



TOWNSHIP OF
PUSLINCH
EST. 1850

OUR CORRIDOR

Community Improvement Plan



March 2016

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1. Introduction to 'Our Corridor'

This Community Improvement Plan (CIP) has been prepared by the Township of Puslinch to support revitalization, beautification, renewal, and economic activity in the Township's key urban corridor. This key urban corridor is made up of the Urban Centres of Aberfoyle and Morriston, as well as the Brock Road mixed-use industrial area. Because of its significant economic, social, recreational, and cultural value, and because of the community's important Vision and Goals for the area, it has been named 'Our Corridor' for the purpose of this CIP.

The 'Our Corridor' CIP is intended to serve as a long-term framework that will be implemented over the next fifteen years. Specifically, during this time it is anticipated that this CIP will:

- 1) Stimulate investment in privately owned land and buildings by providing financial assistance to property owners and tenants; and,
- 2) Focus municipal resources on programs, studies, and other initiatives that will contribute to the overall improvement of 'Our Corridor'.

It has also been prepared with the view that, over time, small improvements throughout 'Our Corridor' will add up. While early implementation may result in a handful of on-the-ground improvements, it is anticipated that revitalization, beautification, renewal, and economic activity will gain momentum over time.

The details of the 'Our Corridor' Community Improvement Plan are set out in the following pages, and include the following:

- ⇒ A more detailed description of what a CIP is (Section 2);
- ⇒ A discussion of the basis for this CIP (Section 3);
- ⇒ A statement of the Township's Vision and Goals for 'Our Corridor' (Section 4);
- ⇒ A description of the area to which this CIP applies (Section 5);
- ⇒ Information about financial incentive programs (Section 6);
- ⇒ Information about Township-led Programs (Section 7);
- ⇒ Details about how this CIP will be implemented, marketed, and monitored (Sections 8, 9, and 10); and
- ⇒ A Glossary is also provided to assist in the interpretation of this CIP (Section 11).

2. What is a CIP?

Simply put, a CIP is a planning document that sets out tools and strategies for improving the built, economic, and social environment in designated areas of a municipality. Many municipalities across Ontario have prepared CIPs in order to achieve important community goals, such as:

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

Under Section 106 of the Municipal Act, municipalities are prohibited from directly or indirectly assisting local businesses by giving or lending money. However, having a CIP in place allows the municipality to assist financially with improvements to private properties. Therefore, this CIP will allow the Township of Puslinch to stimulate investment through the financial incentive programs identified.

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

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

In addition to the Planning Act, several other legislative documents provide the authority for Ontario municipalities to assist with community improvement, including the Municipal Act and the Development Charges Act.

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For more information on any of the specific provisions related to community improvement planning, potential applicants should refer to the specific legislation identified above. It is also noted that a more detailed discussion of the legislative authority is provided in the July 2015 *Township of Puslinch Phase One Options Memo*, which was prepared as background to this CIP, as discussed in Section 3 of this Report.



Local Business



3. Basis of the CIP

A. Options Memo

In July 2015, Township staff and the project consulting team prepared a Phase One Options Memo as background to the 'Our Corridor' CIP. This memo provides a detailed summary of the background research and consultation undertaken in support of this CIP, including:

- ⇒ A legislative review (summarizing Section 28 of the Planning Act and other relevant legislation);
- ⇒ A review of the local policy framework (including applicable Provincial and County planning documents);
- ⇒ A discussion of other key municipal documents which provide context for the Corridor (including economic development plans/papers and local and County planning initiatives);
- ⇒ An overview of findings from case studies of comparable CIPs in Ontario;
- ⇒ A study area assessment, focusing on existing conditions, critical needs and opportunities for improvement in Aberfoyle and Morriston and the connecting Brock Road mixed use/industrial area); and
- ⇒ A summary of findings from community and stakeholder consultation events.

The Phase One Options Memo is a significant background document that serves as a key basis for the 'Our Corridor' CIP. It should be referred to for a detailed discussion of the background issues and options during the preparation of this Plan. The Phase One Options Memo can be viewed on the Township of Puslinch website:

<http://www.puslinch.ca/en/doing-business/Community-Improvement-Plan.asp>

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B. Enabling Official Plan Policies

Since the Township of Puslinch does not have its own local Official Plan in place, it relies on the Wellington County Official Plan to provide direction and a policy framework for managing growth and land use decisions throughout the Township. Section 4.12 of the County's Official Plan establishes policies related specifically to community improvement planning (as required by the Planning Act), which have served as a basis of this CIP.

Specifically, the following objectives for community improvement are provided in Section 4.12.2 of the Official Plan, which are supportive of this CIP:

- a. *Promote the long term stability and viability of identified Community Improvement Areas by reducing land use conflicts and upgrading municipal services;*
- b. *Encourage coordinated municipal expenditures, planning and development activities within identified Community Improvement Areas;*
- c. *Stimulate the maintenance and renewal of private property;*
- d. *Enhance the visual quality of the community; and*
- e. *Foster local economic growth.*

The Official Plan also sets out criteria for the identification of community improvement project areas, which are supportive of the area designated for the purpose of implementing this CIP. This is discussed further in Section 5.

In addition to policies dealing with community improvement, there are also policies that are specific to the County's Urban Centres (as designated in the Official Plan), including both Aberfoyle and Morriston. Of particular relevance is Section 8.1.3, which sets out the following characteristics, which are intended to make up an overall Vision for the Urban Centres:

- a. *That traditional community values will be maintained and the small town character will be enhanced;*
- c. *That the central business district will remain the primary focus of commercial, cultural and civic functions for the municipality;*
- d. *That well planned industrial areas will continue to provide new job opportunities and municipal tax revenues;*
- e. *That the quality of life for the residents will be enhanced by the protection of the natural and cultural environment, the enhancement of new recreational opportunities, and the preservation of heritage resources;*
- f. *That infrastructure such as roads, water, utilities, fire protection and administration will be improved and, where feasible, expanded to meet the needs of a growing community.*

Section 4 of this CIP also sets out a Vision for 'Our Corridor', which similarly focuses on the above characteristics. Since it is the intent that some elements of the Vision will be supported as a result of implementation of this Plan, the 'Our Corridor' CIP is therefore

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consistent with the Vision for the Urban Centres, as identified in Section 8.1.3 of the County's Official Plan.

Finally, there are also a number of long term/strategic planning policies in the Official Plan that support the Township's overall goals for community improvement. For example, in Section 2.2, the following County-wide objectives are identified with respect to growth over the next 20 years:

- 2.2.2 *Direct growth to urban areas and in particular to those with municipal sewer and water services;*
- 2.2.3 *Provide opportunities for jobs, commerce and services that are based on population growth;*
- 2.2.5 *Ensure that County residents have convenient access to commercial uses and services;*
- 2.2.6 *Maintain strong main streets in towns and villages as a focus for commerce and services;*
- 2.2.9 *Maintain the small town and rural character of the County;*
- 2.2.20 *Develop a safe and efficient transportation system for people, goods and services; and*
- 2.2.21 *Broaden recreational and leisure opportunities.*

Section 4 of this CIP sets the Goals of the 'Our Corridor' CIP, which are also consistent with, and supportive of, these objectives.



Community

Our Corridor

C. Community Consultation

Finally, the 'Our Corridor' CIP is based on a number of community and stakeholder consultation initiatives, which were undertaken in order to ensure that this Plan is reflective of the needs, goals, and desires of the community. Consultation Events were held during each phase of the project, as follows:

- ⇒ Phase One consultation events included a community survey (May 2015) as well as a Stakeholder Workshop (May 13, 2015), and presentation to Council (June 17, 2015). The purpose of these events was to collect information from community members and downtown/industrial business owners/tenants on local issues and needs to be addressed through a CIP;
- ⇒ Phase Two Stakeholder consultation events included a second Stakeholder Workshop and public open house (July 9, 2015) to obtain feedback on an optional list of Financial Incentive and Township-led Programs that could be included in the CIP.
- ⇒ A second public open house was held on November 5, 2015 to receive comments on a Draft CIP; and
- ⇒ All materials prepared as background to this CIP have been provided to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for review and comment, in accordance with the Planning Act.

4. 'Our Corridor' Vision and Goals

On the basis of the findings of the background work and consultation activities described in Section 3, a Vision for the CIP has been developed to articulate the community's long-term inspiration for the economic corridor in Puslinch. It is the intent that elements of the Vision will be reinforced as a result of implementation of this Plan.

Additionally, a number of Goals have also been identified to demonstrate what this CIP is meant to achieve. Importantly, as set out in Section 5, in order to be eligible for any of the financial incentives programs offered through the Township of Puslinch 'Our Corridor' CIP, a proposed project must directly support one or more of the Goals of this Plan.

A. Vision

The following is the Vision for the Township of Puslinch 'Our Corridor' CIP:

Within the next 10 years 'Our Corridor' will be integrated and transformed into an attractive, prosperous, and distinctive economic corridor. Residents, families and visitors will come to 'Our Corridor', to shop, eat, socialize, celebrate, play, and explore. They will be able to move around safely through a network of roads, paths, and trails. Our corridor will be connected to its agricultural heritage, rural way of life, and local pride.

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B. Goals

The Goals for the 'Our Corridor' CIP are to:

- 1. Promote beautification and restoration of public and private property.**
- 2. Celebrate and restore local built and cultural heritage.**
- 3. Attract new business development.**
- 4. Support and promote existing businesses.**
- 5. Encourage active transportation and enhance recreational opportunities.**
- 6. Provide attractive streetscapes, including parking, gateway signage, tree plantings and lighting.**
- 7. Provide safe pedestrian and cycling connections between Morriston and Aberfoyle.**

For each of these Goals, a set of measures has also been identified for the purpose of monitoring the effectiveness of this Plan. The measures are presented in the Monitoring Plan (Section 10) of this CIP.

5. Community Improvement Project Area

In accordance with Section 28(2) of the Planning Act, a Community Improvement Project Area has been designated by Council for the purpose of the 'Our Corridor' Community Improvement Plan, as shown in Figure 1 on the following page.

This Community Improvement Project Area represents 'Our Corridor'. It has been designated based on the following:

- ⇒ Buildings are in need of maintenance, rehabilitation or redevelopment;
- ⇒ Municipal services (i.e., including roads, sidewalks, curbs, gutters, street lighting or parking facilities) are inadequate and in need of repair;
- ⇒ There is a need for an increased supply of public open space and linkages throughout the community;
- ⇒ There are examples of conflicting land uses in the area;
- ⇒ There is evidence of deterioration in the appearance of commercial building facades, inadequate parking facilities, and inadequate pedestrian access; and
- ⇒ There are a significant number of heritage resources.

These characteristics are consistent with the criteria for the establishment of CIPAs, as identified in Section 4.12.3 of the Wellington County Official Plan.

Section 6 of this Plan identifies and describes Township-led Programs that may be executed within the 'Our Corridor' CIPA. In addition, Section 7 identifies Financial Incentive Programs that may be available to private land and building owners/tenants who are located within 'Our Corridor'.

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'OUR CORRIDOR' COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT AREA



Community Improvement Project Area Boundary

Sources: Parcel Fabric Teranet 2002, County of Wellington 2014 & 2010 Aerial

Figure 1: 'Our Corridor'

6. Township-led Programs

A set of Township-led Programs are included in this CIP, which may be implemented by the Township of Puslinch during the life of this Plan in an effort to provide visible leadership in achieving the Goals of the ‘Our Corridor’ CIP. The Township-led Programs are designed as a means to encourage private sector investment in the designated CIPA. By setting out the Township-led Programs, this CIP also attempts to coordinate and guide the expenditure of municipal funds.

The Township *may* engage in any of the programs outlined in this Section, *subject to the availability of resources*. The programs have also been prioritized to guide implementation – from low priority (longer term), to medium priority (implemented within 2 to 5 years), to high priority (implemented as soon as possible).

As discussed in Section 8, a CIP Implementation Committee will be established to assist with the implementation of the Programs.

Employment



A. Zoning Review

The Township may undertake a review of zones and zoning provisions that currently apply to the 'Our Corridor' Community Improvement Project Area in order to ensure that the regulatory regime:

- ⇒ Conforms to the overall policy direction of the County's Official Plan;
- ⇒ Is consistent with Township development objectives;
- ⇒ Is supportive of revitalization, renewal and the Township's overall Vision for 'Our Corridor';
- ⇒ Facilitates the development of a particular use or form that is believed to be most beneficial for the community;
- ⇒ Provides certainty to developers; and
- ⇒ Implements contemporary zoning tools, such as form base zoning, bonus zoning, zoning with conditions, and holding by-laws.

The completion of a Zoning Review for 'Our Corridor' is a high priority. It may be initiated as soon as possible following the adoption of this CIP.

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B. Branding and Marketing Initiative

The Township may undertake the development of branding and marketing materials that are focused on the Township's Urban Centres of Aberfoyle and Morriston, as well as the mixed-use industrial corridor. The purpose of the branding and marketing initiative is to:

- ⇒ Promote the positive attributes of 'Our Corridor';
- ⇒ Attract new business development;
- ⇒ Draw tourists;
- ⇒ Draw shoppers; and
- ⇒ Attract new residents.

Key elements of a branding and marketing initiative are:

- ⇒ The creation of a vibrant brand identity;
- ⇒ The development of marketing themes and messages; and
- ⇒ The preparation marketing tools and materials.

The completion of a Branding and Marketing Initiative for 'Our Corridor' is a medium priority. It may be initiated within 2 to 5 years of the adoption of this CIP.

Shopping



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C. Streetscape and Active Transportation Improvements

There have been a number of studies completed by both the Township of Puslinch and County of Wellington that identify a range of streetscape and active transportation improvements and enhancements within and surrounding 'Our Corridor'. These studies include:

- ⇒ *2015 Morriston Highway 6 Streetscape Strategy*, which identifies a number of locations in Morriston that might be appropriate for new plantings and signage to improve the overall streetscape, subject to approval by the Ministry of Transportation;
- ⇒ *2012 Wellington County Active Transportation Plan*, which identifies locations for proposed active transportation routes, including shared roadways, signed bicycle routes, paved shoulders along County roads, and off-road walking routes; and
- ⇒ *2010 Puslinch Design Guidelines*, which identifies a number of streetscape and public realm improvements (such as traffic calming, gateway features, landscaping, street furniture, and lighting) that could be implemented in order to provide more pedestrian friendly environments.

The Township may develop a coordinated strategy for the implementation of improvements identified in these documents, as well as other improvements that are identified.

The completion of a Streetscape and Active Transportation improvements for 'Our Corridor' is a medium priority. It may be initiated within 2 to 5 years of the adoption of this CIP.

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D. Heritage Conservation Initiatives

The Township may implement tools available through Provincial legislation related to the conservation of local heritage resources. Possible tools include the following:

- ⇒ Under the Ontario Heritage Act, the Township may pass by-laws to designate properties of cultural heritage value or interest.
- ⇒ The Township may also implement a Heritage Property Tax Relief Program under Section 365.2 of the Municipal Act, which allows the Township to provide tax assistance for owners of designated heritage buildings. The program recognizes that historic buildings sometimes have higher maintenance and repair costs and is therefore intended to support owners who choose to protect their buildings through a heritage designation.

The implementation of heritage conservation tools within 'Our Corridor' is a longer-term priority, which may be initiated beyond 5 years of the adoption of this CIP.



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E. Parking Needs Study

The Township may undertake a Parking Needs Study for 'Our Corridor'. The Parking Needs Study would examine the need and options for additional parking, including Municipal, on-street, and private off-street parking spaces.

Specifically, the study would:

- ⇒ Inventory existing parking supply;
- ⇒ Determine current demand;
- ⇒ Project future demand;
- ⇒ Identify and assess options in 'Our Corridor'; and
- ⇒ Propose a recommended Parking Strategy.

The completion of a Parking Needs Study for 'Our Corridor' is a longer-term priority, which may be initiated beyond 5 years of the adoption of this CIP.

F. Festivals and Events Strategy

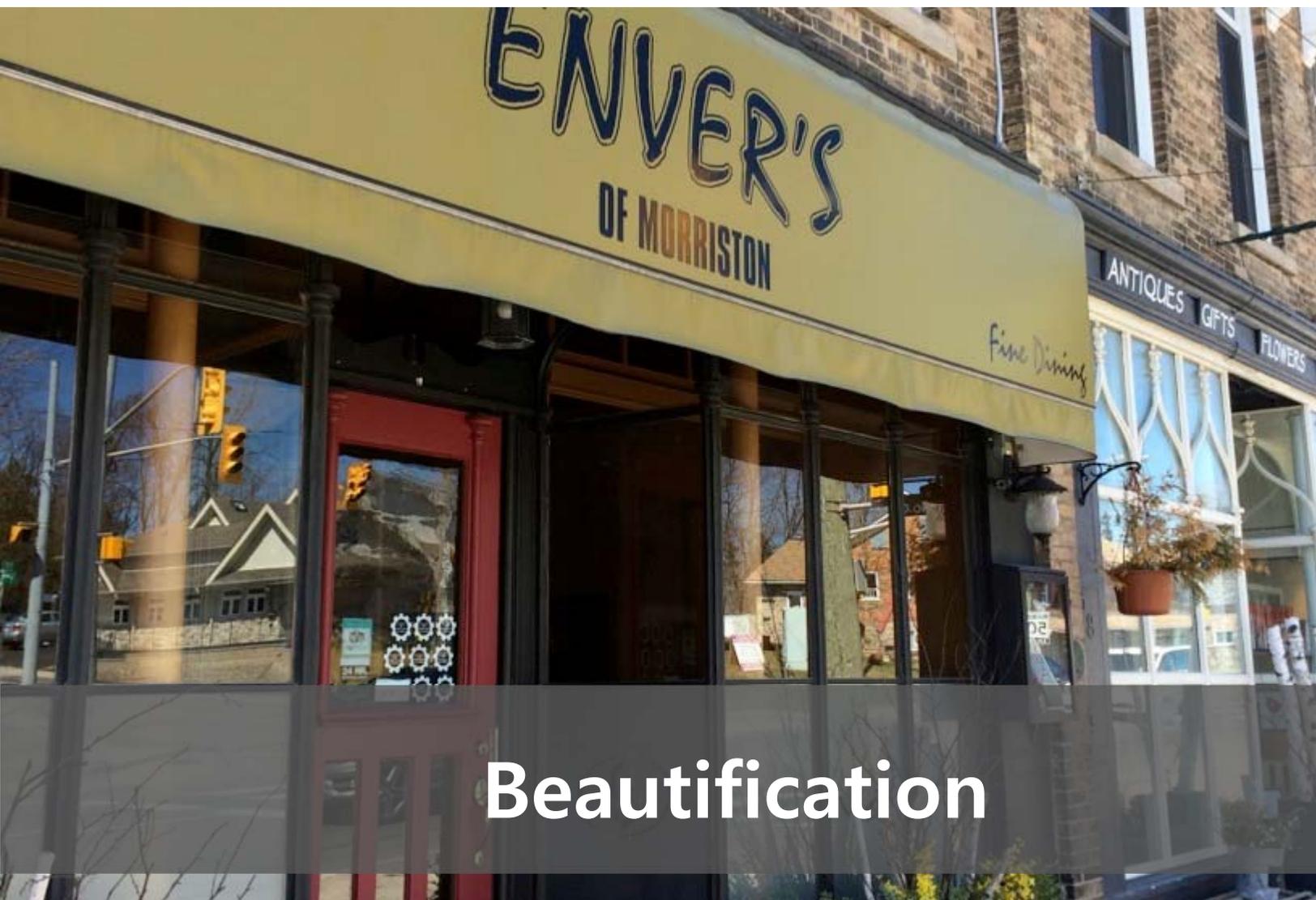
Since festivals and events can serve as an economic stimulator that attracts people to downtowns and mainstreet areas, the Township could develop a strategy for creating and holding one event per season in 'Our Corridor'. Some examples of successful events and festivals that are held elsewhere, which could be explored by the Township include:

- ⇒ Arts Festivals;
- ⇒ Concerts;
- ⇒ Doors Open Events;
- ⇒ Agricultural Fairs; and
- ⇒ Heritage Festivals.

The completion of a Festival and Events Strategy for 'Our Corridor' is a longer-term priority, which may be initiated beyond 5 years of the adoption of this CIP.

7. Financial Incentive Programs

Through the 'Our Corridor' CIP, a set of financial incentive programs may be available to eligible owners/tenants in the Community Improvement Project Area. The programs allow the Township to provide financial assistance and are intended to stimulate private sector investment in land and buildings and help achieve the Vision and Goals of this Plan.



Beautification

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The Township of Puslinch may provide funding for any of the following incentive programs during the term of this CIP, subject to the availability of Township resources:

- ⇒ Planning and Building Fees Grant;
- ⇒ Façade, Signage, and Landscape Improvement Grant;
- ⇒ Building Improvement Grant;
- ⇒ Building Conversion and Expansion Grant;
- ⇒ Motor Vehicle and Bicycle Parking Grant; and
- ⇒ Tax Increment Equivalent Grant Program.

A. Eligibility

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

- 1) The lands and buildings subject to an application must be located the 'Our Corridor' Community Improvement Project Area, as designated by by-law.
- 2) Unless otherwise specified, only properties that are used for commercial, industrial, and mixed-uses will be eligible (i.e., single detached dwellings and other residential uses will not be eligible). A property that is proposed to be rezoned for eligible uses will also be eligible.
- 3) All projects must contribute to achieving one or more Goals for 'Our Corridor' (as identified Section 4.B of this CIP).
- 4) All proposed projects must result in some level of improvement or rehabilitation over the existing conditions and will not simply represent a life cycle replacement.
- 5) Unless otherwise specified, registered owners, assessed owners, and tenants (with consent of the owner) of private land or buildings may be eligible for financial incentives.
- 6) A property is eligible for the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant once during the term of this CIP. This grant may not be combined with other grant programs.
- 7) For all other incentive programs, a property may be eligible for multiple grants during the term of this CIP; however, the total combined value of grants approved in any given year shall not exceed \$5,000 per property or the total value of eligible costs, whichever is less.
- 8) Notwithstanding 6) and 7) above, the total of all grants, loans and tax assistance made in respect of the eligible lands and/or buildings may not exceed the eligible costs of the CIP with respect to those lands and/or buildings.

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- 9) Financial incentives will not be applied retroactively to works started prior to approval of applications and any application for costs incurred prior to the adoption of this CIP will not be considered eligible.
- 10) The property owner must have no outstanding property tax arrears, or any other outstanding Municipal/County accounts receivable on the subject property at the time of application and for the duration of the grant program.
- 11) The proposed works will conform with all Township, County, and Provincial policies, standards, and procedures, including the Official Plan, Zoning By-law, and heritage matters, in addition to being subject to a review and the issuance of necessary planning and development approvals and building permits pursuant to the Ontario Building Code.
- 12) The proposed exterior design of buildings, including signage, must be consistent with any applicable Urban Design Guidelines.

In addition to these general eligibility criteria, a set of program-specific eligibility criteria must also be met, which are outlined in the description of financial incentives (Sections 7.B to 7.H below).

Tourism



B. Planning and Building Fee Grant

B.1 Purpose and Anticipated Benefits

Planning and building approvals may be required in relation to a proposed community improvement project, such as a use conversion.

In such cases, the Planning and Building Fee Grant may be available to eligible property owners and tenants (with consent from the owner) to offset the fees required by the Township in relation to the proposed improvement project.

B.2 Value of Grant

Where all eligibility requirements are fulfilled, a Planning and Building Fee Grant may be provided to cover 100% of the eligible fees required by the Township in relation to a proposed project.

B.3 Program-specific Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible, the general eligibility criteria set out in Section 7.A of this CIP apply.

In addition, only projects that are subject to another financial incentive application offered through this CIP will be eligible.

B.4 Eligible Costs

Eligible costs include the following:

- a. Planning application fees required by the Township, including minor variances, site plans and zoning by-law amendments; and
- b. Building or demolition permit application fees required by the Township.

Please note: where the Township incurs costs related to assessing a planning or building application through third party consultant planning reports, legal consultation, etc., these fees will not be included as eligible costs.

B.5 Payment

All completed projects must comply with the description as provided in the grant application form.

An applicant may prefer to wait for the approval of their planning application prior to apply for this grant program.

The grant will be provided upon successful completion of the approved project. The grant will be paid in a lump sum as a reimbursement of costs incurred.

C. Façade, Signage, and Landscape Improvement Grant

C.1 Purpose and Anticipated Benefits

Subject to the availability of resources, the Façade, Signage, and Landscape Improvement Grant may be available to eligible property owners and tenants (with consent of the owner) to assist with the financing of improvements to a building's façade, signage, or landscaping on private property.

This grant is intended to promote aesthetic, accessibility, and functional improvements to buildings and properties, which otherwise may not occur due to cost premiums associated with these improvements.

C.2 Value of Grant

Where a proposed project satisfies the eligibility requirements, a Façade, Signage, and Property Improvement Grant may be provided for 50% of the eligible cost of the façade, signage, and/or landscape improvements to a maximum of \$3,000 (or the total value of eligible costs related to the project, whichever is less).

Where a proposed project involves the restoration of façades to original materials, and use of original materials or restoration of architectural detailing, the maximum value of a grant may increase to \$4,500 (or the total value of eligible costs related to the project, whichever is less). In order to be eligible for this increase, applicants may be required to submit historical documentation on the subject property in support of the grant application.

C.3 Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible, the general eligibility criteria set out in Section 7.A of this CIP apply. In addition, the following criteria apply:

- ⇒ Façade and signage improvements must be made to the main façade of a building;
- ⇒ Where a side and/or rear wall is visible from a public street or public space, or fronts onto a laneway or parking lot, façade and signage improvements to these walls may also be eligible; and
- ⇒ Landscape improvements must be made to the front yard or side yard of properties.

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C.4 Eligible Costs

The Façade, Signage, and Landscape Improvement Grant may be provided for the following:

- ⇒ For façade improvements, eligible costs include:
 - a. Restoration or replacement of exterior building treatments, such as brickwork/cladding/siding and architectural detailing;
 - b. Restoration or replacement of cornices, eaves, and parapets;
 - c. Restoration or replacement of windows, doors and awnings;
 - d. Restoration or replacement of exterior lighting;
 - e. Chemical or other façade cleaning and exterior painting, or installation of murals or similar wall art;
 - f. Redesign of storefront or entrance modifications, including improvements to accessibility for people with disabilities; and
 - g. Such other similar improvements and repairs that may be necessary to improve the appearance of a building façade exterior.
- ⇒ For signage improvements, eligible costs include replacement, repair, improvement or installation of signage, including signage lighting.
- ⇒ For a landscape Improvement project, eligible costs include:
 - a. Addition of landscaping features (plants/green space, including sod, trees, vegetation, etc.);
 - b. Addition of permanent landscaping elements such as fencing, benches, planters, and lighting;
 - c. Addition of walkways; and
 - d. Such other similar improvements and repairs that may be necessary to improve the landscaping.
- ⇒ The services of a professional engineer, architect, surveyor, or planner to design and implement the project will also be considered eligible costs; however, the maximum amount of a grant for such services shall not exceed 15%.

C.5 Payment

All completed projects must comply with the description as provided in the grant application form.

The grant will be provided upon successful completion of the approved project. The grant will be paid in a lump sum as a reimbursement of costs incurred.

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D. Building Improvement Grant

D.1 Purpose and Anticipated Benefits

The Building Improvement Grant may be available to eligible property owners and tenants (with consent of the owner) to assist with improvements to existing buildings that may otherwise be considered cost prohibitive.

This program is intended to support improvements to private property to meet the current Building Code, improve aesthetic quality, and provide for safe and usable eligible uses.

D.2 Value of Grant

Where a proposed project satisfies the eligibility requirements, a Building Improvement Grant may be provided for 50% of the eligible cost to a maximum of \$3,000 (or the total value of eligible costs related to the project, whichever is less).

D.3 Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible, the general eligibility criteria set out in Section 7.A of this CIP apply.

D.4 Eligible Costs

The Building Improvement Grant may be provided for costs related to:

- a. Structural repairs to walls, ceilings, floors, and foundations;
- b. Repair/replacement of building infrastructure, such as roofing, windows, and doors;
- c. Repair/replacement of plumbing, electrical, HVAC, and fire protection systems;
- d. Weatherproofing;
- e. Improvements to accessibility for people with disabilities; and
- f. Any other improvements that may bring a building up to code, or address health, safety, or risk management issues.

The services of a professional engineer, architect, surveyor, or planner to design and implement the project will be eligible; however, the maximum amount of a grant for such services shall not exceed 15%.

D.5 Payment

All completed projects must comply with the description as provided in the grant application form.

The grant will be provided upon successful completion of the approved project. The grant will be paid in a lump sum as a reimbursement of costs incurred.

E. Building Conversion and Expansion Grant

E.1 Purpose and Anticipated Benefits

The Building Conversion and Expansion Grant may be available to eligible property owners and tenants (with consent of the owner) to assist in the conversion of existing unused or underused space into new eligible uses. Additionally, this program will assist with the expansion of existing eligible uses.

The purpose of this program is to support an increase in non-residential assessments.

E.2 Value of Grant

Where a proposed project satisfies the eligibility requirements, a Building Conversion and Expansion Grant may be provided on approved applications on the basis of \$10 per square foot of converted or expanded floor space, to a maximum of \$3,000, or the total value of eligible costs related to the project, whichever is less.

E.3 Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible, the general eligibility criteria set out in Section 7.A of this CIP apply.

E.4 Eligible Costs

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

- a. Conversion of vacant or underused non-commercial/non-industrial building space into new eligible uses; and
- b. Expansion of existing eligible uses to increase the gross floor area.

For clarity, projects involving a conversion to residential uses (including second storey conversions) will not be eligible.

The services of a professional engineer, architect, surveyor, or planner to design and implement the project will be eligible; however, the maximum amount of a grant for such services shall not exceed 15%.

E.5 Payment

All completed projects must comply with the description as provided in the grant application form.

The grant will be provided upon successful completion of the approved project, study, or design. The grant will be paid in a lump sum as a reimbursement of costs incurred.

F. Motor Vehicle and Bicycle Parking Grant

F.1 Purpose and Anticipated Benefits

The Motor Vehicle and Bicycle Parking Grant may be available to eligible properties to provide a grant to assist the property owners and tenants (with consent from the owner) to add vehicle and/or bicycle parking to their property or increase the vehicle or bicycle parking supply. This program is intended to improve the quality and supply of vehicle and bicycle parking spaces within the corridor.

F.2 Value of Grant

Where a proposed project satisfies the eligibility requirements, a Motor Vehicle and Bicycle Parking Grant may be provided for 50% of the eligible cost of the improvements to a maximum of \$500 (or the total value of eligible costs related to the project, whichever is less).

F.3 Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible, the general eligibility criteria set out in Section 7.A of this CIP apply.

F.4 Eligible Costs

The Motor Vehicle and Bicycle Parking Grant may be provided for costs related to:

- a. Repairs, improvements, expansion, repainting and repaving of existing driveways and motor vehicle parking areas provided that the project results in an improvement over the existing condition (i.e., gravel parking area to paved parking or paved parking to interlocking stone or permeable paving); and
- b. Installation of accessible parking spaces; and
- c. Installation of new outdoor bicycle parking racks and replacement of existing bicycle parking racks which are publically accessible and not fully enclosed.

The services of a professional engineer, architect, surveyor, or planner to design and implement the project will be eligible; however, the maximum amount of a grant for such services shall not exceed 15%.

F.5 Payment

All completed projects must comply with the description as provided in the grant application form.

The grant will be provided upon successful completion of the approved project, study, or design. The grant will be paid in a lump sum as a reimbursement of costs incurred.

G. Tax Increment Equivalent Grant

G.1 Purpose and Anticipated Benefits

The Tax Increment Equivalent Grant program will provide a grant to eligible property owners, which is equivalent to a percentage of the Municipal portion of a property tax increment that is incurred as a result of an improvement project.

The purpose of the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant is to stimulate investment by effectively deferring part of the increase in property taxation as a result of the major redevelopment, reconstruction, or rehabilitation of lands or buildings.

G.2 Value of Grant

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

- ⇒ Following reassessment, a grant that is equivalent to 75% of the Municipal portion of the tax increment will be provided to a property owner. Grants will be provided for a period of 5 years.
- ⇒ The total value of grants over the 5-year period shall not exceed \$25,000, or the total eligible costs of an approved project, whichever is the lesser amount.

Note: In order to determine the suitability of the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant, the Township's treasurer will attempt to estimate the total potential value of the grant prior to submitting an application for the program. The estimate will consider current assessment value, total anticipated investment, and the potential reassessment based on completing the approved community improvement works. Applicants should refer to the definition for Tax Increment provided in the Glossary of this CIP to further understand how grant values will be calculated.

G.3 Program-specific Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible, the general eligibility criteria set out in Section 7.A of this CIP apply. In addition, the following criteria apply:

- ⇒ An applicant must be a registered owner/assessed owner of private property located within the CIPA. Tenants are not eligible for the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant;
- ⇒ Only those projects that are anticipated to generate a minimum tax increment of \$1,000 will be eligible; and
- ⇒ A financial pro-forma (at the expense of the applicant) and an independent third party financial review (at the expense of the applicant) may also be required.

Investment



G.4 Eligible Costs

The Tax Increment Equivalent Grant may be provided for eligible costs associated with the following:

- ⇒ Development or redevelopment of a building or property, including improvements and expansion to an existing building;
- ⇒ Adaptive reuse, building rehabilitation and retrofit works;
- ⇒ Upgrading on-site infrastructure including septic systems and stormwater management facilities; and
- ⇒ Such other similar costs that may be necessary for the development, redevelopment, adaptive reuse or rehabilitation of the building and/or property.

G.5 Payment

All completed projects must comply with the description as provided in the grant application form.

The value of the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant is determined and provided to a property owner following the reassessment of the property by MPAC.

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

H. Invest Well: County Participation in Financial Incentives

H.1 About the Invest Well Programme

The Wellington County Invest Well Programme is a strategic planning and economic development tool that directly supports the County's longer-term planning and economic development priorities. Invest Well was developed by the County in early 2018 and sets out goals, criteria, and an implementation framework for the County's participation in the financial incentive programmes of the Township of Puslinch and this CIP.

The following sections of the Township of Puslinch CIP describe how and when Wellington County will participate in financial incentive programmes offered by the Township of Puslinch CIP, based on an evaluation of individual applications by the Township of Puslinch and Wellington County. The following Sections are included in the Township of Puslinch CIP in accordance with Section 28 of the Planning Act and Section 4.1 of the Invest Well Programme.

The Invest Well Programme was endorsed by the County on June 28, 2018. The full document is available on the County's website <https://www.wellington.ca/en/business/EDCommImprovPlan.aspx> and should be reviewed for full details on County participation in the Township of Puslinch CIP.

The full document will also be used by the member municipalities to integrate County participation within the Township's incentive programmes.

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H.2 Goals

The County has identified the following three goals for the Invest Well Programme, which will guide the County's financial participation in the Township of Puslinch CIP.

GOAL #1: INVEST WELL

To prioritize the investment of County resources into community improvement projects that directly support a set of long-term, County-wide planning and economic development priorities.

GOAL #2: INVEST READY

To strategically position privately-owned properties with high development/redevelopment potential in order to attract further investment from investors and the private sector.

GOAL #3: INVEST MORE

To recognize community improvement projects that are approved for incentives through a member municipality CIP and to provide further support through County resources.

H.3 Criteria for Investment

As further explained in the County's full document, Invest Well is a criteria-based community improvement programme. This means that to be eligible for funding from the County through the incentive programmes in the Township of Puslinch CIP, proposed community improvement projects must meet a certain number of the County's 'criteria for investment'.

The criteria for investment are introduced below and organized according to a list of County economic development and planning priorities. They are provided in no particular order.

PRIORITY #1: TO USE LAND STRATEGICALLY

- 1.1 The proposed project involves the redevelopment of vacant/underutilized lands.
- 1.2 The proposed project will achieve a construction value threshold established by County Council.
- 1.3 The proposed project will result in employment opportunities created or retained in target sectors.

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PRIORITY #2: TO PROVIDE RENTAL HOUSING

- 2.1 A new mixed-use building is proposed, with commercial uses at grade and upper floor rental apartment housing units.
- 2.2 The proposed project will result in the upgrade of existing rental units.
- 2.3 The proposed project is an example of residential intensification in a downtown area.

PRIORITY #3: TO IMPROVE BUILDINGS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- 3.1 The proposed project involves the adaptive reuse of vacant or underutilized buildings.
- 3.2 The proposed project incorporates sustainable building and/or green infrastructure features.
- 3.3 The proposed project will result in improvements/upgrades to utilities/servicing.

PRIORITY #4: DIVERSIFY THE ECONOMY

- 4.1 The proposed project results in new on-farm diversified or agriculture-related uses.
- 4.2 The proposal will result in the creation of a new business in target sector or value-chain/cluster.
- 4.3 The proposal involves new retail, restaurant, or other critical businesses in the downtown area.

PRIORITY #5: TO PROMOTE TOURISM

- 5.1 The proposed project provides for an increase in short-term accommodation options.
- 5.2 The proposed project involves the beautification/restoration/enhancement of key landmarks/tourism assets.
- 5.3 The use is a current or proposed participant in the County's tourism promotion activities (i.e., Top Wellington Destinations, Taste Real).

To determine the extent to which an applicant meets the above 'Criteria for Investment', application and evaluation forms have been prepared and are provided in the County's full document. The application and evaluation forms may also be available from the Township of Puslinch. The forms will be used by the Township of Puslinch and County of Wellington in order to determine eligibility for County funding. Applications will be pre-screened for general eligibility by the Township of Puslinch and the application will be endorsed to the County and processed by County staff to confirm eligibility for incentives.

H.4 County Funding/Incentive Programmes

“Invest Well: County Participation in Financial Incentives” is a funding relationship between the County and the Township of Puslinch to support the implementation of the Township of Puslinch’s CIP. The Invest Well programme sets out a framework for providing County funding in accordance with the goals identified in Section H.2 and the ‘criteria for investment’ in Section H.3. The Invest Well Framework is made up of two incentive programmes (Invest Ready and Invest More), as shown below.

The following is a description of financial incentive programmes that have been created by the County of Wellington via Invest Well to guide the County’s participation in the Township of Puslinch CIP.

H.4.1 INVEST READY INCENTIVES PACKAGE

H.4.1.1 Purpose

The Invest Ready Incentive Package is in direct support of Invest Well Goal #2. It is intended to help prepare properties that have a high potential for development/redevelopment by making them development-ready and therefore more attractive to investors and site selectors in various sectors. The Invest Ready Incentive Package will help fund:

- a) The completion of background studies regarding site-specific issues and constraints, such as servicing and utilities, transportation access, and environmental records; and
- b) Future development/redevelopment and eligible costs for major redevelopment projects.

In addition, successful applicants of the Invest Ready Incentive Package may receive marketing and investment attraction support from the County.

H.4.1.2 Who Benefits?

Through the Invest Ready Incentive Package, the following benefits are anticipated:

- a) The County, its member municipalities, and the public will benefit from an increase in the number of development-ready properties in Wellington County, and the future redevelopment of these sites;
- b) Landowners will benefit from the financial and non-financial support from Wellington County; and

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- c) Potential investors will benefit from the availability of information related to a site condition or a proposed development, which will facilitate site selection decisions.

H.4.1.3 Who is Eligible?

In addition to the General Eligibility Criteria in Section 7.A of this of this Plan and Section 4.0 of the County's full Invest Well document, to be eligible for the Invest Ready Incentive Package, the following requirements must be met:

- a) The subject property must achieve a minimum score (as identified by the County and reviewed on an annual basis), when evaluated against the County's 'criteria for investment', above; and
- b) The subject property must be sponsored and endorsed by the Township of Puslinch.

H.4.1.4 Programme Details and Value

Where a property/applicant satisfies all applicable eligibility requirements, financial incentives may be available in three phases, as shown below, and described in this section.

PHASE ONE: Pre-Development Design/Study Grant:

- i. The County may contribute financially to the following financial incentive programs offered through Section 7 of this CIP, including:
 - The Façade, Signage, and Landscape Improvement Grant;
 - The Building Improvement Grant;
 - The Building Conversion and Expansion Grant; and
 - The Motor Vehicle and Bicycle Parking Grant
- ii. The grant will provide funding to cover eligible costs required to complete due diligence, planning, technical, and/or design studies that will investigate potential site-specific development constraints and/or provide new background information regarding a potential development and redevelopment project.
- iii. Eligible costs will include professional services outlined in Section C.4, D.4, E.4 and F.4 of this CIP.
- iv. If eligible and approved, a grant from the County will be provided for 100% of the total value of eligible costs, to a maximum of \$20,000 per project and/or property.
- v. This is not a matching grant and a grant made by the Township of Puslinch in the same amount is not required in order for the County to provide funding.

PHASE TWO: Tax Increment Equivalent Grant (TIEG):

The County may contribute financially to the 'Tax Increment Equivalent Grant' offered through Section 7.G of this CIP.

- i. The grant will provide funding to cover construction, demolition, on-site infrastructure, and other associated costs as a result of a redevelopment, adaptive reuse, building rehabilitation, or retrofit works.
- ii. Eligible costs will include those outlined in 7.G.4 of this CIP.
- iii. In addition, the following will be considered eligible costs for County funding only:
 - County tipping fees;
 - County planning application and building permit fees;
 - Any costs for design and study work not covered in PHASE ONE; and
 - Additional community improvement costs, as determined by the County.
- iv. The grant will be calculated based on the County portion of a property tax increment that is incurred as a result of a major community improvement project. Following the payment of County property taxes (annually or at the end of the five-year term), a grant will be provided to the landowner which is equal to the County portion of an increase in property taxation.
- v. The actual grant value will be calculated as follows:
 - In year one, the grant is equal to 100% of the County portion of the tax increment;
 - In year two, the grant is equal to 80% of the County portion of the tax increment;
 - In year three, the grant is equal to 60% of the County portion of the tax increment;
 - In year four, the grant is equal to 40% of the County portion of the tax increment; and
 - In year five, the grant is equal to 20% of the County portion of the tax increment.

PHASE THREE: Marketing/Investment Attraction Support:

For a discussion of this County-let initiative, refer to Section 3.2.1 of the full Invest Well document.

H.4.1.5 Payment

- a) Grant payments will be made upon successful completion of the project. All completed projects must comply with the approved project description as provided in the grant application form and submitted to the Township of Puslinch.
- b) Grant payments from the County will be provided to the Township of Puslinch. Grants to the successful applicant will be issued and administered by the Township of Puslinch.

H.4.2 INVEST MORE GRANT

H.4.2.1 Purpose

The Invest More Grant is in direct support of Goal #3 of Invest Well. It is intended to help support a broad range of improvements to existing buildings/properties and contribute to the overall beautification and revitalization of built-up areas. The Invest More Grant will help fund:

- a) Costs required to complete due diligence, planning, technical, and/or design studies that will investigate potential site-specific development constraints and/or provide new background information regarding a potential development and redevelopment project.
- b) Physical, structural, and aesthetic improvements to existing commercial, industrial, mixed-use, and office buildings/properties and contribute to the overall beautification, revitalization, energy efficiency, function, and safety of built-up areas; and
- c) Other significant changes to a building, property, or business that result in the productive use of land and/or buildings to accommodate new job growth.

H.4.2.2 Who Benefits?

Through the Invest More Grant, the following benefits are anticipated:

- a) The County, its member municipalities, and the public will benefit from the overall improvement and revitalization of land and buildings; and
- b) Landowners/investors/businesses will benefit from additional financial and non-financial support from County of Wellington.

H.4.2.3 Who is Eligible?

In addition to the General Eligibility Criteria in Section 7.A of this Plan and Section 4.0 of the County's full Invest Well document, to be eligible for the Invest More Grant, the following requirements must be met:

- a) The subject property must achieve a minimum score (as identified by the County and reviewed on an annual basis), when evaluated against the County's 'Criteria for Investment', above; and
- b) The subject property must be sponsored and endorsed by the Township of Puslinch.

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H.4.2.4 Programme Details and Value

Where a property/applicant satisfies all applicable eligibility requirements, the Invest More Grant may be available, subject to the following:

- a) The County may contribute financially to successful applicants of any grant programme offered in Section 7 of this CIP, with the exception of the TIEG (Section 7.G) as noted above.
- b) The grant will provide funding to cover eligible costs required for a broad range of physical, structural, and aesthetic improvements to existing commercial, industrial, mixed-use, and office buildings/properties, as determined by the County.
- c) Eligible costs will include those outlined in the eligible incentive programmes discussed in Section 7 of this CIP.
- d) In addition, for the Invest More Grant, the following will be included as eligible costs:
 - Roof-top patios, outdoor dining spaces/areas;
 - Privately owned publicly accessible spaces;
 - Bed and Breakfasts, and other short-term accommodations; and
 - Additional community improvement costs, as determined by the County.
- e) If eligible and approved, a grant from the County will be provided for 50% of the total value of eligible costs, to a maximum of \$10,000 per project and/or property.
- f) This is not a matching grant and a grant made by the Township of Puslinch in the same amount is not required in order for the County to provide funding; however, the applicant must be approved for at least one eligible programme in the Township of Puslinch CIP (except for the TIEG).

H.4.2.5 Payment

- a) Grant payments will be made upon successful completion of the project. All completed projects must comply with the approved project description as provided in the grant application form and submitted to the Township of Puslinch.
- b) Grant payments from the County will be provided to the Township of Puslinch. Grants to the successful applicant will be issued and administered by the Township of Puslinch.
- c) The Invest More Grant will be paid in a lump sum as a reimbursement of costs incurred.

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H.5 Application and Approvals Process

Applicants to the Township of Puslinch CIP will automatically be considered for County funding through the Invest Well Programmes, provided the applicant has participated in a pre-consultation meeting with Township of Puslinch staff to discuss the proposal details, and to review the application against the eligibility requirements of the Township of Puslinch and Wellington County incentive programmes.

H.6 Wellington-Waterloo Community Futures

Wellington-Waterloo Community Futures is a non-profit organization mandated to support businesses by providing loans, business coaching and training workshops to encourage entrepreneurship and stimulate economic activity in rural communities. As part of a network of 268 organizations across Canada, they also provide community planning and economic development support. The Wellington-Waterloo Community Futures organization has committed to supporting the Township's CIP through the provision of business loans to assist with the portion of improvements not covered through CIP grants. This innovative and practical funding partnership is intended to act as a catalyst to encourage business owners to invest in their property improvements. The Invest Well County CIP encourages this type of coordination and enables Community Futures to contribute business loans to supplement a project outside of the contribution by the Township and County. This partnership provides the opportunity to encourage and promote the services that Community Futures offers, towards the Township's and County's common economic development goals.

The Process – Wellington-Waterloo Community Futures

For those businesses located in Puslinch and having already received formal written approval by the Township to participate in a local CIP, the specific programme offered by the Wellington-Waterloo Community Futures Development Corporation is as follows:

A business development fund to assist commercial and/or industrial projects related to the County's Invest Well priority three: improve buildings and infrastructure. If approved to receive grant funds from a member municipal CIP, the applicant will automatically be approved to receive funding to put towards upfront and/or matching costs related to the approved grant. The funds will be loaned at a 3% rate on a 5 year term.

Terms:

- Proof of Municipal CIP approval
- Unsecured Business Loans up to \$20,000
- 3% Interest Rate
- Simple Application Process
- Flexible Repayment Terms

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- Personal Guarantee Required

Requests over \$20,000 must be approved by WWCFDC and secured. For further information, please visit www.wwcf.ca .

8. Implementation

A. Implementation Period

It is anticipated that the 'Our Corridor' Community Improvement Plan will be implemented over a 15-year period ending December 31, 2031. Council may extend or reduce the implementation period as deemed appropriate or necessary, subject to an amendment to the CIP.

B. Administration

B.1 Council Roles and Responsibilities

Township Council will be responsible for the overall administration of this CIP (subject to the Township's priorities and the availability of resources/funding) as follows:

- a. Appointing a Community Improvement Implementation Committee, as discussed in Section 8.B.2;
- b. Determining which of the Financial Incentive Programs and Municipal Strategies outlined in this CIP will be put into effect in any given year during the implementation period of this CIP, if any;
- c. Identifying (as part of the annual budgeting process) a community improvement budget for Financial Incentives that have been put into effect for that year, if any, in accordance with Section 8.C. of this CIP; and
- d. Making a final decision on the approval or refusal of applications for financial incentive programs, unless the responsibility to do so has been delegated to the Community Improvement Implementation Committee, as discussed in Section 8.B.3.

B.2 Community Improvement Committee

A Community Improvement Implementation Committee will be appointed by Council and may consist of the following staff from the Township:

- ⇒ Development Coordinator;
- ⇒ Chief Building Official;
- ⇒ Treasurer.

Council may change the composition of the Community Improvement Implementation Committee at any time without amendment to this Plan. Other staff and qualified professionals may also be consulted in order to assist with the review of applications.

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As well, a full or part-time Community Improvement Administrator may be assigned to act as the main contact person and to coordinate day-to-day tasks associated with implementation of this Plan.

The Community Improvement Implementation Committee and Administrator will be responsible for:

- a. Reviewing and evaluating applications for Financial Incentives, in accordance with the process and requirements set out in Sections 7 and 8.D;
- b. Making a recommendation on whether an application should be approved or refused by Council (unless the responsibility to do so has been delegated to the Community Improvement Implementation Committee);
- c. Executing Municipal Strategies, with assistance from Township staff;
- d. Marketing the 'Our Corridor' Community Improvement Plan, in accordance with the Marketing Plan set out in Section 9;
- e. Monitoring the 'Our Corridor' Community Improvement Plan, in accordance with the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan set out in Section 10, and providing an annual report to Council and citizens with respect to the costs and benefits of the CIP.
- f. Making recommendations to Council with respect to:
 - i. Financial Incentive Programs to be put into effect in any given year; and
 - ii. An annual community improvement budget for Financial Incentives.

B.3 Delegation

Council may delegate its responsibility to approve financial incentive applications to the 'Our Corridor' Community Improvement Plan Implementation Committee. In this case, a final decision on the approval or refusal of applications will be made as follows:

- a. The Implementation Committee will evaluate financial incentive applications and supporting materials and will make a recommendation to the Chief Administrative Officer; and
- b. The Chief Administrative Officer will be assigned the task of approving applications.

B.4 Administration of Township-led Programs

The Township may put into effect any number of the Township-led Programs identified in Section 6 this Plan during the implementation period. Implementation may occur in accordance with the anticipated timing identified in Section 6, subject to the availability of Township funds and other resources.

Annually, the Community Improvement Implementation Committee will make a recommendation to Council with respect to programs that will be put into effect (if any). Following Council approval, the Community Improvement Implementation Committee

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and/or the appropriate Township department/staff will execute the Township-led Programs, in accordance with a Council approved budget.

Implementation of the Township-led Programs will be dependent on the commitment of the Township to contribute to, motivate, and assist in community improvement activities and undertakings, in addition to available funds.

B.5 Administration of Financial Incentives

The Township may put into effect any number of the Financial Incentives identified in this Plan during the implementation period, subject to the availability of Township funds and other resources.

Annually, the Community Improvement Implementation Committee may make recommendations to Council with respect to the administration of financial incentives.

Applications for Financial Incentives will be received on a first come, first served basis to the limit of the available funding for that year. Applications will be evaluated in a timely manner, in accordance with:

- a. General Eligibility Requirements, as outlined in Section 7.A;
- b. Program specific eligibility requirements, as outlined in Section 7.B to 7.H;
- c. Application Requirements, as outlined in Section 8.D; and
- d. A Council approved budget.

Council will make final decisions on Financial Program applications, unless the Community Improvement Implementation Committee has been delegated the responsibility to approve applications by Council, in accordance with Section 8.B.3.

Where the Community Improvement Implementation Committee has been delegated the responsibility for approval, should an application be refused, all applicants have the right to appeal the decision to Township Council.

C. Financial Management

As part of the annual Township budgeting exercise, Council will identify a community improvement budget for Financial Incentives.

The annual budget for financial incentives will fund grant programs that may be in effect for that year, if any. The annual budget for financial incentives will not fund the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant Program, since these programs do not require an expenditure of assets. Rather, funding for these incentives will be provided as reimbursements following payment to the Township, or as cancellations.

Since applications will be received and evaluated on a first come, first served basis, the provision of any grant incentive shall be to the limit of the available funding for that year.

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During the implementation period of this Plan, Council will determine if changes to funding and incentive levels are necessary or warranted to ensure that the 'Our Corridor' Community Improvement Plan functions properly in respect of the Vision and Goals (set out in Section 4) and the Township's financial circumstances. Plan amendments are further described in Section 8.E.



Connections

D. Applying for Financial Incentives

D.1 Application Process

- 1) The following is a summary of the process for the submission, evaluation, and approval of Financial Incentive Program applications:
- 2) Applicants must meet with one or more members of the Community Improvement Implementation Committee for a pre-consultation meeting, prior to submitting an application, in order to confirm requirements for a complete application;
- 3) Applications must be submitted in accordance with the requirements outlined in Section 8.D.2;

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- 4) The Community Improvement Implementation Committee will evaluate all applications and supporting materials. Applicants will be notified if their submission is incomplete;
- 5) Based on the evaluation of complete applications, a recommendation will be made to Council (unless Council has delegated its approval authority, in which case a recommendation will be made to the Chief Administrative Officer);
- 6) For applications that are approved, a Financial Assistance Agreement will be prepared, approved by Council, and executed;
- 7) Any program commitments may be cancelled if work does not commence within six months of approval of an application, or if a project is not undertaken or completed in accordance with the Financial Assistance Agreement;
- 8) When projects are completed, a statement with supporting invoices shall be submitted to the Township. Following this, the work will be inspected by the Township and, if approved, notice of completion will be issued and the financial assistance will be initiated;
- 9) Upon completion of a community improvement project, the Township reserves the right to inspect any properties/buildings, or to audit final costs at the owner's expense;
- 10) Funding approval will lapse if a notice of completion is not issued within twelve months of the date of execution of the Financial Assistance Agreement;
- 11) The Community Improvement Implementation Committee may grant an extension for community improvement works following receipt of a written request by the owner setting out the reasons for the extension and providing a new date of completion; and
- 12) Should the applicant fall into default of any of the requirements of the incentive program or other requirements established by the Township, incentives may be delayed, reduced, or cancelled. Applicants may be required to repay benefits to the Township.

D.2 Application Requirements

Applications for Financial Incentives offered through this Plan must include:

- a. Two (2) copies of the completed application form;
- b. Two (2) copies of all supporting documentation, as determined by the Community Improvement Implementation Committee at a pre-consultation meeting, which may include (but is not limited to):
 - i. Specifications of the proposed project, including good quality plans, drawing, and studies;
 - iii. Good quality photographs of the existing building condition;
 - iv. Past/historical photographs and/or drawings;

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- v. Two (2) cost estimates for eligible work provided by professionals and contractors (as required);
- vi. Any additional requirements as determined by the Committee.

The Township is not responsible for any of the costs associated with preparing a CIP financial incentive application.

All sources of additional funding/incentives must be declared at the time of application submission and will be considered upon review and evaluation of the application.



Recreation

9. The Marketing Plan

The following Marketing Plan is meant to be a guide for the Township to promote the opportunities and incentives available by means of the 'Our Corridor' Community Improvement Plan during the implementation period.

A. Target Markets

A.1 Primary Target Markets

The following have been identified as the primary market targets of the 'Our Corridor' Community Improvement Plan:

- a. Property owners and operating businesses (i.e., tenants) located within the 'Our Corridor' Community Improvement Project Area;
- b. Potential investors in the community; and
- c. Local realtors.

A.2 Secondary Target Markets

In addition to these primary target markets, there may be other secondary marketing considerations that will apply, including (but not limited to):

- a. Business Associations, which can serve as an information source about the 'Our Corridor' Community Improvement Plan and its programs;
- b. The general public; and
- c. Township Council, who will receive annual reports on program take-up and on-the-ground results.

The specific communications and marketing messages to be conveyed to each of these market segments are outlined in Table 1 below.

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Table 1: Communications / Marketing Messages to be Conveyed to Target Markets

Target Market	Communications/ Marketing Messages
Property Owners and Operating Businesses in the CIPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ The 'Our Corridor' CIP can help finance projects improvement projects to private property. ⇒ The 'Our Corridor' CIP can multiply the value of private investment. ⇒ There is an efficient application and approvals process. ⇒ The 'Our Corridor' CIP can help achieve strategic business development goals.
Potential Investors in Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ The 'Our Corridor' CIP is just one more way in which the Township of Puslinch has prepared strategically and is actively encouraging local investment and job growth.
Realtors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ The 'Our Corridor' CIP enhances the attractiveness of properties in the CIPA. ⇒ Realtors can help spread the word about the opportunities of the 'Our Corridor' CIP.
Business Associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Business Associations can help spread the word about the opportunities of the 'Our Corridor' CIP, which will benefit their members.
General Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ The Township is actively encouraging investment and job growth through the 'Our Corridor' CIP.
Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Extent to which the 'Our Corridor' CIP is achieving the Vision and Goals identified in Section 4. ⇒ Need for changes / revisions to the 'Our Corridor' CIP programs.

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B. Marketing Materials

The following communications materials may be developed by the Township to promote the 'Our Corridor' CIP and related opportunities:

- ⇒ A section on the Township's web site devoted to the 'Our Corridor' CIP, including information on financial incentives the application process;
- ⇒ An information package that would be sent to both property-owners and tenant businesses in the CIPA;
- ⇒ Presentations could be provided Council to communicate the specific opportunities available through the 'Our Corridor' CIP;
- ⇒ Information displays could be provided at local community events, conferences, and at municipal buildings, to broadly promote the 'Our Corridor' CIP;
- ⇒ Newspaper ads to introduce the 'Our Corridor' CIP to business owners/managers and the general public to the CIP, and direct interested parties to the website containing information; and
- ⇒ Annual progress reports could be prepared to outline the success of the 'Our Corridor' CIP over the period of one year and to serve as case studies for future applicants.

The Township may also identify specific target businesses and properties where improvements would be most desirable, and arrange short visits with owners/managers, in order to ensure awareness and encourage take-up.

These activities may be undertaken as part of the initial launch of the new CIP program, and repeated annually or every few years as 'reminders' of the 'Our Corridor' CIP opportunities.

As discussed, a full or part-time 'Our Corridor' CIP Administrator may be identified as the 'CIP expert' and could be identified as the key contact for information relating to the program.

Table 2 on the following page shows the interrelationship between the target markets and these communications materials.

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Table 2: Communications / Marketing Materials to be Conveyed to Target Markets

Communications Vehicle	Property Owners and Operating Businesses	Potential Investors	Realtors	Business Associations	General Public	Council
Web site Information	X	X	X	X	X	
General Information Packages	X	X	X	X		
Presentations						X
General Information Displays	X	X	X	X	X	
Newspaper Ads	X	X	X	X	X	
Annual Progress Reports	X				X	X

10. Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

The following Monitoring and Evaluation Plan is meant to serve as an overall evaluation framework that will allow the costs and benefits of the 'Our Corridor' Community Improvement Plan programs to be reported back to Council and the public on a regular basis during the implementation period of this Plan.

A. Purpose of Monitoring and Evaluation

The purpose of the following monitoring strategy is to:

- a. Track funds provided by the 'Our Corridor' CIP to owners and tenants of land located within the community improvement project area;
- b. Evaluate whether the programs are achieving the Vision/Goals for 'Our Corridor';
- c. Determine whether program adjustments are required; and
- d. Provide the basis for reporting the results of the 'Our Corridor' CIP, and specifically the uptake and success of financial incentive programs, to the Council of the Township of Puslinch and the general public.

The Township's monitoring strategy is based on the Vision of the 'Our Corridor' CIP (Section 4.A), which is further articulated by a set of Goals (Section 4.B). Specifically, a set of measures has been identified to assist in determining whether the individual Goals of the 'Our Corridor' CIP are being achieved during the implementation period. The measures are presented in Section 10.C below.

B. Frequency

Collection of data related to financial incentive applications and proposed/completed projects should be on-going during the implementation of this Plan. An evaluation of the measures outlined in Section 10.C should be completed on an annual basis.

C. Measures

Table 3 below provides a number of measures that may be used as the basis for evaluating whether the individual goal of the 'Our Corridor' Community Improvement Plan are being met. Each of the measures identified has different implications in terms of what specifically should be collected, how frequently the data should be collected, and how frequently the data should be reported. Additional measures may be identified during the implementation of the CIP.

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Table 3: Measures to be Evaluated in the Monitoring of the 'Our Corridor' CIP

Goals	Measures
<p>1. Promote beautification and restoration of public and private property.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Number underutilized properties or buildings in poor condition that are redeveloped, as a result of funding through the CIP. ⇒ Number of aesthetic improvements to buildings, façades and properties, as a result of funding through the CIP. ⇒ Number of streetscape improvements and public realm improvements implemented. ⇒ Amount of affected square footage of commercial space or residential space, as a result of funding through the CIP. ⇒ Demonstrate improvements visually through 'before' and 'after' documentation (i.e., photographs).
<p>2. Celebrate and restore local built and cultural heritage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Number of improvements to buildings where original/heritage features are being restored, as a result of funding through the CIP. ⇒ Number of improvements to buildings that are listed on the Township's Heritage Inventory, as a result of funding through the CIP. ⇒ Number of projects involving the adaptive reuse of buildings that are listed on the Township's Heritage Inventory, as a result of funding through the CIP. ⇒ Number of properties designated under the Ontario Heritage Act.
<p>3. Attract new business development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Number of new businesses and job positions established as a result of funding through the CIP. ⇒ Hectares/acres of commercial or industrial land developed or redeveloped as a result of funding through the CIP. ⇒ Number of commercial or industrial vacancies occupied as a result of funding through the CIP. ⇒ Value of tax increment on commercial and industrial properties as a direct result of projects funded by the CIP (i.e., not due to a general tax increase/decrease or a change in assessment for any other reason).

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Goals	Measures
<p>4. Support and promote existing businesses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Number of new job positions established as a result of funding through the CIP. ⇒ Number of expansions to existing businesses as a result of funding through the CIP. ⇒ Hectares/acres of commercial or industrial land developed or redeveloped as a result of funding through the CIP. ⇒ Value of tax increment on commercial and industrial properties as a direct result of projects funded by the CIP (i.e., not due to a general tax increase/decrease or a change in assessment for any other reason).
<p>5. Encourage active transportation and enhance recreational opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Number of bicycle parking spaces as a result of funding through the CIP. ⇒ Length of shared roadways, signed bicycle routes, paved shoulders along County roads, and off-road walking routes within and connected to the Community Improvement Project Area. ⇒ Number of traffic calming measures implemented. ⇒ Number of benches, directional signs, garbage cans, streetlights, and other street furniture implemented for the benefit of the public. ⇒ Number of improvements to private and public property, which provide improved accessibility for all persons. ⇒ Number of improvements to recreational buildings and facilities.
<p>6. Provide attractive streetscapes which include parking, gateway signage, tree plantings and lighting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Number of streetscape and public realm improvements implemented, including gateway features, plantings, and lighting. ⇒ Number of municipal, on-street, and private off-street parking spaces.
<p>7. Provide safe pedestrian and cycling connections between Morriston and Aberfoyle.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Number of pedestrian and cycling connections between Morriston and Aberfoyle. ⇒ Number of bicycle parking spaces as a result of funding through the CIP. ⇒ Number of traffic calming measures implemented.

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In addition to the above, there are a number of general measures that will assist in determining the overall success of the 'Our Corridor' CIP. With regard to the financial incentive programs, the Township will also monitor on an annual basis:

- a. The number of inquiries received regarding the financial incentive applications, and the nature of the inquiry;
- b. The number of received applications;
- c. The number of successful applications;
- d. The number and nature of pre-application consultation meetings; and
- e. The total value of grants issued and the total value of construction projects.

D. Reporting

An annual report should be prepared to highlight the successes and achievements of the 'Our Corridor' Community Improvement Plan. The report will be presented to Township Council for consideration. The report may recommend adjustments/amendments to the Plan, as discussed below.

E. Plan Amendments

As a result of the monitoring and evaluation of the Township of Puslinch 'Our Corridor' Community Improvement Plan, amendments to the Plan may be required. The following summarizes when Plan amendments are and are not required:

- a. An amendment to the 'Our Corridor' Community Improvement Plan will not be required in order to:
 - i. Reduce funding levels for the financial incentive programs; or
 - ii. Discontinue or cancel any of the programs identified.
- b. An amendment will be required to the 'Our Corridor' Community Improvement Plan or implementing By-laws in order to:
 - i. Extend the implementation period of the CIP;
 - ii. Add any new financial incentive program and/or increase a financial incentive to be offered within the CIP;
 - iii. Modify the eligibility criteria related to financial incentive programs offered; and
 - iv. Modify the geographic area (i.e., the 'Our Corridor' Community Improvement Project Area) to which financial incentive programs apply.

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Amendments to this CIP will be passed by Township Council under the Planning Act.

The Township of Puslinch will also be required to pre-consult with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on any amendments to the 'Our Corridor' Community Improvement Plan.

11. Glossary

The interpretation of this Plan rests solely with the Township of Puslinch. To assist in interpretation, the following definitions shall apply.

Community Improvement Administrator means the designated person and his or her support staff designated by Council to manage the day-to-day administration of this Plan in accordance with the policies of this Plan and report to Council and citizens.

Community Improvement Implementation Committee means the designated committee appointed to review applications for financial incentives and recommend decisions on financial incentives (unless the responsibility to make decisions has been delegated by Council) in accordance with the policies of this Plan.

Eligible Applicant means registered owners, assessed owners and tenants of lands and buildings 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.

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

County means the Corporation of the County of Wellington.

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

Tax Increment means an increase in taxes, or which is calculated by subtracting the Township portion of property taxes before assessment from the Township portion of property taxes after reassessment. The tax increment does not include any increase/decrease in Township taxes due to a general tax increase/decrease or a change in assessment for any other reason.

Tax Increment Equivalent Grant means a grant equal to the full amount, or a portion of the tax increment.

Township means the Corporation of the Township of Puslinch.