

Meeting Date: May 6, 2024
Department: Building, By-law and Planning
Report No.: BBP-2024-48
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Submitted by: Jennifer Huff, Director of Building & Planning
Approved by: Trisha McKibbin, Chief Building Official

SUBJECT: **Community Improvement Plan Program Annual Update 2023**

RECOMMENDATION: THAT: Council receive report BBP-2024-48 titled “Community Improvement Plan Program Annual Update 2023” for information.

BACKGROUND

The Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc undertook the preparation of its Community Improvement Plan (CIP) in late 2019 and early 2020, intending to build on the success of the previous CIP “About Face”. Through this new CIP that became active in 2021, Strathroy-Caradoc intends to renew its commitment to community improvement and encourage economic investment through the expansion of improvement strategies and financial incentives. The current CIP includes 10 incentive programs:

- Beautification Program
- Intensification & Redevelopment Program
- Additional Unit Program
- Downtown Rental Housing Program
- Attainable Housing Program
- Heritage Program
- Public Art & Interim Use Program
- Urban Economic Development Program
- Rural Economic Development & Agri-Tourism Program
- Environment & Sustainability Program

These CIP programs offer the opportunity for a range of private businesses and homeowners to undertake projects that they may not have been able to do without the help from this program. The standard application process begins with a pre-consultation meeting with the CIP Coordinator to discuss the proposal and to determine eligibility; and if eligible, discuss any additional materials and information required for a complete submission. If a proposal is deemed eligible, the applicant will

submit their complete application to the CIP Coordinator for review before forwarding to the CIP Committee for review to make a recommendation.

The CIP Committee is comprised of the Chief Administrative Office, the Director of Finance, the Director of Community Services, the Director of Building and Planning and By-law, the Development Commissioner, and the CIP Coordinator. The CIP Committee will review the application and make a recommendation to Council for consideration. The decision by Council to fund improvements through the programs of this CIP is entirely at the discretion of Council. Council reserves the right to determine the level of funding which shall be received by an applicant, whether to fund applications in all, or in part, and what conditions, obligations and other requirements may be attached to any funding allocation. If Council approves an application for CIP funding, the applicant must enter into a CIP agreement with the Municipality. CIP funds are paid out to the applicants upon successful completion of the works per the CIP agreement and providing all other required receipts and documents are submitted.

In order to track the implementation and performance of the CIP Plan, various baseline data is gathered, measured and analyzed to assist with monitoring success and identifying any recommendations for changes to the plan to be considered. This report summarizes the data from 2023. Additional information about the CIP Program is available on the CIP website:

www.strathroy/caradoc.ca/cip.

CIP STATISTICS 2021-2023

The statistics presented below summarize information collected between 2021 and 2023. A landowner interested in CIP funding may inquire and apply for funding for their project under a number CIP grant programs. For clarity, if a landowner is interested in multiple grant programs related to one specific property, each grant program is individually accounted for in the tables below.

SUMMARY OF CIP INQUIRIES AND APPLICATIONS RECEIVED TO DATE 2021-2023

The year 2023 marked a significant jump for the number of CIP inquiries received (Table 1). The Beautification and Additional Unit Programs have consistently remained the most popular. Interest in the Attainable Housing and Intensification and Development Programs debuted in 2023.

Table 1. Summary of CIP Inquiries Received 2021-2023

CIP Grant Program	Number of Inquiries		
	2021	2022	2023
Beautification	3	3	10
Intensification & Redevelopment			3
Additional Unit	1	2	14
Downtown Rental Housing			
Attainable Housing			2
Heritage			
Public Art & Interim Use		1	1
Urban Economic Development	2		1
Rural Economic Development & Agri-Tourism		1	
Environment & Sustainability	1		
Total	7	7	31

Staff observed an increase in the number of CIP applications received in 2023 compared to previous years (Table 2). It is important to note that although 11 applications were received in 2023, some applications were deemed ineligible or incomplete. Incomplete applications are considered open until applicants provide additional required materials to support their applications.

Table 2. Summary of CIP Applications Received 2021-2023

CIP Grant Program	Number of Applications Received		
	2021	2022	2023
Beautification	3	3	5
Intensification & Redevelopment			
Additional Unit	1	1	4
Downtown Rental Housing			
Attainable Housing			
Heritage			
Public Art & Interim Use		1	1
Urban Economic Development	2		1
Rural Economic Development & Agri-Tourism			
Environment & Sustainability	1		
Total	7	5	11

The number of CIP applications approved for funding has remained steady since 2021 (Table 3). Of the 11 applications received in 2023, 4 were deemed complete and brought to council for decision. Of those 4 applications, 3 were approved for CIP funding while one application was denied.

Table 3. Summary of the Number of Applications that Received Council Approval for Funding

CIP Grant Program	Applications that Received Council Approval for Funding		
	2021	2022	2023
Beautification	2		
Intensification & Redevelopment			
Additional Unit		1	2
Downtown Rental Housing			
Attainable Housing			
Heritage			
Public Art & Interim Use		1	
Urban Economic Development	1		1
Rural Economic Development & Agri-Tourism			
Environment & Sustainability	1		
Total	4	2	3

Since 2021, a total of \$691,829.59 has been allocated to projects throughout the municipality to a range of projects and CIP Program streams (Table 4). Further, a total of \$25,532,200.80 investment dollars were leveraged with the help of the CIP Program since 2021 (Table 5).

Table 4. Summary of Approved CIP Applications 2021-2023

Year	CIP Program	Total Value of Grants Allocated	Construction Costs of the Project	Location of CIP Grant Issued	Project Description
2021	Beautification	\$4,100.00	\$8,619.22	22494 Adelaide Road, Mount Brydges	New Commercial Sign
	Environment and Sustainability	\$6,425.00	\$22,750.00	51 Front Street W, Strathroy	Exterior lighting for mall parking lot
	Beautification	\$16,500.00	\$211,304.80	51 Front Street W, Strathroy	Reconstruct Façade of mall, update signage
	Urban Economic Development	\$142,000.00	\$3,900,000.00	707 Adair Boulevard, Strathroy	Construction of a 1988.26 sq.m manufacturing facility
2022	Public Art & Interim Use	\$5,000.00	\$9,040.00	11 Front St W, Strathroy, 9 Front Street W, Strathroy, 63 Frank Street, Strathroy	Rental of temporary patios for several downtown businesses
	Additional Unit	\$13,482.90	\$65,000.00	497 Saulsbury Street, Strathroy	Construction of a secondary suite within the basement of a dwelling
2023	Urban Economic Development	\$500,000	\$21,300,000.00	990 Wright Street, Strathroy	Construction of a new 15,262 sq.m industrial facility
	Additional Unit	\$3,520.54	\$13,182.17	2051 Lockwood Crescent, Mount Brydges	Construction of a secondary suite within the basement of a dwelling
	Additional Unit	\$801.15	\$2,304.61	52 Hickory Blvd, Strathroy	Bringing a non-compliant basement secondary suite up to code

Table 5. Summary of CIP Grants Allocated and Investment Dollars Leveraged 2021-2023

	2021	2022	2023	Total
Total value of grants allocated	\$169,025.00	\$18,482.90	\$504,321.69	\$691,829.59
Total value of investment dollars leveraged	\$4,142,674.02	\$74,040.00	\$21,315,486.78	\$25,532,200.80

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CIP

Marketing of the plan and the various incentive programs continues to play an important role in reaching potential applicants and encouraging a broader intake of project proposals. Staff have increased the number of methods for sharing the CIP Program including boosting social media posts, inclusion of CIP Program information in the tax and water bill slips, promotion at the downtown market, working with community business groups and informing the public through day to day interactions.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Each year the municipality invests in its CIP program and allocates funds through its various project streams. The money is used to leverage investments made within its community to support new and existing businesses and new housing. In 2023, a CIP investment of \$691,829.59 leveraged \$25,532,200.80 worth of investments in the community.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This matter is in accord with the following strategic priorities:

- 1) *Economic Development:* Strathroy-Caradoc will have a diverse tax base and be a place that offers a variety of economic opportunities to current and prospective residents and businesses.
- 2) *Growth Management:* Strathroy-Caradoc will be an inclusive community where growth is managed to accommodate a range of needs and optimize municipal resources.

ATTACHMENTS:

NONE