

**City of Port Colborne
Public Meeting Agenda**

Date: Tuesday, September 26, 2023
Time: 6:30 pm
Location: Council Chambers, 3rd Floor, City Hall
66 Charlotte Street, Port Colborne

Pages

1. Call to Order
2. Adoption of Agenda
3. Disclosures of Interest
4. Statutory Public Meetings

Statutory public meetings are held to present planning applications in a public forum as required by the Planning Act. Requests to delegate, both written and appearing in-person or virtually, will be accepted until noon the day of the meeting by contacting deputyclerk@portcolborne.ca. Material accepted after this time will be circulated with the minutes and included as public record.

4.1 Draft Comprehensive Community Improvement Plan, 2023-191

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5. Procedural Motions
6. Information Items
7. Adjournment



Subject: Draft Comprehensive Community Improvement Plan

To: Council

From: Development and Legislative Services Department

Report Number: 2023-191

Meeting Date: September 26, 2023

Recommendation:

That Development and Legislative Services Department 2023-191 be received.

Purpose:

This report is being submitted as part of the Statutory Public Meeting required under the *Planning Act* regarding the draft Community Improvement Plan (CIP) that has been completed by RCI Consulting. It will also be accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation by Luc Piccioni, President of RCI Consulting at the September 26, 2023, Council meeting.

Background:

At the March 8, 2021, meeting, Council approved staff report 2021-68 and a recommendation to retain a consultant to complete a comprehensive review of the City's Community Improvement Plans (CIPs). The City of Port Colborne has six CIPs, namely:

- Brownfield Community Improvement Plan
- Downtown Central Business District Community Improvement Plan
- East Waterfront Community Improvement Plan
- Industrial Community Improvement Plan
- Olde Humberstone Community Improvement Plan
- Niagara Gateway Economic Zone and Centre Community Improvement Plan

The incentive programs in these CIPs were developed by City staff and consultants several years ago based on Council direction to incentivize growth and development in

designated community improvement project areas in the City. Part IV of the *Planning Act* outlines municipal authority for the implementation of CIPs and the City's Official Plan includes enabling policy for the preparation, adoption, and implementation of CIPs.

The comprehensive CIP review focused on the following:

- review current CIP programs, project area boundaries, and service delivery;
- review current best practices from other jurisdictions;
- consolidate the 6 CIPs and ensure program integration with the Region's new incentive programs policy;
- update the community improvement vision and goals to address emerging community improvement policy;
- streamline and revise the incentive programs to achieve the updated community improvement vision and goals and further improve the effectiveness of the CIP programs;
- specify a monitoring program to better measure and track program effectiveness;
- recommendations for budgeting, resourcing, and marketing the CIP programs.

Discussion:

Since the fall of 2021, RCI Consulting and the City's Project Review Team (PRT) have been working together to review and update the following:

- CIP Policy Framework;
- Community Improvement Vision and Goals;
- City's existing CIP incentive programs including evaluating their uptake and effectiveness; identifying any gaps/weaknesses; examining other best practices in Ontario municipalities; and making recommendations to maintain, combine, enhance, or eliminate the current CIP incentive programs;
- boundaries of the community improvement project areas to address emerging community improvement needs and encourage more private sector investment.

The City's PRT, comprised of staff from Corporate Services, Economic Development, and Planning, focused on the following guiding principles when reviewing the CIP programs and discussing potential changes with the consultant:

- ensuring Port Colborne has a competitive advantage in attracting investment;
- ensuring the updated incentive programs will be financially sustainable;
- clarity in program communications to support customer service excellence;
- simplicity in program guidelines and processes to create positive experiences for applicants;
- incorporation of innovative ideas and practices that help facilitate investment;

- forging strong partnerships to achieve public policy objectives and community economic development goals.

A draft Comprehensive CIP has been completed and is being presented to Council for review and comment. Any changes requested by Council will be incorporated into the CIP document which will come back to a Council meeting in October for adoption by By-Law. Assuming no appeals to the new CIP are filed after its adoption by Council, the CIP will be deemed “approved” following a twenty (20) day appeal period, as required under the *Planning Act*.

This new Comprehensive CIP will replace all of the City’s existing CIPs, except for the Gateway Economic Zone and Centre CIP, which will remain in place. The new Comprehensive CIP proposes enhanced and expanded financial incentive programs to promote various types of community improvement including commercial and mixed-use building revitalization in the Downtown, Main Street, and East Waterfront areas, as well as affordable housing and brownfield redevelopment across the urban area of the City of Port Colborne.

City staff and the consultant are focused on an implementation plan that will allow the programs in the new Comprehensive CIP to be implemented upon Council’s approval of the CIP.

Internal Consultations:

A City Project Review Team (PRT) comprised of staff from Corporate Services, Economic Development, and Planning, was established in 2021. The PRT has been attending meetings with the consultant, reviewing the policy framework and CIP project area boundaries, and discussing changes and recommendations to the incentives.

Financial Implications:

It is expected that the total final project cost for preparation of the Comprehensive CIP will be in \$125,000 - \$130,000 range which aligns with the project budget of \$125,000 approved by Council and included in the 2021 Capital Budget.

The 2023 Operating Budget for the City’s current CIP program is \$187,500. This amount funds grants for façade improvement, urban design, environmental site assessment reports, residential rehabilitation projects, and funds for communications and public relations. Tax incentive grants (TIGs) are funded separately from this budget.

Staff are recommending that the 2024 Operating Budget for CIPs be increased to \$246,900 to support the enhanced programs and anticipated demand. This recommendation will be part of the 2024 budget deliberations.

Public Engagement:

City staff have adhered to the statutory requirements under the *Planning Act* to provide notice and hold a public meeting prior to the consideration and adoption of the new CIP by Council. In addition to the Statutory Public Meeting being held on September 26, 2023, the draft Comprehensive CIP was circulated to commenting agencies and provided to the province's Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. It was also posted on the City's website on August 30, 2023, for comment.

A stakeholder and public consultation session was held on Thursday July 14, 2022, at the L.R. Wilson Archives Research Centre. The consultant presented draft recommendations on the new CIP, including proposed revisions to the incentive programs and community improvement project areas, and requested feedback from participants attending the session. There were fifteen (15) attendees present. A survey was also developed and shared with open house attendees and other business owners/investors who expressed interest in the CIP review but were not available to attend the open house. Twenty-one (21) surveys were completed and the results were shared with the consultant. The consultant reviewed these surveys and incorporated many of the comments into the CIP.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

The initiative contained within this report supports the following pillars of the strategic plan:

- Environment and Climate Change
- Welcoming, Livable, Healthy Community
- Economic Prosperity
- Increased Housing Options

Conclusion:

The City's six (6) current CIPs were reviewed by RCI Consulting and a cross-divisional PRT and a new consolidated Comprehensive CIP is now complete and awaiting Council and agency/public comment before being adopted.

The objective of the CIP review was to update the City's CIP programs to:

- better address community improvement needs and incorporate best practices;
- streamline and reposition the CIP programs to more strategically target and leverage private sector investment;
- simplify the processes for incentive plan application review and approval;

- ensure that Port Colborne is investment ready while maintaining financial sustainability of the CIP programs.

This report will accompany a public presentation by the consultant at the September 26, 2022, Council meeting.

Appendices:

- a. RCI Consulting – PowerPoint presentation

Respectfully submitted,

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Report Approval:

All reports reviewed and approved by the Department Director and also the City Treasurer when relevant. Final review and approval by the Chief Administrative Officer.

Port Colborne Comprehensive CIP

Report 2023-191
Appendix A

Statutory Public Meeting September 26, 2023



Outline

1. Purpose of Public Meeting
2. Project Update
3. Overview of Comprehensive CIP
4. Revised Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA)
5. Revised Incentive Programs
6. Monitoring Program
7. Marketing Strategy
8. Final Steps

Purpose of Public Meeting

- Formal statutory public meeting required under Sections 17 and 28 of *Planning Act* prior to adoption of CIP by Council.
- Provide project update.
- Present a summary of the Final Draft of the New Comprehensive CIP.
- Receive final comments from the public and Council on the Final Draft CIP.

Project Update

- CIP Update guided by Staff Project Review Team (PRT).
- CIP Update Presentation to Council and Public Open House/Presentation held Summer of 2022.
- Revisions made to draft incentive programs and CIPA boundaries to incorporate Council and public comments.
- Meetings with PRT to refine incentive programs and CIPAs.
- Prepared Final Draft CIP in consultation with PRT.
- Circulated Final Draft CIP to MMAH/prescribed agencies.
- Positive comments from MMAH, no revisions required.

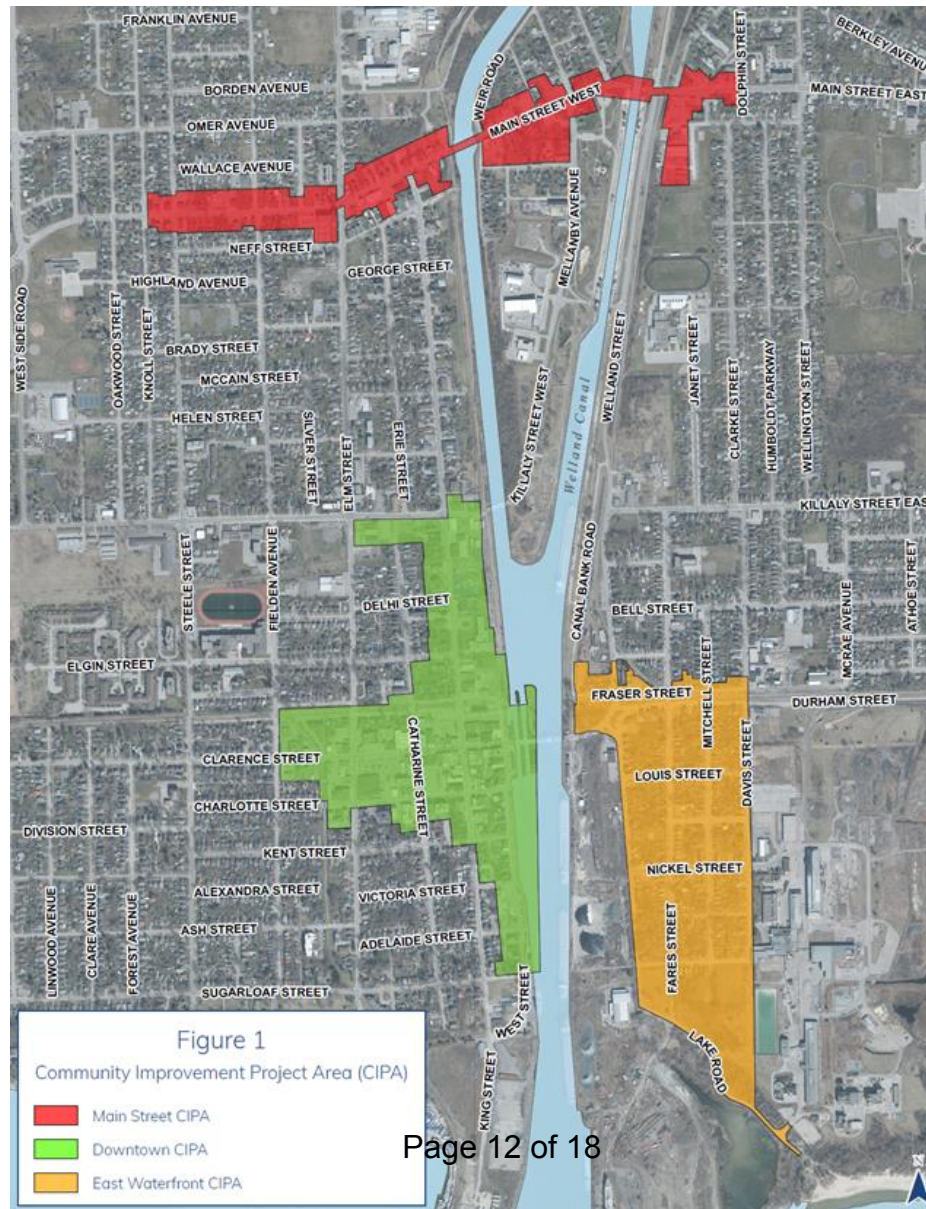
Overview of Comprehensive CIP

- Consolidated 6 existing CIPs into 1 Comprehensive CIP that dovetails with Region's New Incentives Policy (2021).
- Gateway CIP will remain as a stand alone CIP.
- New Comprehensive CIP enables Council to implement incentive programs, but does not obligate Council to do so.
- Some CIPAs were expanded based on building/property conditions and emerging community improvement needs.
- The New CIP places more emphasis on intensification, brownfields, and affordable rental housing.
- 11 incentive programs spread across 6 CIPs streamlined down into 8 enhanced and strategically targeted programs.
- 2 new incentive programs added to promote affordable rental housing.

Revised CIPA

- Walking/driving tour of existing CIPAs and adjacent areas conducted with members of PRT, plus follow up walking tours of specific geographic areas identified for potential inclusion in CIPAs.
- OP designation, zoning, property/building conditions, and business activity reviewed to determine CIPA adjustments.
- The CIPA for Comprehensive CIP is “the entire urban area of the City of Port Colborne, as amended from time to time”.
- This CIPA is divided into 4 sub-areas:
 - 1) Main Street CIPA;
 - 2) Downtown CIPA;
 - 3) East Waterfront CIPA;
 - 4) Brownfield CIPA (entire urban area)

Revised CIPA



Revised Incentive Programs

	Program	Description	Eligible CIPA	Eligible Properties/ Projects
1	ESA Grant Program	Grant = 50% of cost of environmental study, max. grant of \$20K per study, 2 studies and \$30K per project.	Urban Area.	All properties.
2	Urban Design Study Grant Program	Grant = 50% of cost of study/ drawings to max. grant of \$2K per project.	Main Street CIPA. Downtown CIPA. East Waterfront CIPA.	All properties.
3	Facade and Property Improvement Grant Program	Grant = 50% of cost of facade improvement to max. grant of \$20K. + up to \$5K for heritage properties. Separate Grant = 50% of side/rear facade improvement works to max. grant of \$5K.	Main Street CIPA. Downtown CIPA. East Waterfront CIPA.	Existing commercial, institutional and mixed use buildings.
4	Residential Grant Program	Grant = 50% of cost of renovations to code, and new residential units, based on \$15 per sq.ft., to max. \$15K per unit, and 5 units per project.	Main Street CIPA. Downtown CIPA. East Waterfront CIPA.	Renovations to code and conversion to residential in mixed use buildings, and new construction on vacant lots (2+ units).

Revised Incentive Programs

	Program	Description	Eligible CIPA	Eligible Properties/ Projects
5	Affordable Rental Housing Grant Program	Grant = 50% of cost of new affordable rental housing units based on \$15 per sq.ft. to max. grant of \$15K per unit, and 5 units per project.	Urban Area, but priority given to applications in Downtown, Main Street and East Waterfront.	Conversion to residential, added residential units, and new construction on vacant lots (2+ units).
6	Brownfields Tax Assistance Program (TAP)	Cancellation of City property tax increase for up to 5 years. Province can match City.	Urban Area	Must have corresponding Brownfield TIG application.
7	Tax Increment Grant (TIG) Program	Main Street, Downtown and East Waterfront Annual TIG = 80% of City property tax increase for up to 10 years. TIG increases to 100% for affordable rental housing.	Main Street CIPA. Downtown CIPA. East Waterfront CIPA.	Only projects that create a min. assessment value increase of \$500K.
		Brownfield Annual TIG = 100% of City property tax increase for up to 10 years.	Urban Area.	Brownfield TIG capped at remediation costs and reduced by amount of Brownfield DC Grant.

Revised Incentive Programs

	Program	Description	Eligible CIPA	Eligible Properties/ Projects
8	Development Charge Grant (DCG) Program	Main Street, Downtown and East Waterfront Development DCG = 50% of City DC payable.	Main Street CIPA. Downtown CIPA. East Waterfront CIPA.	Applicant must choose between TIG and DCG.
		Affordable Rental Housing DCG = 100% of City DC payable on affordable rental housing units.	Urban Area.	Applicant must choose between TIG and DCG.
		Brownfield DCG = up to 100% of City DC payable.	Urban Area.	Amount of Brownfield DCG deducted from Brownfield TIG.

Monitoring Program

- Specifies information to be monitored for each program.
- Designed to monitor:
 - i. Funds dispersed by program to determine program utilization;
 - ii. Economic impact of projects to determine total ROI, leveraging and program effectiveness;
 - iii. Feedback from applicants on programs.
- Monitoring results will be used to:
 - a) Provide regular monitoring reports to Council;
 - b) Make minor adjustments to incentive program terms and criteria as required; and,
 - c) Provide valuable input into next comprehensive review of the CIP.

Marketing Strategy

- Marketing of incentive programs is very important to the overall effectiveness and success of a CIP.
- The Marketing Strategy:
 - ✓ Provides a general guide to proactively and strategically inform, advertise, and market the CIP incentive programs;
 - ✓ Identifies key messages, the target audience, and prime marketing tools to be used;
 - ✓ Should be implemented as soon as possible after Council adopts the CIP; and,
 - ✓ Should be adjusted over time based on the messaging, targeting, and marketing tools that prove most effective.

Final Steps

1. Incorporate any CIP revisions directed by Council.
2. Council passes a by-law to designate the new CIPA and a by-law to adopt the new CIP (October).
3. Clerk issues a Notice of Adoption for the CIP (October).
4. 20 day appeal period - if no appeals received, CIP is formally approved at end of 20 day appeal period (November).
5. Implementation of new Comprehensive CIP can commence once CIP is approved.
6. Implementation materials (application form, program guides, legal agreements, etc...) will be produced and staff trained on use of these materials.
7. CIP applications formally approved by Council/Council delegate prior to approval of new CIP will be governed by terms of current applicable CIP. All other CIP applications (pending and new) will be governed by terms of the New CIP.