

# Town of Erin Community Improvement Plan Update Project

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DRAFT | CIP OPTIONS REPORT

DECEMBER 2017

# Purpose of this Report

This Community Improvement Plan (CIP) Options Report has been completed by Stantec Consulting as part of the Town's recently initiated CIP Update Project.

It documents the findings of key tasks and, based on the findings, presents:

- 1. Options for a Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA);**
- 2. A set of program options, including:**
  - Financial incentive programs; and**
  - Town-led programs and initiatives.**
- 3. Options for Implementation.**

The information and options within this report has been shared with the Town's Economic Development Committee, and their input has been incorporated.

This Report will also be shared with Council and members of the public in early 2018 to receive feedback on the options. Based on the feedback, a set of preferred options will be identified and will serve as the basis for the development of an updated approach to community improvement planning in the Town of Erin.

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# 1. project history and status

The following previous CIPs for the Town of Erin were prepared under an older and very different planning framework.

- PRIDE/CIP for the Village of Hillsburgh – 1992
- PRIDE/CIP for the Village of Erin – 1984

In 2015 the Town initiated a Review and Update of these CIPs.

In 2015, an Official Plan Amendment was adopted by the Town to update CIP policies. CIP policies in the County Official Plan were also updated at this time to allow for County participation (financial) in the Town's CIP. This is discussed further in Section 2 of this Report.

In mid-2017, the scope of CIP review and update was broadened to include a wider range of programs and to apply to a larger study area.

In October, Stantec was retained to assist the Town in confirming an overall approach to community improvement planning, undertake consultation, and prepare a CIP.



# 1. project history and status

## **Stantec's Scope of Work:**

The following tasks are being completed as part of the CIP update:

1. Background Review and Critical Needs Assessment
2. CIP Options Workshop with Economic Development Committee
3. Preparation of a CIP Options Memo
4. Presentation of Options Memo to Council
5. Presentation of Options Memo at Public Open House
6. Preparation of a Draft CIP
7. Circulation to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for comment
8. Notice of Statutory Public Meeting
9. Statutory Public Meeting
10. Council Adoption
11. Preliminary Implementation Materials



# 1. project history and status

Many other local municipalities in Wellington County have recently updated their CIPs or prepared new CIPs, including the Township of Centre Wellington, Puslinch, Mapleton, and Wellington North.

Wellington County has initiated an upper-tier CIP Initiative (Invest Well), which will allow for the County to participate financially in Erin's CIP.

There are several additional Town planning and economic development initiatives that should be considered, as well. For example, can the CIP help support any of the following?

- Erin Rotary Riverwalk Trail
- Equine Industry Attraction
- Hillsburgh Library



# 1. project history and status

The following goals have been identified for the Town's CIP update project:

**Goal 1:** The updated CIP should be a **comprehensive toolkit** of incentive programs, available throughout the Town.

**Goal 2:** The updated CIP should promote local Economic Development and communicate that the Town is “**Open for Business**”.

**Goal 3:** The updated CIP should help **reshape the Town** and provide support for certain forms of redevelopment.

**Goal 4:** The updated CIP should help **revitalize the Town** and stimulate investment into private property.



## 2. what is a CIP?

### What is 'Community Improvement'?

According to applicable legislation, 'community improvement' is **"the planning or replanning, design or redesign, resubdivision, clearance, development or redevelopment, construction, reconstruction and rehabilitation, improvement of energy efficiency, or any of them, of a Community Improvement Project Area, and the provision of such residential, commercial, industrial, public, recreational, institutional, religious, charitable or other uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements or facilities, or spaces** therefore, as may be appropriate or necessary".

This is a very flexible definition. Therefore, a CIP can assist with a wide range of issues related to the physical condition of land and buildings:





## 2. what is a CIP?

### What is a Community Improvement Plan?

A CIP is a framework that sets out tools and strategies for the physical revitalization and beautification of defined areas of a municipality.

A CIP allows the municipality to provide financial incentives to private landowners, for physical improvements to land and buildings.

Incentives can only be provided for projects that result in rehabilitation, revitalization, or improvement to existing conditions.

The process for preparing a CIP is set out by legislation (the Ontario Planning Act), as discussed on the following pages.

Municipalities all across Ontario have CIPs in place, and they can generate up to a \$5 return on every dollar invested.

Examples of CIP results in other Ontario municipalities are provided on the following pages.

## 2. what is a CIP?

**Why should the Town of Erin invest municipal resources (time and money) into improving privately owned buildings? Should this be left up to the landowner? What is the financial benefit of a CIP to the Town?**

The following is a summary of some CIP results from Haldimand County\* where 2 CIPs are currently in place. The Downtown Areas CIP has been in place for almost 10 years and the Rural Business CIP has been in place for less than five.

110 applications for financial incentives have been approved to-date.

Financial Incentive Program (Including PED-EDT-10-2017)	Downtown Areas	Rural Business and Tourism
Application and Permit Fees Refund	\$152,921	\$8,185
Building Restoration, Renovation and Improvement	\$36,882	\$59,313
Downtown Housing Grant	\$119,063	N/A
Heritage Improvement Grant	\$20,000	\$19,923
Façade Improvement Grant	\$633,081	\$51,887
<b>Total value of CIP grants provided by the County**</b>	<b>\$961,947</b>	<b>\$139,308</b>
Total construction value of CIP Projects	\$4,778,813	\$356,746

**According to the above, for every dollar granted by the County through both of its CIPs, approximately \$5.00 of funding has been invested by the private sector.**

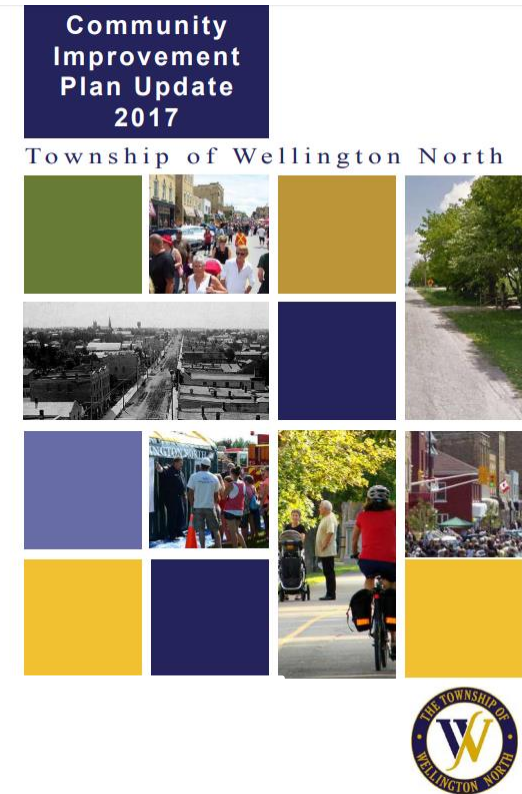
**\*Note: Haldimand County is a single-tier (not upper-tier) level of government.**

## 2. what is a CIP?

### More local CIP results....

#### **According to a 2017 Community Improvement Plan Update for the Municipality of Wellington North:**

- Since 2012, 40 financial incentive applications have been received
- Total value of improvements to Main Street businesses is estimated to be more than \$375,000.
- It is further estimated that:
  - \$84,584 (22%) has been covered by grants from the CIP
  - \$22,500 (6%) has been advanced in interest free loans repayable over 5 years
  - \$269,000 (72%) has been the applicants contributions



## 2. what is a CIP?

### More local CIP results....

According to a 2015 Monitoring Report for the Township of Centre Wellington Community Improvement Plan:

- Approximately \$34,000 in combination Grants/Loans was used for funding projects in 2015.
- Based on the portion of the projects used for Grant/Loan program eligibility, for every \$1.00 invested by the township, \$3.50 was invested by the private sector.





# 3. planning and economic development framework

The **Ontario Planning Act** legislates community improvement planning. It sets out a general process for preparing a CIP and providing incentives:

**Step 1:** A municipality must first designate a Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA).

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

*It should be noted that:*

- *A CIPA boundary should be well thought out as it will determine which properties are eligible for grants and loans, and which are not.*
- *The Town can create a more flexible planning tool with a larger/more comprehensive CIPA.*

# 3. planning and economic development framework

The **Ontario Planning Act** legislates community improvement planning. It sets out a general process for preparing a CIP and providing incentives:

**Step 2:** It may then prepare and adopt a Community Improvement Plan (CIP).

**Step 3:** The municipality may then make grants or loans to property owners and tenants of buildings within the community improvement project area.

**Step 4:** Grants and loans can pay for eligible costs related to community improvement.

Section 28, the Planning Act defines eligible costs as those 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.”

# 3. planning and economic development framework

In addition, Ontario's **2014 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS)** is a statement of the government's policies on land use planning. There are a number of policies in this Statement that can be supported by community improvement planning in Erin:

PPS Policy	Comments
1.1.3.1 Settlement areas shall be the focus of growth and development, and their vitality and regeneration shall be promoted.	The PPS supports initiatives that promote the vitality and regeneration of settlement areas. Erin's CIP can contribute to the overall improvement and regeneration of the Urban Areas of Erin and Hillsburgh by supporting beautification and redevelopment efforts.
1.1.4.1 Healthy, integrated and viable rural areas should be supported by: f) promoting diversification of the economic base and employment opportunities through goods and services, including value-added products and the sustainable management or use of resources; i) providing opportunities for economic activities in prime agricultural areas, in accordance with policy 2.3.	The PPS also supports initiatives that promote diversification of the rural economic base, provide opportunities for tourism, and encourage value-added economic activities in prime agricultural areas. There is an opportunity for the Town's CIP framework to promote and encourage regeneration, redevelopment, and economic diversification within agricultural areas
1.7.1 Long-term economic prosperity should be supported by: a) promoting opportunities for economic development and community investment-readiness; c) maintaining and, where possible, enhancing the vitality and viability of downtowns and mainstreets; h) providing opportunities to support local food, and promoting the sustainability of agri-food and agri-product businesses by protecting agricultural resources, and minimizing land use conflicts;	Erin's CIP can focus generally on supporting the economic prosperity of the Town by helping to facilitate economic growth and diversification, enhance core areas/mainstreet areas, industrial areas, and support agri-businesses/ the agricultural sector.
1.2.1 A coordinated, integrated and comprehensive approach should be used when dealing with planning matters within municipalities, across lower, single and/or upper-tier municipal boundaries, and with other orders of government, agencies and boards including: b) economic development strategies;	Coordination between upper and lower-tier municipalities is supported by the PPS. There is an opportunity to coordinate community improvement efforts with Wellington County, and to align the Town's CIP with broader economic development goals.
1.3.1 Planning authorities shall promote economic development and competitiveness by: b) providing opportunities for a diversified economic base, including maintaining a range and choice of suitable sites for employment uses which support a wide range of economic activities and ancillary uses, and take into account the needs of existing and future businesses.	There may also be an opportunity for the CIP to promote economic development and competitiveness in industrial areas, which would be supported by the PPS.

# 3. planning and economic development framework

The **Wellington County Official Plan** provides direction for managing growth and land use decisions throughout the County to 2031. Growth policies should be considered as part of the CIP update.

According to the County Official Plan, Erin is anticipated to experience modest growth by the year 2041. Specifically, Table 7 in Section 3.5 indicates that:

- Erin's population will grow from 12,365 in 2016, to a range of 15,865 to 18,905 in 2041 (representing an increase of 3,500 to 6,540 people), and that the majority of this growth will occur in the Villages of Erin and Hillsburgh; and
- Erin's employment base will grow from 3,770 jobs in 2016 to 5,240 jobs in 2041 (representing an increase of 1,470 jobs), including jobs from industrial, commercial and institutional uses

*Therefore, there is an opportunity for Erin's CIP to help accommodate new population and employment growth in the Urban Centres. This could be through incentives to accommodate new rental housing units, or incentives that are meant to attract new industrial investment.*

A Special Policy in the County Official Plan states that the growth forecasts for Hillsburgh and Erin Urban Centre combined are provided as ranges to recognize that the Town of Erin is in the process of determining its future potential to accommodate growth on municipal water and wastewater services in these two Urban Centres.

It should also be noted that in 2014, the Town of Erin completed a Servicing and Settlement Master Plan (SSMP) to address servicing, planning and environmental issues within the Town. The Town is now initiating Phases 3 & 4 of the Class EA Planning Process to determine the preferred design concept for wastewater servicing for the existing urban areas of Erin and Hillsburgh, and to accommodate future growth.



### 3. planning and economic development framework

There are also policies in the County's Official Plan dealing with Community Improvement Planning. Specifically, Section 4.12 of the County's Official Plan establishes policies related specifically to community improvement planning, which allow the County to participate in Erin's CIP:

*Section 4.12.5 County Council may participate in a municipality's Community Improvement Plan, and make grants and loans to the Council of a lower tier municipality for the purposes of carrying out a Community Improvement Plan that has come into effect, on such terms as to security and otherwise as County Council considers appropriate.*

***It should be noted that:***

- ***The County intends to participate in the Town's CIP through it's 'Invest Well' County-wide CIP Program.***
- ***Stantec has been retained to prepare the Invest Well program with Economic Development staff***
- ***The timing of both the Town of Erin CIP and Invest Well program processes is an advantage because it allows for the CIPs to be aligned.***

# 3. planning and economic development framework

Section 3.4 of the **Town of Erin Official Plan** provides direction for community improvement planning, as summarized below:

Official Plan Policy	Comments
<p>Community Improvement Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) To identify areas that exhibit problems of instability, building deterioration, inadequate municipal services and facilities, or inappropriate arrangements of land uses;</li><li>b) To promote the long-term stability and viability of identified Community Improvement Areas by reducing land use conflicts and upgrading municipal services;</li><li>c) To encourage coordinated municipal expenditures and planning and development activities within areas identified as Community Improvement Areas;</li><li>d) To utilize funding programs of the senior levels of government to carry out identified community improvements;</li><li>e) To stimulate the maintenance and renewal of private property, and act as a resource base for private improvement initiatives; and,</li><li>f) To enhance the visual quality of the community</li></ul>	<p>The CIP policies in the Town's OP allows the municipality to initiate this CIP process. They are also flexible to allow a range of issues to be addressed and programs to be implemented.</p>
<p>Council may, pursuant to the provisions of the Ontario Planning Act, designate "Community Improvement Areas" in the Town, within which the Council may acquire land, prepare improvement plans, and undertake various community improvement projects and works to implement those plans. Council shall consider the following criteria in the designation of community improvement areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) A significant portion of the housing stock and/or other buildings are in need of maintenance, rehabilitation or redevelopment;</li><li>b) Opportunities exist for improvement to vacant and/or underutilized properties and buildings;</li><li>c) Municipal services including sanitary sewage, stormwater and water supply systems, roads, sidewalks, curbs, gutters, street lighting or parking facilities are inadequate and in need of repair;</li><li>d) The supply of public open space or recreation facilities is deficient;</li><li>e) There are conflicting land uses in the areas;</li><li>f) Within commercial areas, deterioration is present in the appearance of the streetscape and building facades, and deficiencies in parking facilities and pedestrian access;</li><li>g) A significant portion of the buildings are considered heritage resources; and,</li><li>h) Improvements for erosion or flooding control measures are required in the area</li></ul>	<p>The Town's policies establish criteria to designate the CIPAs. These criteria are comprehensive and allow for a many areas to be designated based on a wide range of needs, such as housing, maintenance, infrastructure, recreational facilities, streetscape and more.</p>

# 3. planning and economic development framework

In addition to the community improvement policies in Section 3.4, there are other broad planning policies in the **Town's Official Plan** that are specific to local economic development and that can be supported by a CIP.

Official Plan Policy	Comments
<p>2.2.2 Residential Growth</p> <p>a) That low density residential development, consisting of primarily single-detached dwellings, will continue to be the predominant form of housing given the lack of municipal sewers, but a variety of housing types will be encouraged.</p> <p>b) That new development be provided for primarily by the expansion of the existing settlement areas of Erin and Hillsburgh. Limited expansion of other hamlet areas will also be considered where appropriate.</p> <p>c) That urban design standards which retain the traditional small town character of the Town's urban centres be applied while envisioning their development as the focal point for commercial, cultural and economic development activities.</p> <p>2.2.4 Economic Development</p> <p>a) That the Town will be "Open for Business" by encouraging additional commercial and industrial opportunities to provide greater employment opportunities to complement the Town's residential development. In particular clean, technologically smart industry and business is encouraged.</p> <p>b) That the Town will encourage rural tourism as an economic development opportunity.</p> <p>c) That the Town continue to support home based businesses and cottage industries, enabled through technology, as an alternative form of economic development.</p> <p>3.5.5 Residential Intensification</p> <p>The strategic approach to intensification intends to retain small town character and revitalize downtown areas which include:</p> <p>b) supporting appropriate intensification in all areas within the built boundary including adaptive re-use or redevelopment of brownfields and greyfields.</p> <p>c) Encouraging added housing above commercial uses in and near the downtown in residential transition areas, and in other main commercial areas;</p> <p>d) Encouraging intensification within urban centres along major roadways and arterial roads;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The CIP can support and recommend Urban design guidelines and other beautification opportunities for the Town as Erin grows.</li><li>• The CIP will signal to the business community that Erin is Open for Business and is providing incentives for the business community. The CIP can support both existing business and attract new interested businesses/employers.</li><li>• The CIP can provide significant assistance with redevelopment, adaptive re-use and intensification in the core areas to focus on strengthening the Town's main streets.</li></ul>

# 3. planning and economic development framework

**There are other local Economic Development Plans and Strategies that will inform the development of the Town's CIP.**

**Financial incentive programs and incentives can be aligned with these local documents.**

- **The Corporate Strategic Plan focuses on achieving the following:**
  - A Planned, Accessible and Sustainable Community
  - Strong Local Economies
  - A Proud Place of Heritage, Culture and the Arts
- **The Economic Development Action Plan identifies the following local priorities:**
  - Support the Retention, Growth and Expansion of existing businesses
  - Balanced growth in industrial, commercial and residential development
  - Build a positive business climate
  - Work cooperatively and strengthen links with all partners at all levels
  - Establish the Town as a Premier location for Equine Enthusiasts
  - Promote and market the Town as a Four Seasons Tourism Destination
  - Develop a Sustainable Economy



# 4. local assets and opportunities

As part of the CIP updated project so far, a needs and opportunities assessment has been completed to determine how the Town could be improved with respect to its vitality, regeneration, and economic prosperity.

Areas of economic interest have been the focus of this review:

1. **The Agricultural Area;**
2. **The Urban Areas of Erin Village and Hillsburgh;**
3. **Hamlets; and**
4. **Employment/ Industrial Areas.**

Findings of the review are presented in the following slides.



# 4. local assets and opportunities

## The Agricultural Area

### Local Assets:

- Currently, most lands in the Town of Erin are designated Prime or Secondary Agricultural. Prime Agricultural lands are protected for Farming purposes. Secondary Agricultural lands are also intended for farming purposes but there are more opportunities for a broader range of residential, employment and community uses than in prime agricultural areas so long as the use does not adversely impact existing agricultural operation and is in keeping with the rural character of the area.
- Erin is unique in its market for equine-related operations and businesses. Erin created an Equine Task Force and created an Equine Economic Development Report 2013. A 'RED' Grant has been provided to the Town to undertake research on creating/enhancing the 'Erin Equine Experience'.
- The Province now allows for a greater diversification of on-farm uses, businesses and practices which could create new opportunities as well as enhancing existing operations and farm businesses.

### Community Improvement Opportunities:

- Incentives could be made available to encourage agricultural diversification, such as the conversion of existing farm buildings to farm business and agri-tourism uses.
- Incentives could also be made available for improvements to the façade, signage, building, property, and landscaping of existing on-farm businesses and agri-tourism uses.
- The updated CIP could be strategically aligned with local investment attraction initiatives. For example, in order to specifically attract businesses that are involved in the equine industry, increased incentive amounts can be offered for these types of businesses through the CIP.

# 4. local assets and opportunities

## Erin Village and Hillsburgh (CBD)

### Local Assets:

- There is a mix of land uses in Erin Village and Hillsburgh, including the Central Business Districts (CBD).
- The CBD in Erin Village runs along Main Street between Water and Church Street, and in Hillsburgh along Main Street (Trafalgar Road) south of Mill Street to Church Street.
- The CBDs are active community areas with significant pedestrian and vehicle traffic.
- The majority of buildings in the CBD appear to be occupied and well-maintained. A large number of buildings may have some heritage value, but are not designated. There are several examples of properties that may have recently undergone building, façade, and signage improvements.
- There are also properties that could also benefit from these types of building and property improvements in the future, as well some properties that have redevelopment or infill potential.
- The Central Business District also permits some residential uses, provided they are provided in a mixed-use building with retail, office or commercial on the main floor.
- The Town has a Committee called "Let's get Hillsburgh Growing" who's purpose is 'the beautification and revitalization of Trafalgar Road and nurturing a sense of community in the village of Hillsburgh.' This committee is committed to a number of yearly activities to address this purpose.

The Town's Official Plan objectives for its Central Business Districts are:

- To ensure that the downtowns remain the primary focus for retail, office, service, administrative and cultural activities;
- To provide adequate commercial facilities to serve the needs of the local community and surrounding population;
- To maintain and promote compact and people-oriented downtowns by establishing a safe and pleasant pedestrian environment which encourages movement by foot and bicycle rather than by automobile;
- To protect the heritage buildings and structures in the downtown areas and ensure that the attractive streetscape is retained and, where possible, enhanced;
- To enhance the appearance of and increase access to the natural heritage areas, including the river in the downtown areas for economic and recreational purposes;
- To continually improve the image and level of services of the downtowns.

# 4. local assets and opportunities

## Erin Village and Hillsburgh (CBD)

### Community Improvement Opportunities:

- Incentives could be made available to help achieve the objectives for Central Business Districts. For example, grants and loans can be provided for:
  - The conversion or adaptive reuse of buildings to accommodate new commercial or mixed-use buildings.
  - Improvements to the façade, signage, building, property, and landscaping for existing businesses.
  - Improvements to second-floor housing units (above commercial uses), or conversion of commercial to residential space.
  - The restoration of heritage buildings.
  - Improvements to the streetscapes and the public realm.
  - Improvements to the overall image of downtown.
  - Increased incentives could be provided to certain types of businesses, or buildings (mixed-use), or for certain properties that are identified a priority.





# 4. local assets and opportunities

## Erin Village and Hillsburgh (Industrial)

### Local Assets:

- The Town has two major Industrial areas, both of which are located in the Urban Areas of Erin Village and Hillsburgh.
- The Town's Official Plan identifies that the industrial areas are concentrated in the north end of Erin and southeast corner of Hillsburgh.
- Growth is anticipated to continue in the Erin Industrial area however the Hillsburgh Industrial area is undeveloped.
- The Town's Official Plan encourages clean and technologically smart industry. This means encouraging uses which do not have detrimental effect on the natural environmental and surrounding land uses. Industrial is limited to those that do not discharge large amounts of waste and do not consume large amounts of water. All industrial uses must be on public services.



### Community Improvement Opportunities:

- Incentives could be made available to support improvements to the facades, signage, landscaping, and access/parking areas, and to encourage potential redevelopment/expansions to existing industrial uses.
- Tax incentives may potentially be used to assist with attracting new investment to existing industrial parks.
- Increased incentives could be provided to industries that are 'green', or for using sustainable building technologies (i.e., LEED Certified).

# 4. local assets and opportunities

## Hamlets

### Local Assets:

- There are six Hamlet's in the Town of Erin: Ballinafad, Brisbane, Cedar Valley, Crewson's Corners, Orton; and Ospringe.
- These Hamlets typically service the surrounding agricultural communities, some of the settlements are constrained by environmental features such as hazard land and wetlands.
- While some growth is anticipated to be directed to these Hamlets, they are not serviced meaning only minor infilling or rounding out of the settlement area is possible.
- Generally the Hamlet areas are low density residential development with a focus to maintain the qualities of a small village.
- Some limited institutional uses such as churches, schools, parks, local commercial and small scale dry industrial may be permitted.

### Community Improvement Opportunities:

- Incentives could be made available to support the beautification of non-residential properties in the Town's Hamlets, and to encourage potential redevelopment, as appropriate.

# 4. local assets and opportunities

**Other local assets are noted throughout the Town, which the CIP can promote and enhance:**

- Active arts community
- Strong community character
- High quality of life
- Advantages of the rural community
- Close proximity to GTA
- Unique geography
- Recreational opportunities
- Lower cost for land
- Tourism opportunities





# 4. local assets and opportunities

**Additional opportunities were observed throughout the Town, which could be supported through the CIP:**

- Wider range of housing choices
- Business support services
- Parking signage and marking
- Facilitate planning approvals for development applications
- Coordinated streetscapes/furniture/treatments
- Building upgrades (facades, buildings)
- Landscaping improvements
- Gateways and signage



# 4. local assets and opportunities

## Additional Notes Regarding Heritage Resources:

- The Town has a Heritage Committee and evaluation criteria to designate districts and properties.
- The Town does have a Municipal Heritage Inventory but it is not available on-line.
- 600 heritage properties are listed on the Municipal Heritage Inventory of which 2 are designated under Part VI of the Ontario Heritage Act.
- The Designated properties are known as: Crewson's Corners (barn and house), and the Stanley Park Archway.
- The Town does not have any designated Heritage Conservation Districts.
- Both the Village of Erin and Hillsburgh identifies a Downtown Heritage Walking Trail and identifies a number of properties with heritage value but are not designated.

## Community Improvement Opportunities:

- Incentives could be increased for projects that involve the restoration of heritage features.





# 4. local assets and opportunities

## Additional Notes Regarding Trails and Parks:

Trails, parks and open spaces in the Town are a significant asset and offer important public gathering spaces. Key recreational facilities in the Town include:

- Erin Community Centre & Arena;
- Stanley Park;
- Carberry;
- McMillan Park;
- Riverside Park;
- Hillsburgh Arena;
- Hillsburgh park and baseball diamond; and
- Victoria Park.

A portion of the Elora Cataract Trail (18 km) is located through the Town and a number of walking tours/trails along the historical downtown areas.

In 2016, the Town completed a *Riverwalk Trail Feasibility Study* to assess the implementation of a potential riverwalk trail. It is stated that as 'trail use' grows in popularity, communities realize the economic potentials trails can bring to an area since they can act, when positioned well, as tourist attractions/ destinations. Trails provide opportunities for all businesses, from commercial recreation and restaurants, to shops and places of lodging, all of which contributes to the local economy.

The Report looked at two study areas, the Village of Erin and Hillsburgh. Both study areas had access from the Elora Cataract Trailway.

### Opportunities:

- There may be an opportunity for the CIP to support the Riverwalk Trail. This could potentially be through incentive programs, or future Town-led initiatives.

# 5. options for discussion

The remainder of this report looks at options for an updated CIP, which could be considered by the Town.

A CIP is typically made up of the following key elements:



A number of options have been identified with respect to developing a CIP, specifically focusing on the following key elements:

1. **A Community Improvement Project Area;**
2. **Municipal Leadership Programs;**
3. **Financial Incentive Programs; and**
4. **Implementation of the CIP.**

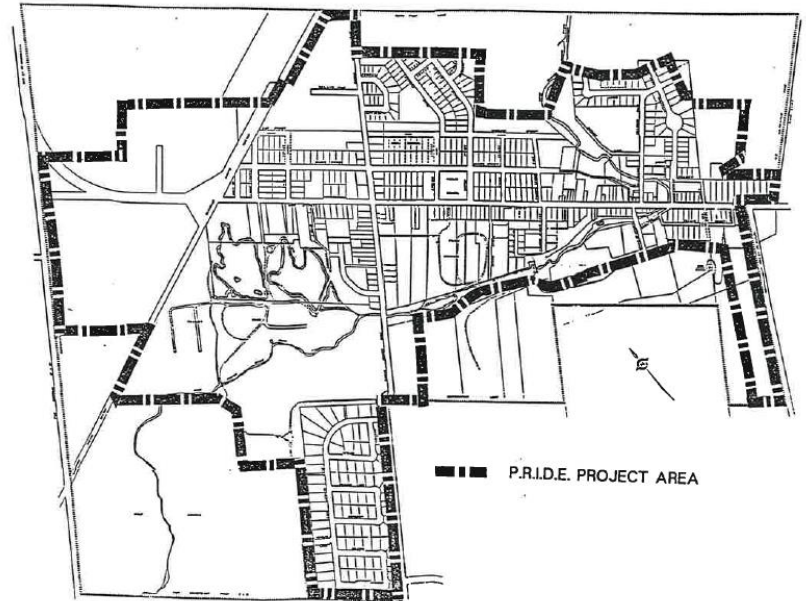
The Town is currently consulting on the Options identified to determine which is the most appropriate option for the Town of Erin CIP.

# 5. options for discussion

## Options for a Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA)

The following options should be considered with respect to designating a CIPA for the Town of Erin:

1. The Town could include the Agricultural Area in the CIPA.
2. The Town could generally maintain the existing boundaries for the Erin Village and Hillsburgh CIPs.
3. The Town could include the existing Erin Industrial Park in the CIPA,
4. The Town could include the Hamlets in the CIPA.
5. All of the Above.



*It should be noted that:*

- A more comprehensive CIP will allow the Town to be more flexible.
- The Town can focus on certain parts of a CIP (Sub-Areas) during certain years of implementation, rather than making incentives available everywhere immediately.

# 5. options for discussion

## Options for Financial Incentive Programs

The Town should consider including any of the following incentive programs in its updated CIP:

1. **Façade and Signage Improvement Grant**
2. **Tax Increment Equivalent Grant (TIEG) for Major Redevelopment/Rehabilitation**
3. **Design and Study Grant (including Contamination Assessments)**
4. **Planning Application and Permit Fee Grant**
5. **Building and Property Improvement Grant**
6. **Building Accessibility Grant**
7. **Building Conversion and Expansion Grant**
8. **Brownfield Tax Assistance Grant Program** (Note: this is a provincial incentive program and a CIP is required to implement it.)
9. **Heritage Property Tax Assistance Program** (Note: this is a provincial incentive program and a CIP is NOT required to implement it. However, only DESIGNATED Heritage Buildings are eligible.)

*It should be noted that:*

- *Just because a certain program is in a CIP, the Town is not committed to enacting it.*
- *The Town can create a toolbox of incentives that MAY be used.*
- *A more comprehensive CIP will allow the Town to be more flexible.*
- *The Town may wish to make certain grants available in certain areas of the Town.*
- *Grants can alternatively be provided as loans.*

# 5. options for discussion

## Options for Prioritizing Properties and Projects

**The Town could provide larger grants to projects that meet certain criteria. For example:**

- Heritage restoration
- New/improved equine facilities/operations
- Supporting/contributing to trails and tourism
- Increasing mixed-use/affordable housing units
- Exceptional design features
- Major redevelopment potential

**The Township of Centre Wellington has successfully taken this approach, with two levels of incentives programs:**

- **Improve 1 – available to all eligible property owners; and**
- **Improve 2 – available to eligible property owners who also meet one or more of the above criteria.**





# 5. options for discussion

## Options for Town-led Programs

Some CIPs include a set of initiatives and programs that may be implemented by the Town to demonstrate municipal commitment to achieving community improvement goals. The Town could consider any of the following options for Town-led programs in its updated CIP:

*It should be noted that:*

- *There is no commitment on behalf of the Town to implement the Town-led programs.*
- *The CIP will stipulate that implementation is subject to the Town's capital budget and the availability of resources.*

Option	Purpose/Details
<b>1. Public Realm and Streetscape Improvement Strategy</b>	The Town could develop a strategy and timing for a range of Public Realm and Streetscape Improvements to enhance amenities and public spaces, and promote a design that is generally consistent with the community identity. The Strategy could address: traffic calming measures; gateway features; key intersection improvements and crosswalks; streetscape, sidewalk, and boulevard treatments; street furnishings, such as lampposts, street signage, benches, planters, garbage bins, and planters; public art installations; and tree planting and planting beds.
<b>2. Gateway and Signage Improvements</b>	Gateway features such as walls, signage, and plantings could be updated/implemented at key entrance locations along main roads within each community core area. Signage/wayfinding could also be updated and made consistent to portray a harmonious and unified message about the Town.
<b>3. Comprehensive Design Guidelines</b>	Basic design guidelines/principles will be included in the CIP and used to evaluate applications for financial incentives and ensure that certain design elements are met. However, the Town could also prepare a more comprehensive set of guidelines that deal with façade improvements, management and respectful conservation of cultural heritage resources, streetscapes, property access, signage, and open spaces, for example. These guidelines could apply to a range of different types of land uses (commercial, mixed-use, industrial, etc.) within the core areas, or across the Town.
<b>4. Parking Improvements</b>	To better understand whether current parking opportunities are adequate, the Town could undertake a more detailed parking study involving public and stakeholder consultations, a review of the existing Town's parking standards and standards of other municipalities/industry standards, as well as site-specific parking inventory/utilization surveys at peak/off-peak times.
<b>5. Master Heritage Study</b>	The Town could undertake a Town-wide Master Heritage Study to identify a Town-wide vision and goals for heritage conservation and management. This Study would make recommendations with respect to the Town's existing inventory of heritage buildings, and the potential use of tools such as designating heritage buildings and heritage conservation districts.
<b>6. Vacancy Rebate Strategy</b>	The Town could develop a locally appropriate strategy for the Town-wide use of Vacancy Tax Rebate tools that would work in alignment and support with the goals of this CIP.

# 5. options for discussion

## Options for Implementation

Finally, with respect to implementation of the CIP, the Town could consider the following options, which will be discussed in greater detail in Phase Two of the CIP project:

### Review of Financial Incentive Applications:

1. A Community Improvement Implementation Committee (CIIC) could undertake the implementation of the CIP, including the review of financial incentive applications. **AND**
2. The Town's Economic Development Officer could be the dedicated staff person to 'champion' and implement the CIP.

### Approval of Financial Incentive Applications:

1. Council could delegate approval authority for financial incentive applications. Approval authority could be delegated to the CIIC, or an appropriate staff person (i.e., the CAO/Clerk). **OR**
2. Council could approve all applications.

### Application Submissions:

1. Financial incentive applications could be received on a first come first serve basis. **OR**
2. Annual/bi-annual application deadlines could be established to motivate the submission of applications and streamline the review/approval process and to help prioritize the distribution of municipal funds.

# 6. consultation and next steps

On November 8, 2017, a workshop was held with the Economic Development Committee to introduce the Options and receive initial feedback on the background work completed to date and the direction of the options to address the Town's needs and wants for the final CIP.

## A summary of general feedback includes:

- Downtown existing businesses need to be 'rewarded' first. The core areas should be the first priority sub-CIPA.
- Industrial growth is needed in the Town
- Affordable housing and rental housing supply is a concern for younger generation as well as middle class work force.
- Additional assets to build on: fall fair, equine shows, trails and the Riverwalk/cycling, farm to table (gastronomic), tea house, Hannah's retail store, doors open event and farmers market.
- Opportunities for improvement: downtown public washrooms, parking, the community centre, gateway features, greening/landscaping downtown.

## A summary of feedback received on the Options includes:

- The Committee would like to see the entire Municipality identified as a CIPAs with sub-CIPAs. The sub-CIPA would be prioritized and incentive would become available at the appropriate time.
- The existing Core Areas of Erin and Hillsburgh would be top-priority, followed by hamlets, the Erin Industrial park and agricultural area (priority order to be determined).
- A deadline application process is preferred.
- Committee of Staff members could review applications and make recommendations to Council.
- Council should do a yearly review of the priority areas, financial programs and available funds.
- Financial Programs and Town-led Programs should both be included in the CIP.

## 6. consultation and next steps

### **We are looking for your input!**

**This CIP Options Report will serve as the basis for:**

- Discussing the options for a CIP with Council in early 2018;
- Discussing the options with the public at an open house in early 2018; and
- The development of a CIP.

**The Draft CIP will also be available for public review and comment.**

### **For more information:**

**If you are looking for additional information about the Town's CIP Update project, or you would like to provide questions/comments on this report, please contact:**

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