design Guidelines as part of any façade improvement incentive programs);
- Permission of portable signs on a public sidewalk/boulevard provided an appropriate minimum walking space width on the sidewalk is maintained;
- Permission of projecting signs to encroach over the public sidewalk provided that an encroachment agreement is entered into with the Town;
- Limitation on the location of wall signs to be no higher than the upper limit of a building's first storey;
- Limitation of the placement of wall signs to be generally parallel to the wall façade, and not angled or tilted; and
- Prohibition of any new pole or roof signs with the exception of a replacement of an existing, legally established sign.

### 8.4 Downtown Design Guidelines

The Downtown Master Plan provides the overall land use and design strategy guiding improvements to Downtown Grimsby. As part of this strategy, it provides a comprehensive series of "Downtown Design Guidelines" that are meant to provide guidance to the various participants involved in the process.

The design guidelines in Section 6.0 of the Downtown Master Plan are meant to be a design tool that implements the vision and policies of the Town of Grimsby Official Plan and the Downtown Master Plan. They are intended to be a flexible and comprehensive guide for the design and development of new buildings and façade improvements in Downtown Grimsby. They are to be applied at the Zoning By-law and Site Plan Control phases of the development process, and also through the application of CIP financial incentives programs, should they be offered.

The design guidelines are not written as policy, and are not meant to be a “checklist” for the design of new developments and façade improvements. Rather, the design guidelines have been written with the understanding that the guidance offered is to be used on a case-by-case basis, recognizing that context and different situations will affect how the guidelines are relevant and how they will be applied. There is flexibility in the interpretation and application of the guidelines, provided it is keeping with the spirit of the overarching design vision and principles for Downtown Grimsby identified in this CIP.

Recognizing this role, Grimsby Town Council should adopt the Downtown Design Guidelines, by resolution, as a guidance document for the development approvals process and the administration of the financial incentive programs.

## **8.5 Incentive Program Monitoring**

### **8.5.1 Purpose**

The Monitoring Program set out in this section has several purposes. It is designed to monitor:

- a) Funds dispersed through the CIP incentive programs so as to determine which programs are being most utilized, and use this information to adjust the programs, as required;
- b) Feedback from applicants to the incentive programs so that adjustments can be made to the incentive programs, as required; and,
- c) The economic impact associated with projects taking advantage of the CIP incentives programs.

The Grimsby CIP is not intended to be a static planning document. It is intended to be a proactive plan for economic and community renewal and revitalization in Downtown Grimsby. Therefore, information obtained through the Monitoring Program will be used by the Town to periodically adjust the incentive programs to make them even more relevant and user friendly. Information type c) will also be utilized to provide regular reports to Council on the amount of private sector investment being leveraged by the municipal incentive programs and the economic benefits associated with these private sector projects. Ultimately, the purpose of the monitoring program is to provide Town staff and Council with the information required to make knowledgeable and well informed decisions about how to adjust the incentive programs in order to help ensure that the Vision for Downtown Grimsby is realized over time.

### **8.5.2 Description**

Monitoring of the uptake and performance of the incentive programs should be done on a regular basis and these monitoring results reported to Council annually or even semi-annually. As well, feedback from users of the incentive programs should be considered and utilized to adjust the incentive programs in order to improve their effectiveness and ensure that the incentive programs are effective for a range of project types and sizes in the two Community Improvement Project Areas. Similarly, monitoring of progress on implementation of



the Municipal Leadership Strategy should be done regularly and reported to Council on an annual basis.

**Table 3** presents a list of the variables that should be monitored on an individual project and aggregate basis for the incentive programs contained in this CIP. In addition to these quantitative economic measures, the Town should also attempt to monitor the qualitative results of the CIP in terms of its social and community benefits. This could include the impact of public realm improvement projects on existing businesses and community pride, and the number and size of public/community events held in Downtown Grimsby. Regular qualitative observations should be conducted by Town staff of the individual and cumulative impact of both public and private CIP projects on the Downtown. These qualitative measures should be regularly monitored and reported to Council along with the quantitative measures specified in **Table 3**.

It is also recommended that the Downtown Revitalization Steering Committee be maintained as a Committee to assist the Town in monitoring implementation of the CIP once it is adopted and approved so that Town staff can regularly meet with, and report to this Committee. The members of this Committee can then provide valuable feedback on implementation of the Incentive Programs and the Municipal Leadership Strategy to Town staff.

### 8.5.3 Program Adjustments

The individual incentive programs contained in this CIP can be activated, deactivated or discontinued by Council without amendment to this Plan. Over time, feedback from monitoring of the CIP may lead to minor revisions to the programs contained in this CIP. Therefore, the Town may periodically review and adjust the terms and requirements of any of the programs contained in this Plan, without amendment to the Plan. Such minor changes will be provided to the

Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing for information purposes only. Increases in funding provided by the financial incentives contained in this CIP, the addition of any new incentive programs to this CIP, or an expansion of the Community Improvement Project Area will require a formal amendment to this Plan in accordance with Section 28 of the *Planning Act*.

Table 3

Incentive Programs – Variables to be Monitored

Program	Variable
<b>7.4 Commercial/Mixed Use Building Facade Improvement Grant Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of applications by type of facade improvement (front/side);</li> <li>• \$ amount of grant;</li> <li>• Type and cost (\$) of total facade improvements;</li> <li>• Total Cost (\$) of other building improvements/construction;</li> <li>• Increase in assessed value of participating property;</li> <li>• Increase in municipal (Town and Region) and education property taxes of participating property; and</li> <li>• Number and \$ amount of program defaults.</li> </ul>
<b>7.5 Residential Conversion/Intensification Grant/Loan Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of applications by type (conversion, intensification, infill)</li> <li>• \$ amount of grant or loan;</li> <li>• Total \$ value of construction;</li> <li>• Number of residential units created by type (rental/ownership, 1 bedroom, 2 bedroom, 2+ bedroom) and square footage of residential space rehabilitated, converted or added;</li> <li>• Increase in assessed value of participating property;</li> <li>• Increase in municipal (Town and Region) and education property taxes of participating property; and</li> <li>• Number and \$ amount of loan/program defaults.</li> </ul>
<b>7.6 Property Revitalization (Tax Increment) Grant Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of applications and \$ amount of grant;</li> <li>• Total \$ value of construction;</li> <li>• Number of residential units by type and square footage of residential space converted, rehabilitated or constructed;</li> <li>• Square footage of commercial and institutional space rehabilitated or constructed;</li> <li>• Number of new businesses successfully occupying space (1 year post completion);</li> <li>• Jobs created/maintained;</li> <li>• Number of projects involving environmental remediation and \$ cost of remediation;</li> <li>• Increase in assessed value of participating property;</li> <li>• Increase in municipal (Town and Region) and education property taxes of participating property;</li> <li>• Number of projects incorporating LEED certification or Smart Growth Principles;</li> <li>• Number and \$ amount of program defaults.</li> </ul>

Program	Variable
<b>7.7 Development Charge Exemption Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$ amount of development charge exempted by project;</li> <li>• Total \$ amount of development charges exempted;</li> <li>• \$ amount of grants awarded by type (LEED or Smart Growth)</li> <li>• Number of residential units by type and square footage of residential space converted, rehabilitated or constructed;</li> <li>• Square footage of commercial space rehabilitated or constructed;</li> <li>• Total \$ value of construction;</li> <li>• Increase in assessed value of participating property; and</li> <li>• Increase in municipal (Town and Region) and education property taxes of participating property.</li> </ul>
<b>7.8 Urban Design Study Grant Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of applications;</li> <li>• \$ amount of grant</li> <li>• Total cost of urban design study/ architectural/design drawings;</li> <li>• Number of Urban Design Study Grants leading to facade/construction projects; and</li> <li>• Number and \$ amount of program defaults.</li> </ul>
<b>7.9 Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) Grant Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of applications;</li> <li>• Type of ESA (Phase II, Remedial Work Plan, or Risk Assessment);</li> <li>• \$ Amount of Grant;</li> <li>• Total Cost of ESA; and</li> <li>• Number of ESA Grants leading to actual environmental remediation and rehabilitation projects.</li> </ul>
<b>7.10 Brownfield Tax Assistance Program (TAP)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of applications</li> <li>• \$ Cost of environmental remediation and other eligible costs</li> <li>• Hectares/acres of land remediated and redeveloped</li> <li>• Total \$ value of construction;</li> <li>• Number of residential units by type and square footage of residential space converted, rehabilitated or constructed;</li> <li>• Square footage of commercial and institutional space rehabilitated or constructed;</li> <li>• Jobs created/maintained;</li> <li>• Increase in assessed value of participating property</li> <li>• Estimated and actual amount of municipal (Town and Region) and education tax assistance for participating property</li> <li>• Number and \$ amount of program defaults</li> </ul>

Downtowns in small towns in Ontario are typically the heart and identity of the community, a focal point where people can shop, relax, and socialize. They should be diverse and complete areas of a community where residents and visitors can undertake a number of different activities. They should be an enjoyable area which creates a high quality experience for all users.

To this end, the Grimsby DIA and the Town of Grimsby initiated the Downtown Grimsby Community Improvement Plan to provide a vision and direction for the improvement of Downtown Grimsby. The need for a CIP originated from the "*Blueprint for Action*", a comprehensive action plan that prioritized a series of projects for the revitalization of Downtown Grimsby.

The CIP involved a comprehensive community consultation process, including open houses, walking tours, workshops and public information sessions, with the intent of determining the desired vision and necessary improvements for Downtown Grimsby. The Vision that was developed through this process identifies that over time Downtown Grimsby will:

- a) Be the vibrant, active and safe gathering place in the Town with a concentration of commercial, civic, and residential uses;
- b) Have a clear and definable identity that meshes the Town's historic roots with contemporary improvements;
- c) Have a healthy and sustainable commercial environment that is supported by a strong downtown residential base;
- d) Capitalize on an integrated system of its natural heritage and cultural heritage assets;

- e) Have an visually attractive and clean public realm that is accommodating to all users;
- f) Accommodate new developments that complement the character of the area's traditional form; and
- g) Offer a complete range of day-to-day uses and specialty uses that cater to both residents and visitors.

To achieve this Vision, the Downtown Grimsby CIP provides a number of recommendations to facilitate achieving the vision and facilitating the improvements identified for Downtown Grimsby. Generally, the recommendations are categorized into three different types: public realm improvements; financial incentive programs; and policy and regulatory amendments. A summary of the recommendations in the Downtown Grimsby CIP are identified below.

#### Public Realm Improvements:

- (1) Design and install gateway features at the central, eastern, western, and southern entrances to Downtown Grimsby.
- (2) Design and install a comprehensive wayfinding signage system at various locations through Downtown Grimsby directing visitors to key features.
- (3) Design and implement streetscape improvements for the primary streets within Downtown Grimsby: Main Street East and West, Livingston Avenue, Christie and Mountain Street, Ontario Street, and Elm Street.
- (4) Design and implement visually defined pedestrian crossings as part of the streetscape improvements at key intersections in Downtown Grimsby.
- (5) Assess the feasibility of realigning Elm Street to connect directly with Ontario Street, through consultation with Canada

Post and followed by a traffic impact study assessing the technical feasibility of a roundabout.

- (6) Design and implement the realignment of Elm Street to connect directly with Ontario Street, provided it is feasible.
- (7) Design and implement a public square at the location of the current Elm Street connection with Main Street, provided Elm Street is realigned.
- (8) Design and implement physical improvements to Coronation Park to improve its functionality and interface with Main Street West.
- (9) Naturalize Forty Mile Creek with further plantings to provide visual interest and to screen views.
- (10) Implement improvements to the municipally-owned parking lots to increase visual interest, accessibility, and user comfort.
- (11) Encourage the installation of public art as part of streetscape improvement and private sector development projects.

#### **Financial Incentive Programs:**

- (1) Adopt and implement a Commercial/Mixed Use Building Façade Grant program.
- (2) Adopt and implement a Residential Conversion/Intensification Grant/Loan program.
- (3) Adopt and implement a Property Rehabilitation (Tax Increment) Grant program.

- (4) Adopt and implement a Development Charge Exemption program.
- (5) Adopt and implement an Urban Design Study Grant program.
- (6) Adopt and implement an Environmental Site Assessment Grant program.
- (7) Adopt and implement a Brownfields Tax Assistance program.
- (8) Establish a monitoring program to track the results of the financial incentives program.
- (9) Maintain the Downtown Revitalization Steering Committee to assist with the monitoring program of the financial incentives program.

#### **Policy and Regulatory Amendments:**

- (1) Incorporate revised Community Improvement policies into the new Official Plan as part of the review process (or process an Official Plan Amendment to amend the existing Official Plan policies).
- (2) Initiate a revision to the zoning in Downtown Grimsby as part of the comprehensive zoning by-law project to provide a more contemporary approach for the area that achieves the Vision of the CIP.
- (3) Amend the Town's Sign By-law to identify a "Downtown District" with specific sign regulations in keeping with the Downtown Design Guidelines.

# APPENDICES

Appendices "A" through "I" do not form an operative part of the Downtown Grimsby Community Improvement Plan and may be changed from time to time, as required, without amendment to the Community Improvement Plan.





# APPENDIX A

## Recommended Official Plan Community Improvement Policies

---

### 9.13 Community Improvement Plans

9.13.1 The purpose of the Community Improvement policies is to provide a comprehensive framework for the designation of community improvement project areas and preparation of community improvement plans that promote and focus public and private investment into maintenance, rehabilitation and redevelopment activities that result in improved living and working conditions in the Town.

9.13.2 The goals of Community Improvement are to:

- a) Preserve, rehabilitate and redevelop the existing built environment, including selected residential, commercial, and mixed use areas;
- b) To maximize the use of existing public infrastructure, facilities and amenities;
- c) To coordinate private and public community improvement activities;
- d) To guide the Township in setting priorities for municipal expenditure respecting community improvement projects;
- e) To participate, wherever possible, in Federal and/or Provincial programs that facilitate community improvement; and,
- f) To reconcile existing land use conflicts and minimize future land use conflicts.

9.13.3 Community Improvement Plans may be prepared and adopted by the Town to achieve one or more of the following objectives:

- a) Encourage the private sector renovation, repair, rehabilitation, redevelopment or other improvement of lands and/or buildings, including 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;
- b) Maintain and improve municipal services including the water distribution system, the sanitary and storm sewer systems, roads, sidewalks, street lighting, and to provide a safe health standard for the citizens of the community;
- c) Preserve and enhance existing commercial areas through the stimulation of private sector investment, especially in Downtown Grimsby;
- d) Encourage maximum use of existing public infrastructure through the infilling, intensification and redevelopment of lands and buildings which are already serviced with municipal services;
- e) Encourage the restoration, maintenance, improvement and protection of natural habitat, parks, open space, recreational and heritage facilities and amenities, and to establish new facilities where deficiencies exist to meet the needs of the citizens of the community;
- f) Encourage the preservation, restoration, adaptive reuse and improvement of historical or architecturally significant buildings;
- g) Maintain and improve the transportation network to ensure adequate traffic flow, pedestrian circulation, and parking facilities, especially in Downtown Grimsby;

- h) Improve and maintain the physical and aesthetic qualities and amenities of the streetscape, especially in Downtown Grimsby;
  - i) Encourage the eventual elimination and/or relocation of incompatible land uses, and where this is not feasible, to encourage physical improvements to minimize the incompatibility.
  - j) Improve environmental conditions;
  - k) Improve social conditions;
  - l) Promote cultural development;
  - m) Facilitate and promote community economic development; and,
  - n) Improve community quality, safety and stability.
- 9.13.4 The Town may designate by by-law one or more Community Improvement Project Area(s), the boundary of which may be part or all of the entire Urban Area of the Town of Grimsby, with the Urban Area of Grimsby as defined in this Plan, and as amended from time to time.
- 9.13.5 For an area to be designated as a Community Improvement Project Area, it must satisfy at least one, and preferably more than one of the following general criteria:
- a) Buildings, building facades, and/or property, including buildings, structures and lands of heritage and/or architectural significance, are in need of preservation, restoration, maintenance, repair, rehabilitation, energy efficiency or renewable energy improvements, or redevelopment;
  - b) Vacant lots and/or underutilized properties and buildings which have potential for infill, redevelopment or expansion to better utilize the land base;
  - c) Deficiencies in physical infrastructure including but not limited to the sanitary sewer system, storm sewer system, and/or watermain system, roadways, sidewalks, curbs, streetscapes and/or street lighting, street furniture, and accessible parking facilities;
  - d) Deterioration or deficiencies in the level of community and social services such as public open space, municipal parks, neighbourhood parks, indoor/outdoor recreational and/or community facilities, and public social facilities;
  - e) Commercial and residential areas with poor overall visual quality of the built environment, including but not limited to, building facades, streetscapes, public amenity areas and urban design;
  - f) Presence of buildings and/or lands of architectural or heritage significance;
  - g) Known or suspected environmental contamination;
  - h) Non-conforming, conflicting, encroaching or incompatible land uses or activities that threaten to disrupt the predominant land use and/or lifestyle of the citizens of the area due to factors such as noise, odour, parking, loading and traffic circulation;
  - i) Minor incompatibilities between specific developments in historic mixed areas where improvement to site design could resolve the existing problems;
  - j) Existence of or potential for the creation of a business improvement area.
  - k) Problems or deficiencies associated with the circulation and/or access of traffic;
  - l) A shortage of land to accommodate widening of existing rights-of-way, building expansion, parking and/or loading facilities;

- m) Other significant barriers to the repair, rehabilitation or redevelopment of underutilized land and/or buildings; and,
- n) Other significant environmental, social or community economic development reasons for community improvement.

9.13.6 Priority for the designation of Community Improvement Project Areas and the preparation and adoption of Community Improvement Plans shall be given to:

- a) Downtown Grimsby;
- b) Those areas where the greatest number of criteria for selection of Community Improvement Project Areas are present; and/or,
- c) Those areas where one or more of the criteria for selection of Community Improvement Project Areas is particularly acute; and/or,
- d) Those areas where one or more of the criteria for selection of Community Improvement Project Areas exists across the Urban Area of Grimsby.

9.13.7 The phasing of community improvements shall be prioritized according to:

- a) The financial capability of the Town to fund community improvement projects;
- b) Availability and timing of senior government programs that offer financial assistance for community improvement efforts; and,
- c) The timing of related capital expenditures from various municipal departments to ensure community improvements are coordinated as much as possible with departmental priorities.

9.13.8 In order to implement a Community Improvement Plan in effect within a designated Community Improvement Project Area, the Town may undertake a range of actions, including:

- a) The municipal acquisition of land and/or buildings and the subsequent:
  - i) Clearance, grading, or environmental remediation of these properties;
  - ii) Repair, rehabilitation, construction or improvement of these properties;
  - iii) Sale, lease, or other disposition of these properties to any person or governmental authority;
  - iv) Other preparation of land or buildings for community improvement.
- b) Provision of public funds such as grants and loans to owners of land and their assignees;
- c) Application for financial assistance from and participation in senior level government programs that provide assistance to municipalities and/or private landowners for the purposes of community improvement;
- d) Agreements with any government authority or agency for the preparation of studies, plans and programs for the development or improvement of a Community Improvement Project Area;
- e) Discussions and negotiations with owners of properties which are substandard with respect to maintenance, and if such discussions and negotiations are unsuccessful, enforcement of the Maintenance and Occupancy By-Law;
- f) Support of the preservation of historic and/or architecturally significant buildings through the Ontario

*Heritage Act, 1990*, and the use of funding programs under that Act;

- g) Support for and co-operation with local service clubs and other organizations in the development of recreation and other facilities and services in a Community Improvement Project Area.
- h) Provision of information on municipal initiatives, financial assistance programs, and other government assistance programs;
- i) Establishment of a Business Improvement Area;
- j) Refinement of zoning controls and application of flexible land use policies within designated Community Improvement Project Areas to the extent that they complement community improvement goals and objectives; and,

9.13.9 All developments participating in programs and activities contained within Community Improvement Plans shall conform with the policies contained in this Plan, the Zoning-By-law, Maintenance and Occupancy By-law, and all other related municipal policies and by-laws.

9.13.10 Council shall adopt such special measures as may be necessary to implement the goals and objectives for Community Improvement.



## APPENDIX B

### Commercial/ Mixed Use Building Facade Improvement Grant Program Administration

---

#### Step 1 Application Submission

Applicants will be required to have a pre-application consultation meeting with Town staff in order to determine program eligibility, proposed scope of work, and project timing, among other details. Town staff will perform an initial site visit(s) and inspection(s) of the building/property, as necessary.

Before accepting an application, Town staff will screen the proposal and application. If the application is not within the Community Improvement Project Area, or the application clearly does not meet the program eligibility criteria, the application will not be accepted. If Town staff determines that the application is not acceptable for one or more of the above noted reasons, the application will be returned to the applicant with a letter explaining the reason for not accepting the application. Acceptance of the application by the Town in no way implies program approval.

The Town may accept applications all year round for this program or the Town may issue a Request for Applications (RFA) for this program once or twice per year depending on availability of funding and program interest.

The Town may request that applications for this program be accompanied by supporting documentation, including but not necessarily limited to:

- a) photographs of the existing building facade;

- b) historical photographs and/or drawings;
- c) a site plan and/or professional design study/architectural drawings;
- d) specification of the proposed works, including a work plan for the improvements to be completed and construction drawings;
- e) two (2) cost estimates for eligible work provided by a licensed contractor.

If the application is approved, and the applicant elects to engage the contractor who provided the highest cost estimate, the Town's grant contribution will be based on the lowest cost estimate. An application fee may be collected at the time of application.

#### Step 2 Application Review and Evaluation

Applications, supporting materials and documentation will be reviewed by Town staff against program requirements. Town staff will determine the eligible works and costs.

The determination of eligible works and costs and the recommendation on the application will be guided by the Town's Downtown Design Guidelines and any other Town approved guidelines, as amended from time to time, and other appropriate reference material as determined by staff.

For buildings designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, the facade restoration and improvement works should be supported by documentation in the form of historic photographs or drawings clearly showing the feature(s) to be restored or reconstructed.

An application for a Commercial/Mixed Use Building Facade Improvement Grant will be approved by Council or Council's designate. A recommendation report will be prepared by Town staff. If this report recommends approval of the application, a grant agreement satisfactory to the Town Solicitor will also be prepared. This agreement will contain

conditions to ensure that the project is commenced and completed in a timely fashion. This agreement will be forwarded to the applicant to be dated and signed. Once the signed agreement has been returned to the Town, the Council application approval process can commence.

### **Step 3 Application Approval**

The recommendation report along with the grant agreement (if recommendation report recommends approval) will be forwarded to Town Council or Council's designate for consideration. If Council or Council's designate approves the application and grant agreement, the agreement will be executed (signed and dated) by Town officials and a copy is provided to the applicant.

### **Step 4 Payment**

Payment of the grant shall not take place until:

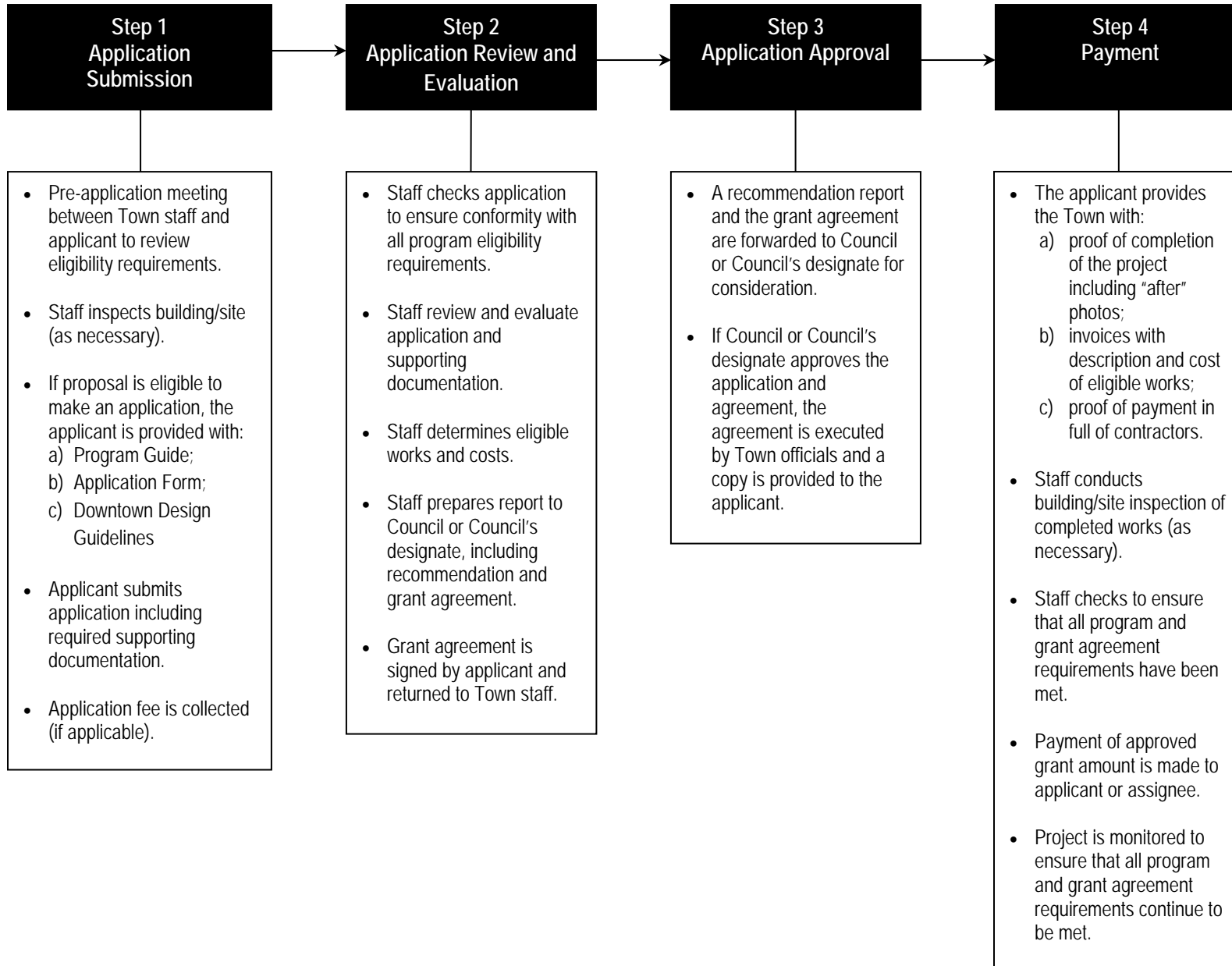
- a) the grant agreement has been executed by the applicant and the Town;
- b) construction of the eligible works is completed;
- c) photographic evidence of the completed works (satisfactory to the Town) has been submitted;
- d) staff have inspected the completed works (as necessary) to ensure that the project has been completed in accordance with the program application and grant agreement;
- e) invoices clearly showing the amount paid for all eligible works have been submitted;
- f) written verification that all contractors have been paid in full has been provided; and,
- g) staff are satisfied with all reports and documentation submitted.

Prior to issuance of the grant payment, Town staff will check to ensure that all program requirements (general and program specific) and grant agreement requirements have been met. If all program requirements and grant agreement requirements have been met to the Town's

satisfaction, then the Town will issue payment of the approved grant in conformity with the grant agreement.

Town staff will monitor the project, periodically checking that the project is in compliance with the grant agreement requirements. Town staff will take appropriate remedies as specified in the grant agreement if the applicant defaults on the agreement.

**Figure B-1 Commercial Building Facade Improvement Grant Program Administration**



# APPENDIX C

## Residential Conversion / Intensification Grant / Loan Program Administration

---

### Step 1 Application Submission

Applicants will be required to have a pre-application consultation meeting with Town staff in order to determine program eligibility, proposed scope of work and project timing, among other details. Town staff will perform an initial site visit(s) and inspection(s) of the building/property, if necessary.

Before accepting an application, Town staff will screen the proposal and application. If the application is not within the Community Improvement Project Area, or the application clearly does not meet the program requirements, the application will not be accepted. If Town staff determines that the application is not acceptable for one or more of the above noted reasons, the application will be returned to the applicant with a letter explaining the reason for not accepting the application. Acceptance of the application by the Town in no way implies program approval.

The Town may request that applications for this program be accompanied by supporting documentation, including but not necessarily limited to:

- a) a site plan, landscape plan, and/or professional design study/architectural drawings;
- b) photographs of the existing building facade;
- c) historical photographs and/or drawings;

- d) specification of the proposed works, including a work plan for the improvements to be completed, construction drawings, and number and size of units to be constructed;
- e) two cost estimates for eligible work provided by licensed contractors, including a breakdown of costs;
- f) impact studies such as traffic studies and studies of microclimatic conditions (sun, shadow, wind);
- g) environmental reports and/or a record of site condition;
- h) financial information, including but not necessarily limited to:
  - i) sources and uses of funds;
  - ii) financial statements;
  - iii) purchase price and appraised value of property (for loan program demonstrating a minimum 25% equity);
  - iv) owner equity;
  - v) registered mortgages;
  - vi) details of primary construction lending and secondary financing;
  - vii) projected unit sales prices and/or rental rates.

The applicant must provide evidence of financial capability to develop the property according to the terms of the program. An application fee may be collected at the time of application.

### Step 2 Application Review and Evaluation

Applications and supporting materials and documentation are reviewed by Town staff against program requirements and applicable Town guidelines. Town staff will then determine eligible costs. The determination of eligible works and decision on the application will be guided by the Town's Downtown Design Guidelines and any other Town approved guidelines, as amended from time to time, and other appropriate reference material as determined by staff.

A recommendation report will be prepared by Town staff. If this report recommends approval of the application, a grant agreement satisfactory

to the Town Solicitor will also be prepared. This agreement will be forwarded to the applicant to be dated and signed. Once the signed agreement has been returned to the Town, the Council application approval process can commence.

### **Step 3 Application Approval**

The recommendation report along with the grant agreement (if report recommends approval) is forwarded to Council or Council's designate for consideration. If Council or Council's designate approves the application and grant agreement, the agreement is executed (signed and dated) by Town officials and a copy is provided to the applicant.

For loan program, the Town registers or causes to be registered on title security for the loan, usually in the form of a second mortgage.

### **Step 4 Payment**

Prior to payment of the grant, the applicant must provide the Town with:

- a) photographic evidence of the completed works satisfactory to the Town;
- b) invoices for all eligible work done clearly showing the amount paid for eligible works; and,
- c) proof of payment of contractors in full.

Prior to release of 60% of the loan, the applicant must provide the Town with:

- a) proof that the development is at least 60% complete. This will take the form of photographic evidence satisfactory to the Town and an engineer's report;
- b) proof that equity and financing required to that stage of completion has been injected into the project;
- c) progress and final reports and documentation as required to the Town's satisfaction.

For a grant, Town staff will conduct a final building/site inspection (as necessary) to ensure that the project has been completed in accordance with the grant application and agreement. For a loan, Town staff will conduct a building/site inspection (as necessary) to ensure that the project is 60% complete.

Prior to issuance of the grant/ loan advance payment, Town staff will check to ensure that all program requirements and grant agreement requirements have been met. If all program requirements and grant/loan agreement requirements have been met to the Town's satisfaction, then the Town will issue payment of the approved grant in conformity with the grant agreement or advance 60% of the loan to the applicant in conformity with the loan agreement.

For a loan, the above noted progress verification and loan advance process, including building inspection by Town staff (as required) will be repeated at 80% completion and 100% completion. At 80% completion and 100% completion, if all program requirements and loan agreement requirements have been met to the Town's satisfaction, further advances of the loan will be made to the applicant.

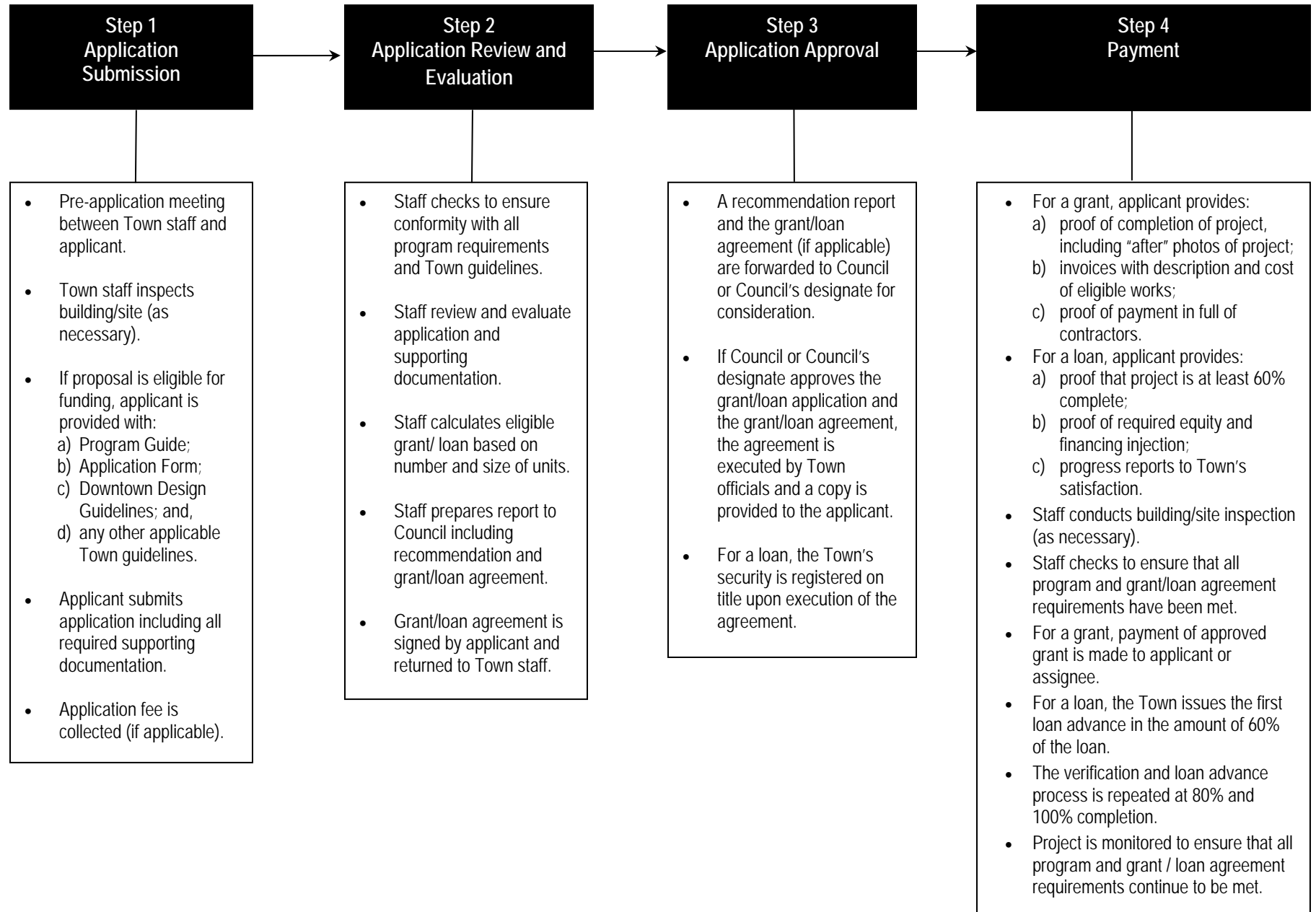
Prior to issuing the final loan advance, Town staff will conduct a final building/site inspection (as necessary) when the project is 100% complete to ensure that building occupancy is possible.

Upon the closing of sale on any unit participating in the program, the loan for that unit is due. The loan is repayable in equal monthly payments over 5 years with 15% of the loan repayable every year and a lump sum payment of outstanding loan funds at the end of 5 years.

Town staff will monitor the project, periodically checking that the project is in compliance with all program and grant/loan agreement requirements. Town staff will take appropriate remedies as specified in the grant/loan agreement if the applicant defaults on the agreement.



**Figure C-1 Residential Intensification Grant/Loan Program Administration**



# APPENDIX D

## Property Revitalization (Tax Increment) Grant Program Administration

---

### Step 1 Application Submission

Applicants will be required to have a pre-application consultation meeting with Town staff in order to determine program eligibility, proposed scope of work, and project timing, among other details. Town staff will perform an initial site visit(s) and inspection(s) of the building/property (if necessary).

Before accepting an application, Town staff will screen the proposal and application. If the application is not within the Community Improvement Project Area, or the application clearly does not meet the program eligibility criteria, the application will not be accepted. If Town staff determines that the application is not acceptable for one or more of the above noted reasons, the application will be returned to the applicant with a letter explaining the reason for not accepting the application. Acceptance of the application by the Town in no way implies program approval.

The Town may request that applications for this program be accompanied by supporting documentation, including but not necessarily limited to:

- a) photographs of the existing building facade;
- b) historical photographs and/or drawings;
- c) a site plan and/or professional design study/architectural drawings;
- d) specification of the proposed works including a work plan for the improvements to be completed and construction drawings;

- e) professional design study/architectural drawings;
- f) estimated project construction costs, including a breakdown of said costs;
- g) impact studies such as traffic studies and studies of microclimatic conditions (sun, shadow, wind)
- h) environmental reports and/or a Record of Site Condition (RSC);
- i) a Business Plan; and,
- j) any other financial information.

An application fee may be collected at the time of application.

### Step 2 Application Review and Evaluation

Applications and supporting materials and documentation are reviewed by Town staff against program requirements and applicable Town guidelines. Town staff will determine the eligible works and costs. The determination of eligible works and costs and the recommendation on the application will be guided by the Town's Downtown Design Guidelines and any other Town approved guidelines, as amended from time to time, and other appropriate reference material as determined by staff.

For buildings designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, the facade restoration and building improvement works should be supported by documentation in the form of historic photographs or drawings clearly showing the feature(s) to be restored or reconstructed.

As an option, Town staff will utilize the actual pre-project Town property taxes and estimated post-project assessed value and applicable tax rates to calculate the estimated post-project property taxes, increase in Town and Regional property taxes, and the estimated annual and total grant amount to be provided.

A recommendation report will be prepared by Town staff. If this report recommends approval of the application, a grant agreement satisfactory

to the Town Solicitor will also be prepared. This agreement will contain conditions to ensure that the project is commenced and completed in a timely fashion. This agreement will be forwarded to the applicant to be dated and signed. Once the signed agreement has been returned to the Town, the Council application approval process can commence.

### **Step 3 Application Approval**

The recommendation report along with the grant agreement (if report recommends approval) is forwarded to Council or Council's designate for consideration. If Council or Council's designate approves the application and grant agreement, the agreement is executed (signed and dated) by Town officials and a copy is provided to the applicant.

### **Step 4 Payment**

Prior to payment of the grant, the applicant must provide the Town with:

- a) photographic evidence of the completed project satisfactory to the Town;
- b) other documentation proving completion of the project, e.g., engineer's report (if required);
- c) all final reports and documentation as required.

Town staff will conduct a final building/site inspection (as necessary) to ensure that the project has been completed in accordance with the grant application and agreement.

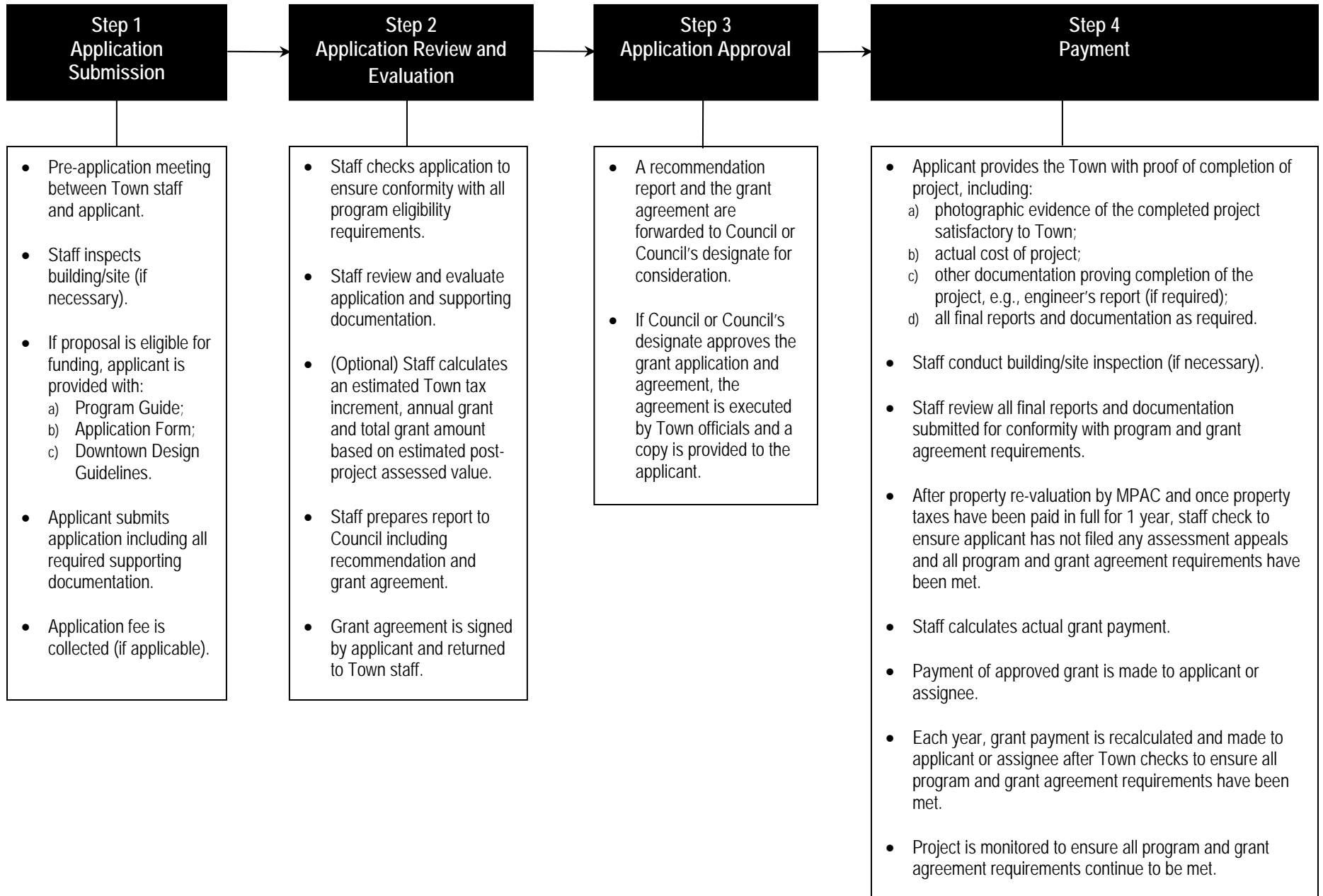
Once the project is complete, an occupancy permit has been issued, and the property has been re-valued by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation, the property owner will be sent a new tax bill. After the property owner has paid in full the new property taxes for one (1) year, the Town will check to ensure that:

- a) the applicant has not filed any assessment appeals; and,
- b) all program and grant agreement requirements have been met.

If all program and grant agreement requirements have been met to the Town's satisfaction, then the Town will calculate the actual tax increment and grant payment. The Town will then issue payment of the grant in the form of a cheque in the amount specified as per the calculation of the actual grant payment.

Town staff will monitor the project, periodically checking that the project is in compliance with all program and grant agreement requirements. Town staff will take appropriate remedies as specified in the grant agreement if the applicant defaults on the agreement.

**Figure D-1 Property Revitalization (Tax Increment) Grant Program Administration**



# APPENDIX E

## Development Charge Exemption Program Administration

---

### Step 1 Application Submission

Only owners of properties are eligible to apply for this program. Applicants will be required to have a pre-application consultation meeting with Town staff in order to determine program eligibility, proposed scope of work, project timing, and preliminary development concept including proposed building size, height and density, number of residential units, gross floor area of residential and commercial space and other project details. This pre-application meeting shall occur prior to commencement of any works to which the development charge grant will apply.

Town staff will perform an initial site visit(s) and inspection(s) of the building/property (as necessary).

Before accepting an application, Town staff will screen the proposal and application. If the application is not within the Community Improvement Project Area, or the application clearly does not meet the program eligibility criteria, the application will not be accepted. If Town staff determines that the application is not acceptable for one or more of the above noted reasons, the application will be returned to the applicant with a letter explaining the reason for not accepting the application. Acceptance of the application by the Town in no way implies program approval.

The Town may request that applications for this program be accompanied by supporting documentation, including but not necessarily limited to:

- a) photographs of the existing building facade;
- b) historical photographs and/or drawings;
- c) a site plan and/or professional design study/architectural drawings;
- d) specification of the proposed works including a work plan for the improvements to be completed and construction drawings;
- e) professional design study/architectural drawings;
- f) estimated project construction costs, including a breakdown of said costs;
- g) impact studies such as traffic studies and studies of microclimatic conditions (sun, shadow, wind)
- h) environmental reports and/or a Record of Site Condition (RSC);
- i) a Business Plan; and,
- j) any other financial information.

### Step 2 Application Review and Evaluation

Applications and supporting materials and documentation are reviewed by Town staff against program requirements and applicable Town guidelines.

The recommendation on the application will be guided by the Town's Downtown Design Guidelines and any other Town approved guidelines, as amended from time to time, and other appropriate reference material as determined by staff.

For buildings designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, any facade restoration and improvement works should be supported by documentation in the form of historic photographs or drawings clearly showing the feature(s) to be restored or reconstructed.

If the application meets the general and program specific requirements and is approved, the 50% Development Charge Exemption will be applied at the time that development charges are normally paid, i.e., at issuance of building permit.

Town staff will review the application to determine if the applicant is eligible for the 50% development charge equivalent grant based on whether or not the project will achieve LEED certification and whether or not the project incorporates at least three of the five Regional Smart Growth principles (see Appendix G).

A recommendation report will be prepared by Town staff regarding the 50% development charge equivalent grant. If this report recommends approval of the application, a grant agreement satisfactory to the Town Solicitor will also be prepared. This agreement will contain conditions to ensure that the project is commenced and completed in a timely fashion (or the grant approval is lost) and that the grant level to be provided is tied to actual LEED certification or actual incorporation of Regional Smart Growth principles achieved by the construction project. This agreement will be forwarded to the applicant to be dated and signed. Once the signed agreement has been returned to the Town, the Council application approval process can commence.

### **Step 3 Application Approval**

The recommendation report along with the grant agreement (if report recommends approval) is forwarded to Council or Council's designate for consideration. If Council or Council's designate approves the application and grant agreement, the agreement is executed (signed and dated) by Town officials and a copy is provided to the applicant.

### **Step 4 Payment**

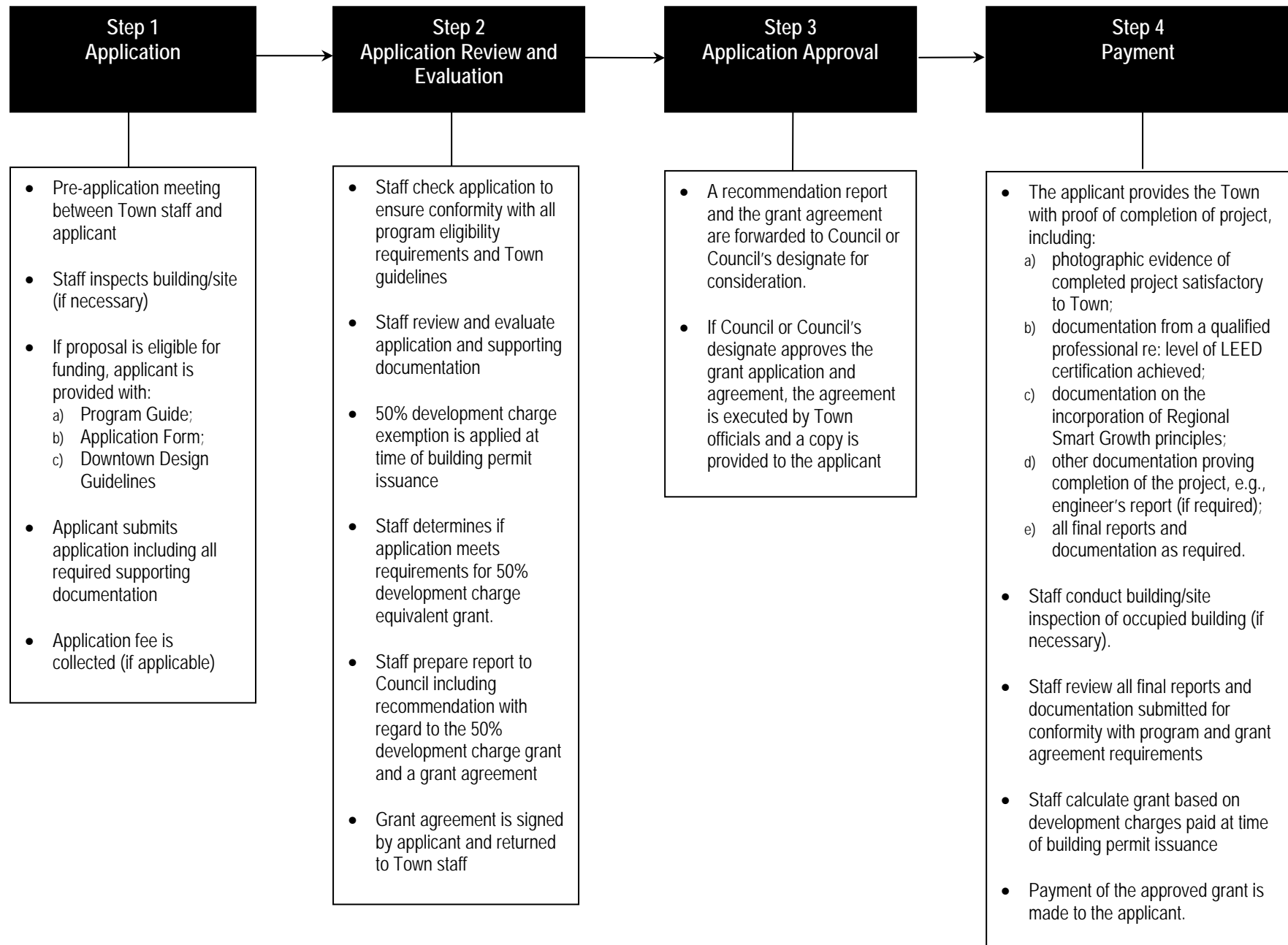
The Town will collect the 50% of development charges normally payable at the time of building permit issuance. Prior to payment of the grant (if applicable), the applicant must provide the Town with:

- a) photographic evidence of the completed project satisfactory to the Town;
- b) documentation from a qualified professional with respect to the level of LEED certification achieved by the project (as applicable);
- c) description of how the project incorporated at least three of the five Regional Smart Growth principles;
- d) other documentation proving completion of the project, e.g., engineer's report (if required);
- e) all final reports and documentation as required.

Town staff will conduct a final building/site inspection (as necessary) to ensure that the project has been completed in accordance with the grant application and agreement. Once the project is complete and an occupancy permit has been issued, Town staff will ensure that all program and grant agreement requirements have been met to the Town's satisfaction. The Town will calculate the amount of the 50% development charge equivalent grant. The Town will then issue payment of the grant in the amount specified as per the calculation of the actual grant payment.



**Figure E-1 Development Charge Exemption Program Administration**



# APPENDIX F

## Urban Design Study Grant Program Administration

---

### Step 1 Application Submission

Applicants will be required to have a pre-application consultation meeting with Town staff in order to determine program eligibility, proposed scope of work, and project timing, among other details. Town staff may perform an initial site visit(s) and inspection(s) of the building/property (as necessary).

Before accepting an application, Town staff will screen the proposal and application. If the application is not within the Community Improvement Project Area, or the application clearly does not meet the program eligibility criteria, the application will not be accepted. If Town staff determines that the application is not acceptable for one or more of the above noted reasons, the application will be returned to the applicant with a letter explaining the reason for not accepting the application. Acceptance of the application by the Town in no way implies program approval.

Applications will include:

- a) a work plan and cost estimate for the urban design study and/or architectural/design drawings, prepared by a qualified professional as determined by the Town; and,
- b) a description of the planned redevelopment, including reference to any planning applications that have been submitted/approved.

### Step 2 Application Review and Evaluation

Applications and supporting materials will be reviewed by Town staff against program requirements. A decision on the grant application will be made by Town staff, subject to delegation of this approval authority from Council.

All urban design studies and architectural/design drawings approved under the Urban Design Study Grant Program shall be completed by a qualified professional as determined by the Town. All completed project design studies and architectural/design drawings must comply with the description of as provided in the grant application form.

One (1) electronic and one (1) hard copy of the urban design study and/or architectural/design drawings along with the original invoice indicating that the study consultants have been paid in full shall be submitted to the Town for review. Applicants must agree at the time of application to provide the Town with permission to provide the design study and architectural/design drawings to a subsequent owner(s) of the property and interested parties should the applicant decide not to proceed with the work that is subject of the study grant.

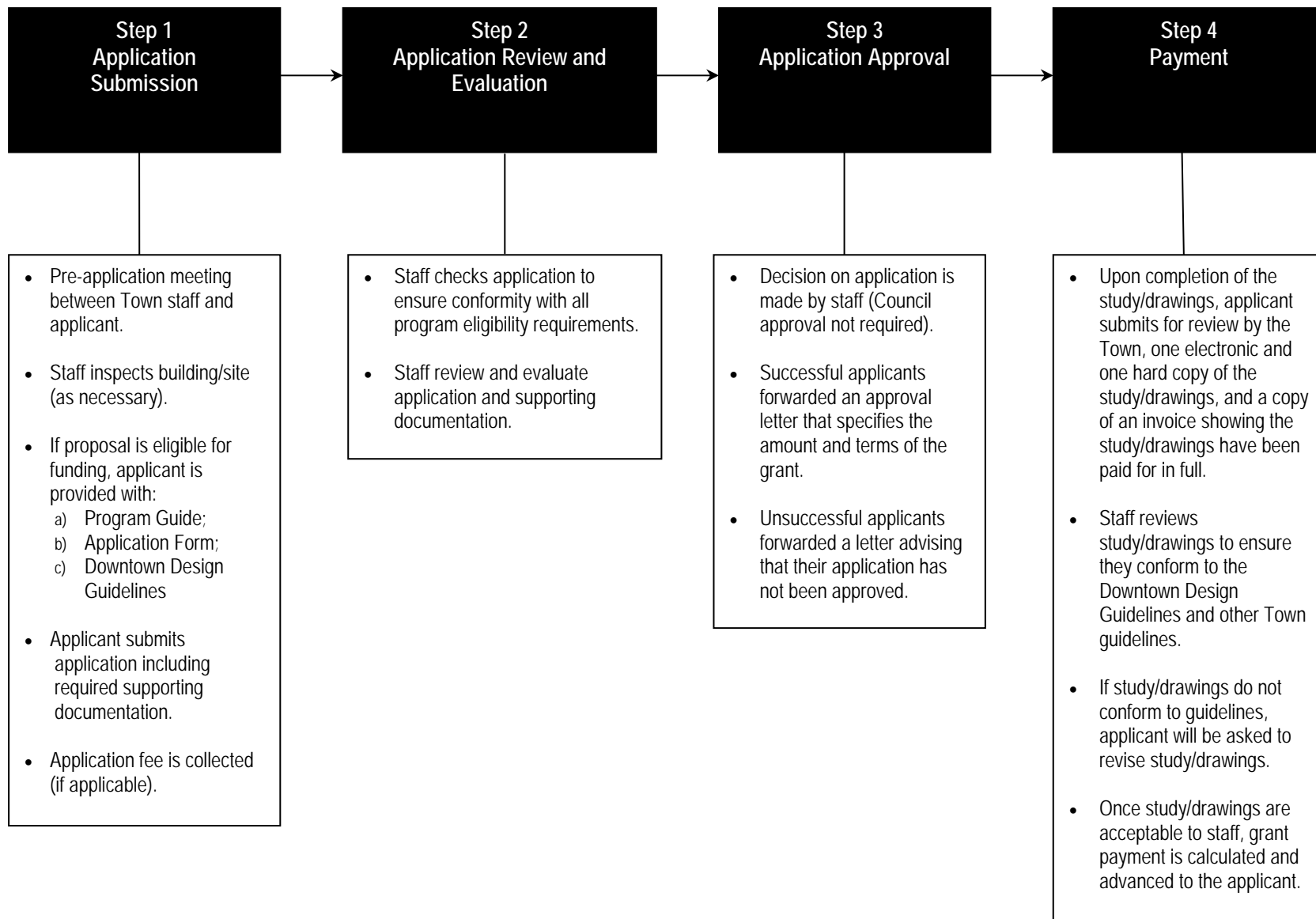
### Step 3 Application Approval

If an application is approved, the applicant will be sent a letter that outlines the terms and the amount of the grant. If an application is not approved, the applicant will also be advised by letter. The grant amount will be based on 50% of the estimated cost of the study (excluding taxes) or 50% of the actual cost of the study (excluding taxes), whichever is less.

#### **Step 4 Payment**

Grants approved under this program would be provided to applicants following submission to the Town for review of one hard copy and one electronic copy of the final completed urban design study, architectural, and/or design drawings with the original invoice, indicating that the study consultants have been paid in full. The grant may be reduced or cancelled if the study/drawings are not completed, not completed as approved, or if the consultant(s) that prepared the study/drawings has not been paid.

Figure F-1 Urban Design Study Grant Program Administration



# APPENDIX G

## Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) Grant Program Administration

---

### Step 1 Application Submission

Applicants will be required to have a pre-application consultation meeting with Town staff in order to determine program eligibility, proposed scope of work, and project timing, among other details. Town staff may perform an initial site visit(s) and inspection(s) of the building/property (as necessary).

Before accepting an application, Town staff will screen the proposal and application. If the application is not within the Community Improvement Project Area, or the application clearly does not meet the program eligibility criteria, the application will not be accepted. If Town staff determines that the application is not acceptable for one or more of the above noted reasons, the application will be returned to the applicant with a letter explaining the reason for not accepting the application. Acceptance of the application by the Town in no way implies program approval.

Applications will include:

- a) a Phase I ESA that shows the property is suspected of environmental contamination;
- b) a work plan and cost estimate for the environmental site assessment, prepared by a qualified person as defined in Ontario Regulation 153/04; and,
- b) a description of the planned redevelopment, including reference to any planning applications that have been submitted/approved.

### Step 2 Application Review and Evaluation

Applications and supporting materials will be reviewed by Town staff against program requirements. A decision on the grant application will be made by Town staff, subject to delegation of this approval authority from Council.

All environmental site assessments approved under this program shall be completed by a qualified person as defined under professional as defined in Ontario Regulation 153/04. All completed environmental site assessments must comply with the description of as provided in the grant application form.

One (1) electronic and one (1) hard copy of the environmental site assessment along with the original invoice indicating that the study consultants have been paid in full shall be submitted to the Town for review. Applicants must agree at the time of application to provide the Town with permission to notify any other subsequent project proponents of the existence of an environmental site assessment(s).

### Step 3 Application Approval

If an application is approved, the applicant will be sent a letter that outlines the terms and the amount of the grant. If an application is not approved, the applicant will also be advised by letter.

The grant amount will be based on 50% of the estimated cost of the environmental site assessment (excluding taxes) or 50% of the actual cost of the site assessment (excluding taxes), whichever is less.

### Step 4 Payment

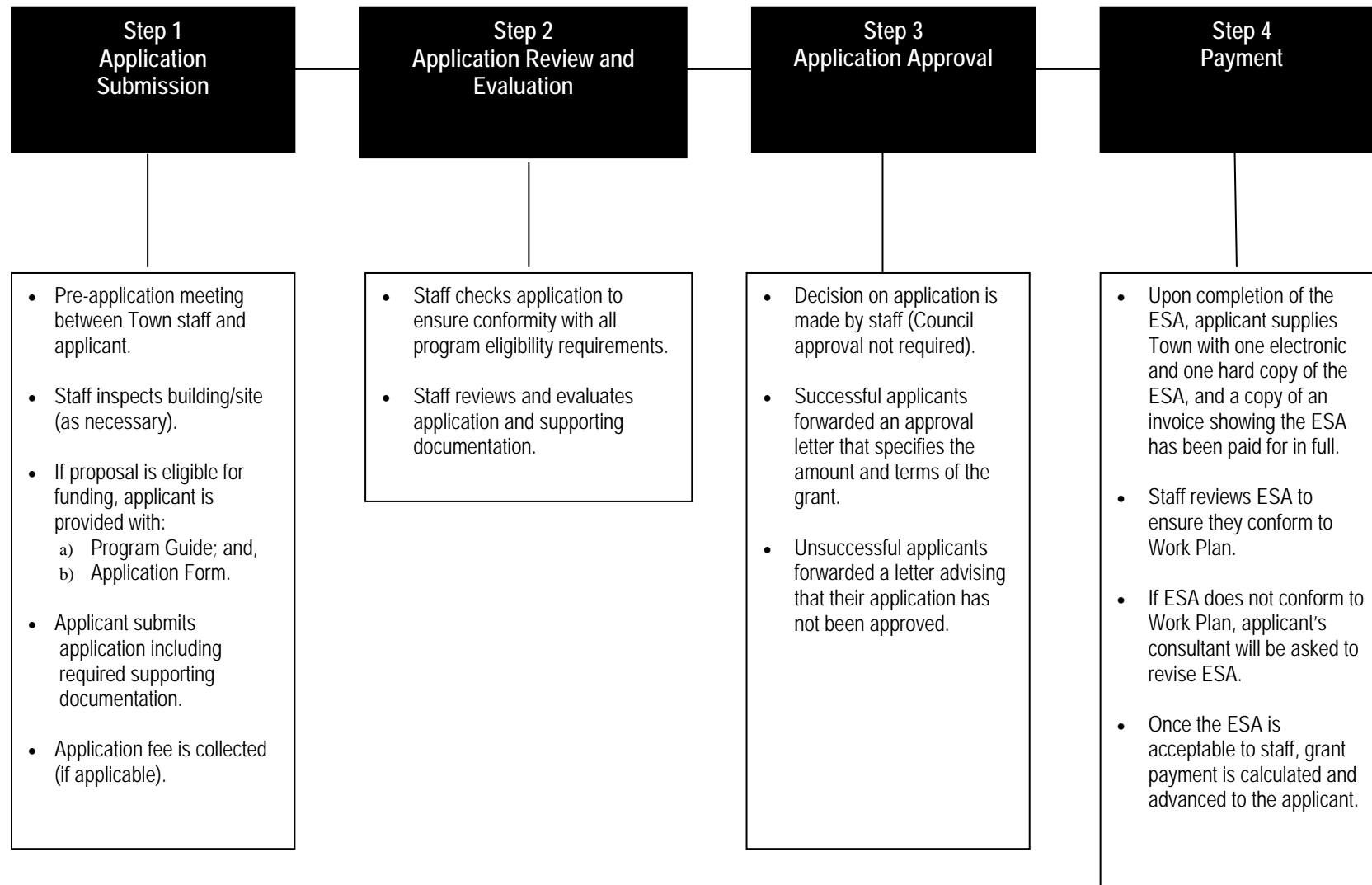
Grants approved under this program would be provided to applicants following supply to the Town for review of one hard copy and one electronic copy of the final completed environmental site assessment along with the original invoice, indicating that the study consultants have been paid in full. The grant may be reduced or cancelled if the

environmental site assessment(s) are not completed, not completed as approved, or if the consultant(s) that prepared the environmental site assessment(s) has not been paid.



Figure G-1 Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) Grant

Program Administration



# APPENDIX H

## Brownfields Tax Assistance Program (TAP) Administration

---

### Step 1 Application Submission

Applicants will be required to have a pre-application consultation meeting with staff in order to determine program eligibility, proposed scope of work, and project timing.

Staff will perform an initial site visit(s) and inspection(s) of the building/property (if necessary).

Before accepting an application, staff will screen the proposal and application. If the application is not within the Community Improvement Project Area, or the application clearly does not meet the program eligibility criteria, the application will not be accepted. If Town staff determines that the application is not acceptable for one or more of the above noted reasons, the application will be returned to the applicant with a letter explaining the reason for not accepting the application. Acceptance of the application by the Town in no way implies program approval.

Applications submitted to the Town shall be accompanied by a Phase II ESA and/or Remedial Work Plan and/or Risk Assessment prepared by a qualified person that identifies and details estimated eligible costs and a work plan and budget for the proposed remediation. The Town may also require submission of a Business Plan for the proposed redevelopment project.

An application fee may be collected at the time of application.

### Step 2 Application Review and Evaluation

Applications and supporting materials and documentation are reviewed by Town staff against program requirements. Town staff will determine the eligible works and costs.

The actual pre-project education and municipal (Town and Region) property taxes and estimated post-project assessed value and applicable tax rates will be used to calculate the estimated post-project property taxes, increase in municipal property taxes, education property taxes, and the estimated maximum amount of municipal and education property tax assistance to be provided during the rehabilitation period and the development period (as defined under Section 365.1 (1) of the *Municipal Act, 2001*).

Where staff will be recommending approval of an application for Brownfields Tax Assistance, staff will prepare the following documents:

- a) A recommendation report to Council or Council's designate on the Brownfields Tax Assistance Program Application;
- b) a Brownfields Tax Assistance Program Agreement;
- c) a draft by-law to authorize municipal and education tax assistance under Section 365.1 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*; and
- d) an application to the Minister of Finance for matching education property tax assistance.

Items a) – c) above will be forwarded to Regional Council and Regional Council will be requested by resolution, to agree to the matching Regional tax assistance.

Once the Town is in receipt of a Regional Council resolution agreeing to the matching Regional tax assistance, staff will forward this Regional Council resolution and Items a) – d) above to the Minister of Finance. Matching education property tax assistance through the Brownfield

Financial Tax Incentive Program (BFTIP), or through any other replacement programs administered by the Province is subject to approval by the Minister of Finance. Once written approval of the by-law is received from the Minister of Finance, any conditions or restrictions specified by the Minister will be included in the by-law.

### **Step 3 Application Approval**

The Minister of Finance is currently prepared to authorize municipal applications for matching education property tax assistance for a maximum of three (3) years from the date of the passing of the by-law. Applications seeking matching education property tax assistance for a longer period are subject to approval of the Minister of Finance. The Town and Region may continue to offer municipal tax assistance up to the time period specified for Town and Regional tax assistance in the by-law, or when the total tax assistance provided equals the total eligible costs, whichever comes first. The matching education property tax assistance may be provided on a different schedule from the tax assistance provided by the Town and the Region and may be subject to additional conditions.

A recommendation report will be prepared by staff. If this report recommends approval of the application, a grant agreement satisfactory to the Town Solicitor will also be prepared. This agreement will contain conditions to ensure that the project is commenced and completed in a timely fashion. This agreement will be forwarded to the applicant to be dated and signed.

The recommendation report, the Agreement (dated and signed by the applicant), and the by-law will then be forwarded to Council (or Council's designate) for consideration. If Council or Council's designate approves the Brownfields TAP Application and the Agreement, and adopts the by-law, the agreement will be executed by the authorized Town officials and a copy will be provided to the applicant. A copy of the by-law, including all information prescribed by Ontario Regulation

274/04 will be forwarded to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Minister of Finance within 30 days of passing of the by-law by the Town.

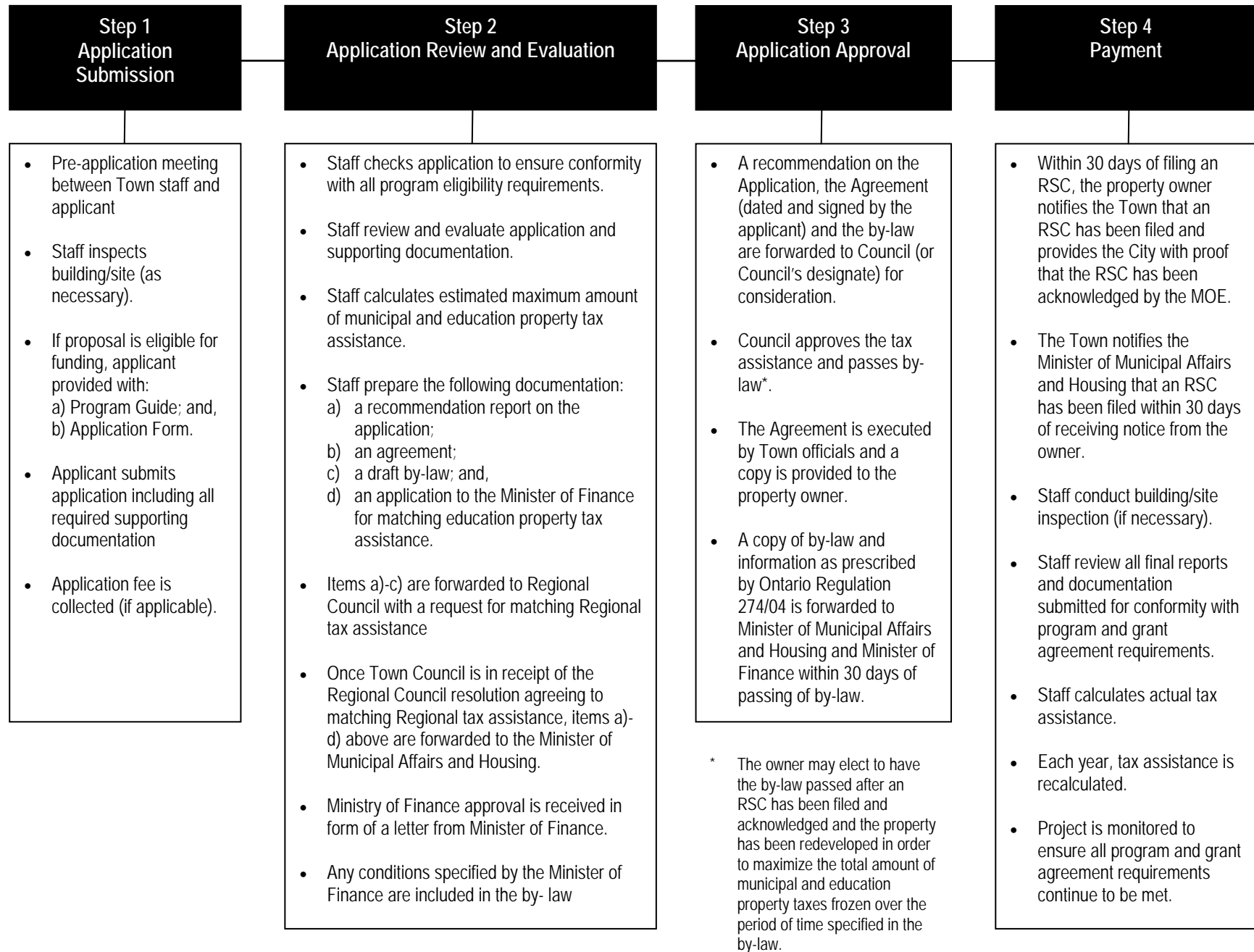
### **Step 4 Payment**

Where the Minister of Finance has approved an application for matching education property tax assistance, the municipal property tax assistance and education property tax assistance will begin when Council passes the Minister of Finance approved by-law for tax assistance.

Once remediation of the property is complete, the property owner shall file in the Environmental Site Registry a Record of Site Condition (RSC) for the property signed by a qualified person, and the owner shall submit to the Town proof that the RSC has been acknowledged by the Ministry of the Environment (MOE). The owner shall, within 30 days of filing the RSC, notify the Town of the filing, and within 30 days after receiving said notice, the Town shall advise the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing of the filing of the RSC.

The Ministry of Finance's tax assistance will be given as a tax deferral followed by cancellation to the landowner when conditions are met. During the deferral and cancellation stage, the landowner would not be required to pay the education taxes that have been deferred or cancelled. The Town and Region have the option of providing conditional tax assistance, which means that the tax assistance will not be provided until the landowner has first met municipal (Town and Region) conditions related to the rehabilitation and development of the lands. Under a conditional tax assistance scenario, the Town and Region have decided to provide no deferral, only cancellation when conditions are met. The full municipal taxes are payable and collected until these conditions have been satisfied. Once the conditions have been satisfied, the Town and Region would provide the accumulated tax assistance to the landowner as identified in the by-law.

**Figure H-1 Brownfields Tax Assistance Program Administration**



# APPENDIX I

## Regional Smart Growth Principles Regional Development Charges By-law No. 62-2009

---

**“Intensification of an existing use”** meaning redevelopment or building addition so as to add floor area and/or a residential unit or units.

**“Creation of mixed uses”** meaning redevelopment, addition or conversion so as to add a new compatible use or uses to a building or property. “Creation of mixed uses” also means new development that proposes a mixed use building or a mix of uses on the site.

**“Contribution towards the creation of a walkable neighbourhood character”** meaning development, redevelopment, addition or conversion within a neighbourhood context that features one or more of the following: safe and clearly demarcated pedestrian access to and within the development site, building orientation and pedestrian access oriented toward the street, site and building access directly from the street without requiring passage across a driveway or parking area, street-oriented building façade that features fenestration and entranceways to create a sense of permeability and movement between the street and the building interior, contribution to the quality of the public space on the street by the provision of space for public assembly, street furniture, artworks and/or landscaping.

**“Creation of a range of housing opportunities and choices”** meaning development, redevelopment, addition or conversion that adds multiple-unit housing types to the housing stock.

**“Reduced setbacks from roadways”** meaning development, redevelopment or conversion that places the building façade at the front lot line or closer to the street than the mid-point between the street line and the existing building. Where there is an existing building line along the block-face that is set back from the street line, “reduced front setbacks from roadways” means placing the building façade closer to the street line than the mid-point between the street line and the established building line.