



DOWNTOWN  
**PARIS**



Paris Downtown Community Improvement Plan  
Application for Financial Incentives



DOWNTOWN  
**PARIS**

DOWNTOWN PARIS DESIGN GUIDELINES

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AUTHORED BY



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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 BACKGROUND

Due to the positive changes and evolving dynamic of Downtown Paris, a group consisting of local residents, business owners, municipal staff and political representatives was formed to develop design guidelines for the downtown area. The objective of the group [named the Paris Renaissance Team] is to bring people together to nourish our beautiful downtown environment for the benefit of community pride, engaging visitors, improving the local economy and promoting the County of Brant. We have inherited a unique landscape and it is our responsibility to celebrate its rich heritage by moving forward with a united, collaborative spirit, adopting focused beautification guidelines that will turn potential into reality.



## 1.2 VISION AND CONTEXT

Downtown Paris is a beautiful area located in the County of Brant. Nestled in a river valley where the Grand River and Nith River meet, the downtown area can be accessed by foot, bike, water or car. The area is experiencing moderate growth and ever-changing business and building owners. It is for this reason that the design guidelines have been created. It is essential that the downtown area evolves in a consistent aesthetic manner with reference to its historical architecture and character.

Key objectives addressed in this guideline include:

- Preserving existing historical character and supporting a vibrant mixed-use condition within the downtown area;
- Supporting the redevelopment of building facades with a positive urban environment that is consistent with the existing historical nature of the area;
- Supporting active streetscapes by encouraging more residential apartments and offices above commercial activities (with adequate parking to support growth);
- Creating a more cohesive, pedestrian experience by implementing well-design and consistent elements including landscaping, tree grates, waste bins, benches and light posts;
- Improving the character and visibility of existing pedestrian, cyclist, automobile and river connections throughout the area;
- Improving the prominence of the Grand River and Nith River by increasing visibility.
- Promoting a unique experience for residents and visitors alike by creating a vibrant downtown that acts as a hub for local business, commerce, tourism and art.

## 1.3 OBJECTIVES

The objective is to create a more uniform aesthetic, one taking its cues from the appealing historic character of the downtown core. By utilizing traditional materials found in the existing built resources such as stone, brick and wood, and recognizing certain common architectural elements (i.e. paying attention to existing parapets, cornices,

pilasters, sign bands, etc.) will stand to re-enforce the over-all desired effect even in modern facades if they demonstrate an attention to scale, massing and proportion in keeping with existing heritage buildings. While acknowledging that all buildings within the prescribed area are not of “heritage significance” the objective should be to find the best possible solutions in order to integrate them as much as possible into the visionary plan.

It is the intent of these design guidelines to provide recommendations that will encourage and reflect pride of ownership, along with stimulating a pride of place in the community. One which, when complete, will not only enhance the public, pedestrian experience, but will be reflected in an increasingly vibrant and prosperous merchant base and will provide long term sustainability, not only for Paris, but for other communities within the County of Brant as well.

## 1.4 ROLE OF THE DESIGN GUIDELINES

The recommendations found within this document address the existing and future character of the built environment, streetscaping, landscaping and open spaces, existing architectural elements, and the use of materials.

This document outlines best design practices, and includes guidelines that may be implemented through the Community Improvement Plan and the County of Brant’s By-laws.

As the best practices outlined in the document become common practice, they will evolve. The examples shown in the document provide one example of how the guidelines can be applied, and are not intended to exclude alternative developments that meet their intent.

The document is intended to assist the County of Brant, Downtown Paris BIA, building owners, businesses, developers and the public with clear tools to guide the design of renovation and redevelopment projects within the downtown area. This is essential to ensure that the overall character of the Downtown Paris is maintained and enhanced through future redevelopment.

## 2.0 REVIEW OF DOWNTOWN PARIS

### 2.1 AREA REVIEW

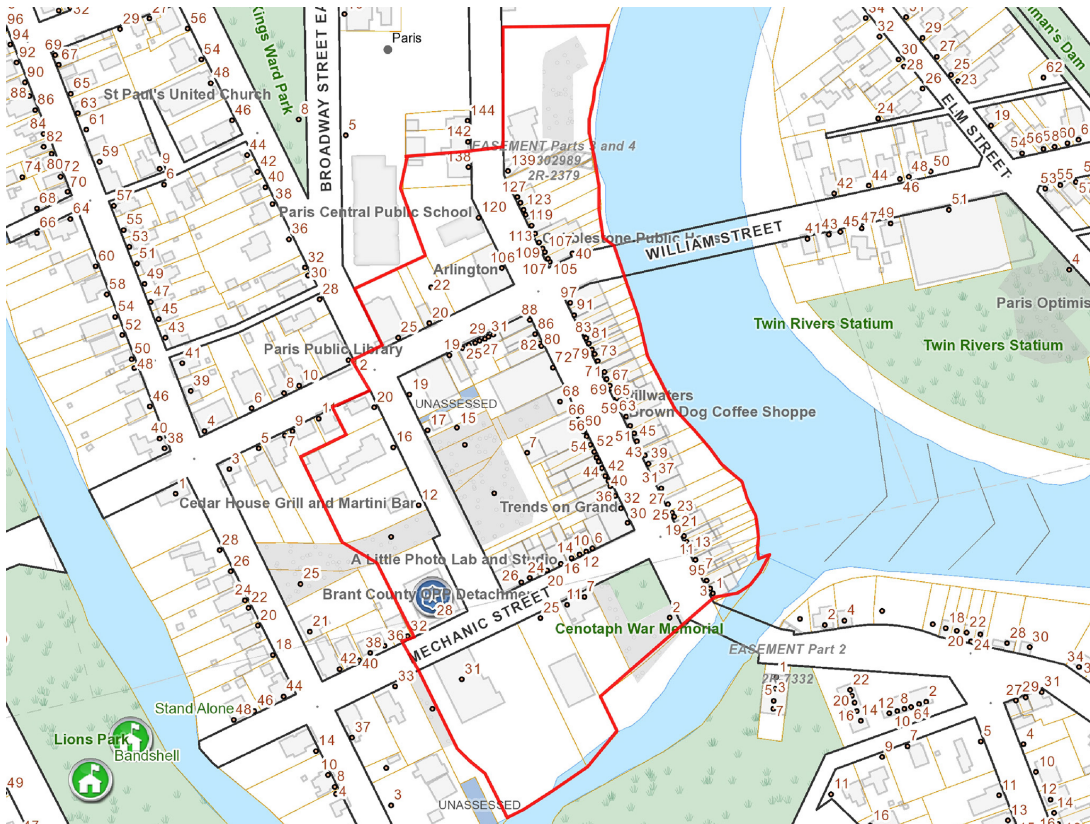
The Central Business District of Paris has several major north-south and east-west streets running through it. Grand River Street North and Broadway Street both run north-south while William Street and Mechanic Streets run east-west. All of these streets are 2-way and wide enough for parking. The Central Business District is also at the confluence of the Grand River and Nith River. This unique geography results in all through traffic being directed through Downtown Paris.

Portions of Downtown Paris are within the flood plain and this designation contributes to the dichotomy of the area.

### 2.2 LAND USE

Within the downtown area, there are residential, commercial, office and institutional land uses. Each of these uses has a different character and streetscape requirement. Maintaining a mix of uses throughout the downtown area, and emphasizing the importance and significance of the Grand River and Nith River, is important to the vitality and success of Downtown Paris.

Opportunities for new residential and commercial development that is in keeping with the downtown heritage character should be encouraged to increase the number of people living, working and shopping in the area. There also exists the opportunity to expand the boundaries of the downtown area based on future development and the evolution of the area's land use.



MAP OF PARIS DOWNTOWN AS DEFINED BY THE COUNTY OF BRANT BY-LAWS AND DOWNTOWN PARIS BIA

## 2.3 OPEN SPACES AND PARKS

The Garden of Hope is located beside Sibbick Fuels. This park was established by one of many community groups. This peaceful, multi-level garden, is built on a hill that looks over the Grand River. The purpose of this garden is for people who wish for a quiet place to remember their loved ones whom they have lost to cancer. Various benches are set among beautiful gardens, and offer a peaceful place to sit and think. There is also a mural that reflects “Paris Past.”

The Cobblestone Common is a beautiful park located in a more central area of downtown. This parkette was established by a group of people, who worked closely with the County, to help build the centerpiece of the downtown area. With a wonderful view of the two rivers, this park provides a place to visit for the wildlife, reading, photography or meeting others. It also houses a beautiful Christmas tree that rises 22 feet in the air. The water feature also adds a lovely atmosphere as you view the names of many important people who helped contribute to this special place.

The Cenotaph is located on the corner of Grand River Street North and Mechanic Street on the Nith River. This beautiful monument honours our fallen soldiers is surrounded by beautiful gardens. This area gives people the opportunity to reflect and quietly thank the brave Men and Women who keep our country safe, both past and present.

Each space has a strong relationship with the river.



## 2.4 EXISTING ARCHITECTURAL MAKEUP

The commercial centre of Downtown Paris is comprised of a varied mix of late-Georgian, Victorian and predominately Edwardian buildings, stylistically reflective of each of these periods. Due to the devastating fire of 1900, many of the earlier buildings along the central block of Grand River Street were lost and therefore a major number of the existing buildings date from this era and beyond.

They are of two and three stories, most constructed of red or yellow brick, with symmetrically organized fenestration and restrained stone adornments. Almost all have been negatively augmented in the mid-part of the twentieth century in a misguided effort to “modernize”. In some cases the upper section of second floor windows were filled in with brick or other materials to accommodate lowered ceilings beyond. Decorative embellishments to cornices and pilasters were stripped away, and sculptural stone finials removed. Traditional deep shop fronts were altered to reflect changing times and tastes with most entrances pushed out to the sidewalk.

Signage, left to the discretion of individual owners, pays no attention to an established horizontal sign band (entablature) above the first floor and as a consequence presents visual inconsistency. All of this has contributed to a loss of aesthetic appeal and any sort of meaningful and cohesive whole. Many buildings suffer from obvious neglect, especially above the commercial ground floor and as a result give a negative impression of the downtown area.



## 2.5 COMMON PUBLIC ELEMENTS

Common public elements include paving, light posts, garbage receptacles, benches and landscaping. The majority are in disrepair and inconsistent in style and design, and do not compliment the overall character of the downtown area.

- Paving is a mix of stamped concrete, interlock, standard concrete and asphalt patchwork.
- Light posts are a mix of styles, colours and ages, and in some instances have not been properly maintained.
- Garbage receptacles are poured concrete and in poor repair.
- Benches are of various designs and not consistent with the downtown area aesthetic.
- Existing trees require trimming and updated grates to replace the asphalt.
- Streets require cleaning and weeding.



## 2.6 PARKING

The downtown area has street parking along Grand River North, Mechanic Street and William Street with parking lots off of Mechanic (south entrance) and Broadway Street (east and west entrances).

## 2.7 WALKING AND CYCLING

In the downtown area, there are ample opportunities for walking and cycling. Additional opportunities to improve the area's walkability, access to future bike parking including integrated bicycle parking in front of buildings, connectivity to the Grand River, and dedicated bike lanes should be reviewed with each development application.



### 3.0 DESIGN GUIDELINES

Based on research and an audit of the current situation in Downtown Paris, these design guidelines have been developed to assist businesses, building owners and the County of Brant with updates to existing properties and future developments. By using this resource, buildings will benefit from adhering to the unique aesthetic of the downtown area by creating an attractive positioning for their building/business.

#### 3.1 HEIGHT

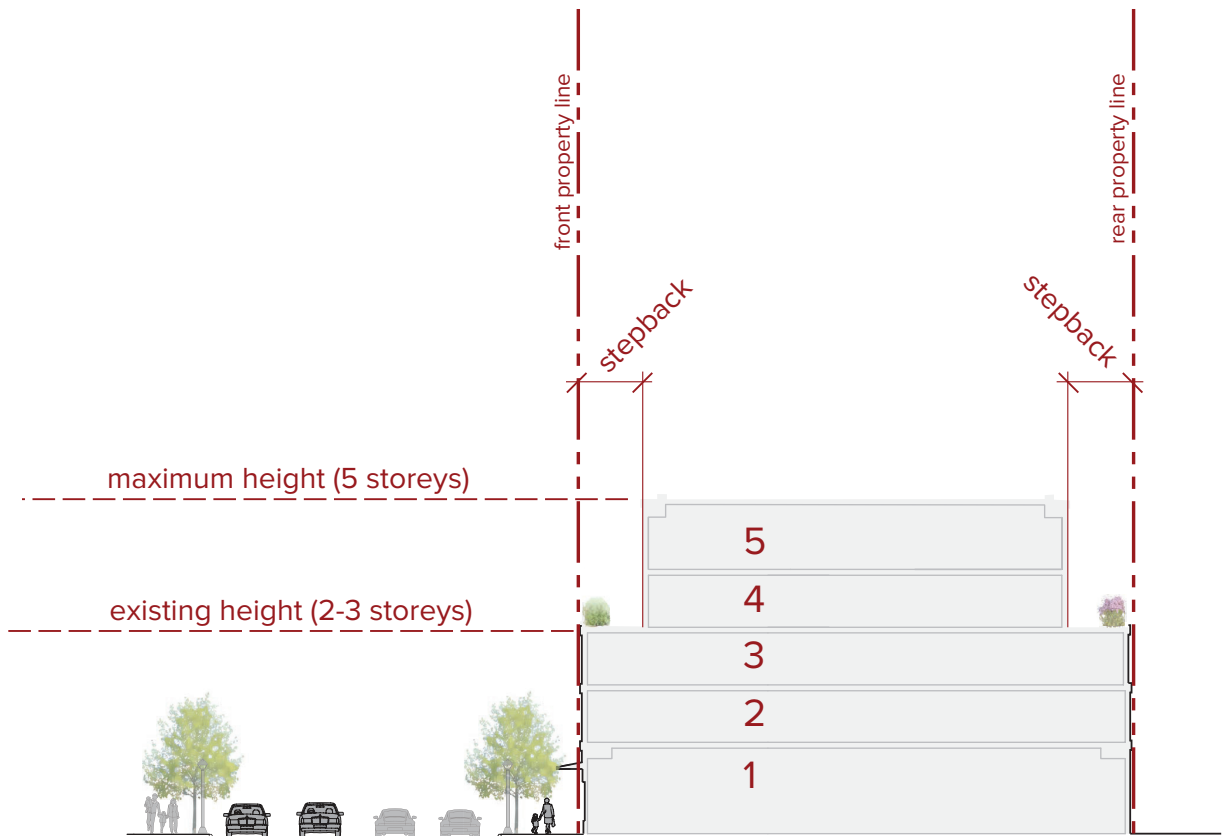
The downtown area should adhere to a 2-3 storey streetwall, stepping back to a maximum height of 5 storeys. Additional height may be accommodated if deemed appropriate, and would be subject to approval by the County of Brant.

#### 3.2 SETBACKS AND STEPBACKS

New buildings, or changes to existing buildings should match the established setback of its adjacent buildings, providing that a continuous street wall results. All new buildings and additions should be built to the front and side of the property line wherever possible to encourage a complete streetwall and maximum frontage.

With regards to front property setbacks, should approval be granted to build to a height of 5 storeys, the top 1 or 2 storeys should step back from the bottom 3 or 4 storeys in order to minimize their visibility and shadow impacts.

Any level built above the 3 or 4 storey streetwall, to a maximum of 5 storeys, should step back a minimum of 3m from the storey beneath it. New development should maintain a continuous Streetwall and side setbacks are to be built to the side property line.

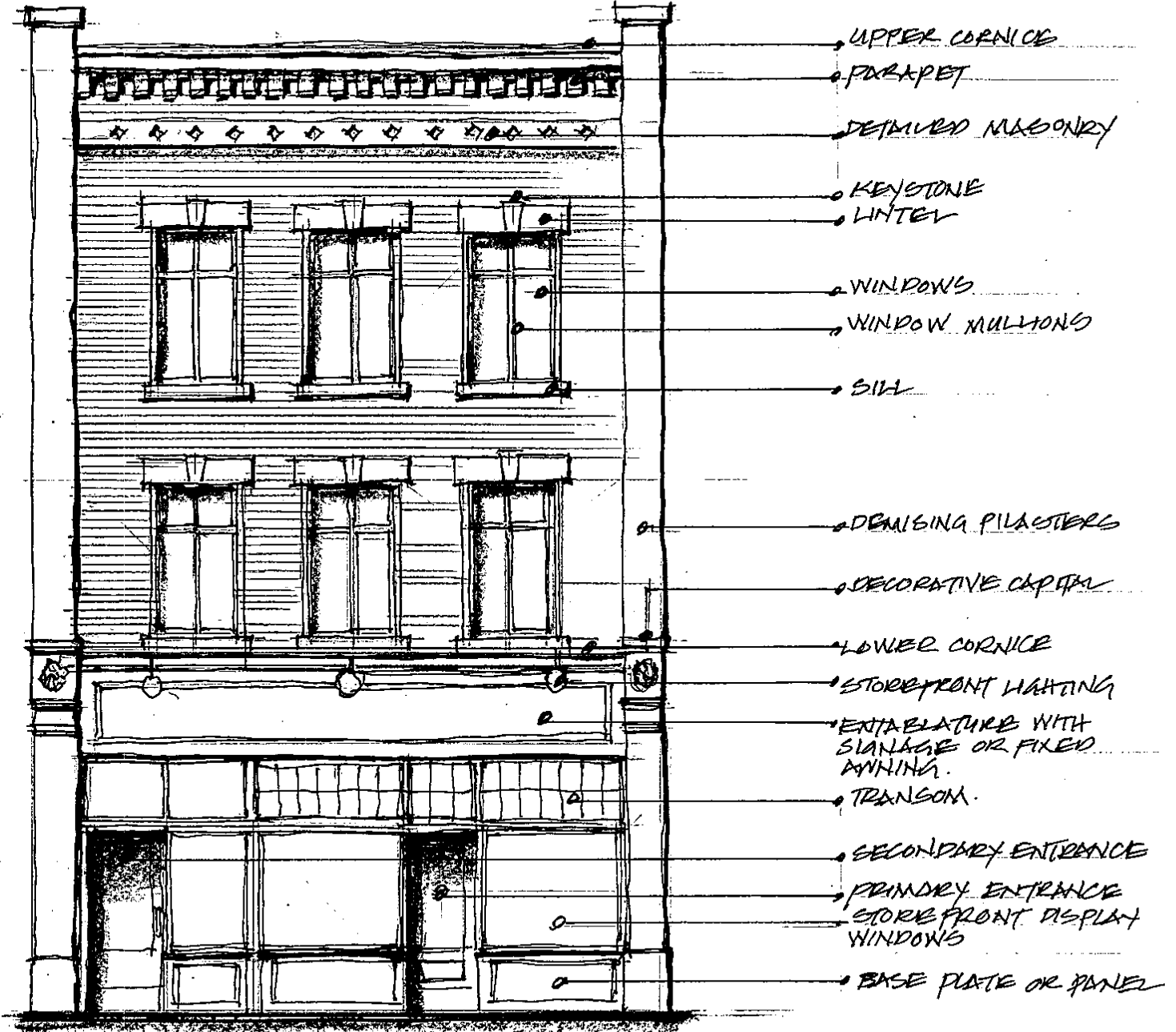


### 3.3 FAÇADE ARTICULATION

The articulation of the building facade plays a significant role in the pedestrian experience along a street.

Remaining consistent with the existing articulation found within the downtown area will help to promote the area's character by maintaining a rhythm of openings, recesses, projections and vertical and horizontal demarcations.

- Buildings will typically be divided vertically into symmetrical facade units referred to as “bays”. New buildings should maintain narrow bay widths in order to reinforce the rhythm of the historic fabric. The vertical divisions between the bays may be demarcated using construction elements such as masonry coursing, changes in materials, changes in colour, projecting piers, pilasters or columns.
- Buildings will typically be divided horizontally into storeys that accommodate different uses - retail uses and service commercial on the ground floor with the upper storeys containing a mix of office and/or residential uses. Each storey may be horizontally demarcated on the building facade through the use of projecting mouldings, intermediate cornices, changes in material, changes in colour and masonry coursing.
- Cleaning of buildings should occur in a non-destructive manner. Sand blasting and high pressure water blasting or excessive acid washes should be prohibited. Any form of blasting can be detrimental for pre-1935 masonry. Alkali washes can be used if the pH is similar to the substrate.
- Wood should be repaired rather than replaced as much as possible. Replacement, if necessary, should use the same material. Modern aluminum or vinyl replacement should not be used.
- Appropriate brick and masonry repair should be undertaken using proper materials and methods. Removal of old mortar should be performed with hand tools only and existing masonry should never be sealed. Appropriate lime formula should be used with mortar mixes matching original colour and sand. Modern mortars cause damage to older masonry.
- When possible, concealed elements (i.e. transoms that have been bricked in) should be re-introduced to the building facade.
- The re-introduction of a strong horizontal cornice and sign band (entablature) above shop windows would immediately improve the overall impression of the main street. Approved signage would consist of painted signage, cut-out lettering mounted on a flat panels within this described area.
- New shop windows shall allow for display of stores' products. Opaque or postered windows should not be used.
- The introduction more traditional lighting methods such as gooseneck lamps or subtle projected lighting. Backlit signage/awnings, up-lighting would no longer be acceptable.
- To minimize energy use but encourage all evening storefront lighting, energy efficient lighting fixtures, including LED lighting, should be integrated in shop windows to be left on in evenings for pleasure of “window shopping” pedestrians and to assist street lighting.
- Display windows of businesses that have nothing to display can be an opportunity for artists, non-profit agencies or others to display and promote events, etc.
- The issue of upper storey windows is difficult as it impacts on those interiors whose ceilings have been dropped. A cosmetic approach would be to install decorative awnings over the effected windows to disguise these intrusions and give a more positive impression.
- A pre-approved colour program be instituted so as to establish in the long-term a unified palette. Corporate identities with established branding and colours would be the exception (i.e. banks, realty companies) but would be encouraged to lead the way in presenting more appropriate heritage type signage.
- Entrances for spaces located above the main floor should be designed as welcoming elements that compliment the facade of the building. Appropriate lighting can be used to improve the aesthetic and also reduce crime.



TYPICAL HERITAGE FACADE ELEMENTS -

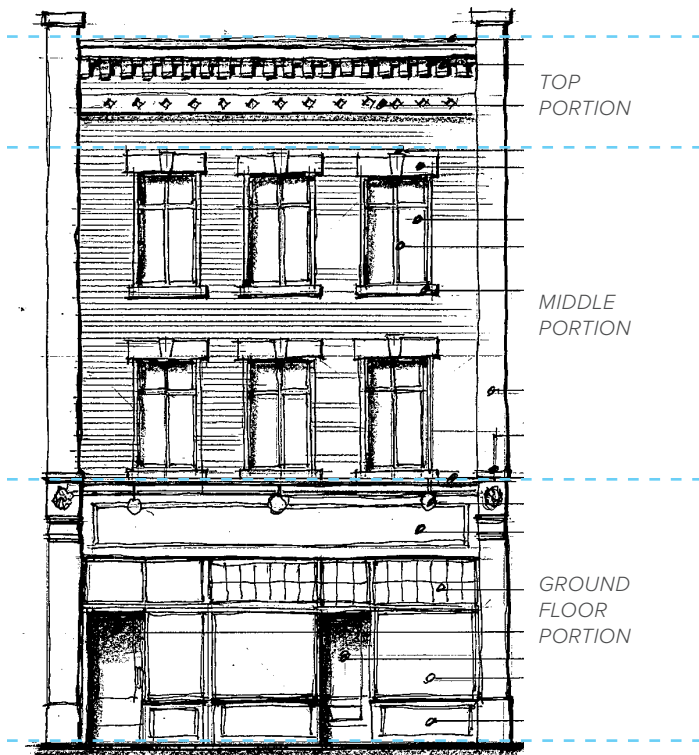
### 3.4 FAÇADE COMPOSITION

New buildings should respect the rhythm of bay sizes of the heritage buildings. Large buildings should be designed into bays. The narrow bays are good for storefronts and create an appropriate scale for development.

The facade of new and/or updated buildings should have a sign band cornice matching the height of its nearby established structures. Roof cornice lines and floor lines should be compatible with their neighbours.



Example of a new building with clearly defined facade articulation. This can be further improved by using windows with mullions.



Typical Heritage Facade Composition Diagram

#### Mixed Ground Floor Portion consists of:

- Store front
- Primary entrances
- Taller ceiling heights
- Defined by lower cornice or entablature
- Signage and lighting

#### Middle Portion consists of:

- 2-3 stories
- Symmetrical windows
- Intermediate cornice

#### Top Portion consists of:

- Upper cornice
- Parapet

### 3.5 SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

- The County of Brant can take the lead with the facade of the Municipal Offices by interpreting the original facade of the Fire Hall in a more appropriate manner (i.e. red brick, limestone, traditional fenestration, cornice and entrance point).
- The only limestone facade, situated at no. 33-35 Grand River Street North, beside the recently established Cobblestone Common, deserves careful scrutiny and would benefit greatly from having the paint removed and the stone restored
- A block of red brick buildings beginning with the CIBC bank on the corner of Grand River Street North and running west along William Street are virtually intact, but suffering from years of owner neglect. The owner should be contacted and “strongly encouraged” to repair and restore the street facade at the very least.
- Only John M. Hall has retained the original elements of the facade, the fenestration pattern on the second and third floors along with its shop front with deeply indented and original door. This should serve as an inspiration, not an anomaly, and be recognized and designated as such.



COUNTY OF BRANT MUNICIPAL OFFICES



33-35 GRAND RIVER STREET NORTH



RED BRICK BLOCK - WILLIAM STREET

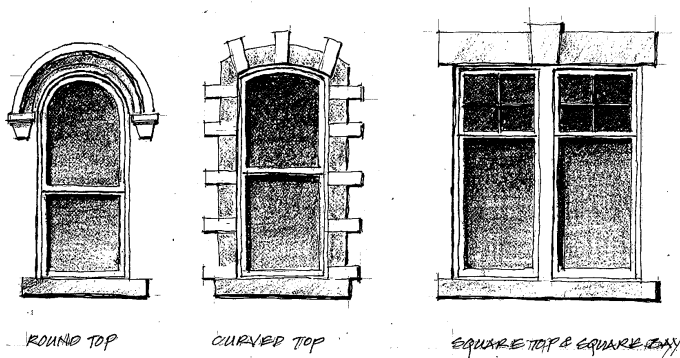


JOHN M. HALL BUILDING

### 3.6 WINDOWS AND DOORS

- Original windows should be repaired and restored. Original wood windows, even single glazed, can, with appropriate restoration, perform as well as modern replacement windows. Proper caulking, installation of storms and weather stripping can allow existing windows to perform well thermally.

TYPICAL HERITAGE WINDOW STYLES



- If it is necessary to replace a window, the replacement should replicate existing window configurations. Wood framed windows are recommended over aluminum and vinyl.
- The proportion of the window areas in a new building's facade with respect to the size and pattern of the windows should reflect those observed in the existing heritage buildings.
- In the event that there are two window proportions on either side of a new building, the new building should adhere to the one that is more prevalent in that streetwall/block.
- Windows other than shop fronts should be punched openings (i.e. window openings in block or stone wall that are surrounded by window framing, rather than a curtain wall, which consists of aluminum and glass and spans multiple floors) similar in proportion, grouping and arrangement as those in existing historical buildings.
- Windows in new construction may be made in prefinished metal or wood so long as proportions and configuration are maintained.



EXAMPLE OF RESTORED WINDOWS



EXAMPLE OF STOREFRONT WINDOW

### 3.7 ROOFS

Roofs of new buildings are recommended to be similar to their heritage neighbours. Rooftops can include open space balconies and/or roof terrace green roofs in new structures where roof loading can be designed to accommodate these uses.

Rooftop additions for equipment on top of new buildings should be set back far enough from the front or exterior facades in order to not be seen from the sidewalk on the opposite side of the street if possible. If this setback is not possible, rooftop equipment should be screened using appropriate building materials, parapet designs and facade treatments.

### 3.8 MATERIALS

Historic buildings in the downtown area tend to be either stone, red brick, or yellow brick with detailing in stone, bronze or wood. Windows and storefronts are typically constructed in wood. New buildings should have, as their fundamental cladding, brick, limestone or granite. In new buildings, precast concrete may be considered for lintels and other decorative detailing.

All exterior building finishes should be durable, easy to maintain and reflect a high quality of workmanship. The rear of the building or any exposed sides should be finished in similar materials as the principal street facade, though usually with fewer decorative elements.

Colour schemes for the new buildings should relate to the palette recommended in this design guide with the objective of consistency and appeal (see pages 14-15).

Modern facades should consider an attention to scale, massing and proportion that elevates the character of the existing heritage buildings. Materials recommended for exterior cladding include:

- high quality clear or lightly tinted glass curtain wall
- wood
- solid-coloured brick
- natural or synthetic stone
- architectural pre-cast concrete blocks/panels
- pre-fabricated metal panel systems

Building finishes and accents should include steel, copper, aluminium and/or metal panels and painted or natural wood. Materials that should not be used include:

- synthetic siding systems
- mirrored/heavily tinted glass panels
- unadorned concrete block
- textured stucco; if stucco is used it should have a smooth surface and be limited to side walls, roof top additions and small areas of the main facade
- decorative marble or granite tiles unless used as accent



oxford white blanc oxford CC-30	ecru écru 2014-70	pirates cove beach pêche discret OC-80	cotton tail tige de coton 2155-70	minced onion oignon émincé 2145-60
cotton balls balles de coton OC-122	old world corail 2011-40	funky fruit pur plaisir 2015-50	cream yellow jaune crème 2155-60	soft fern fougère douce 2144-40
cloud white blanc nebuleux OC-130	glamour pink rose glamour 2006-40	peach sorbet pêche de perse 2015-40	morning sunshine matin ensoleillé 2018-50	rosemary sprig brin de romarin 2144-30
white dove oie blanche OC-17	rhubarb rhubarbe 2007-30	marmalade marmelade 2016-40	suntan yellow jaune topaze 2155-50	ranthrae green rocaille verte CC-560
dune white blanc dune CC-70	strawberry red rouge fraise 2003-20	carrot stick carotte 2016-30	american cheese bain de soleil 2019-40	topenade topenade CC-694
dove wing acrylique transparent OC-18	red rouge 2009-10	starling orange orange brillant 2016-10	semolina semoule de blé 2155-40	great barrington green arbrisseau HC-122
white down oube CC-50	million dollar red rouge million de dollars 2003-10	orange sky ciel orange 2018-10	york harbour yellow fleur de semoule 2154-40	cushing green complanule HC-125
gray mist blanc mousse CC-80	lemon red rouge citron CC-68	jack o'lantern moisson d'or 2156-30	cork liege 2153-40	lavast floor côte vert CC-370
fog mist leger brouillard OC-31	leopard leopard CC-64	bronze tone nouveau bronze 2166-30	spicy mustard moutarde épicée 2154-20	backwoods vert de la garde CC-630
tapestry beige broderie antique OC-32	cascabel chile piment d'espelette GSP-445	gold rush sentier d'automne 2166-10	corduroy vannerie 2153-20	topsoil venelle CC-692
gray owl chouette grise 2137-40	sea haze brume de mer 2137-50	stone harbour grisé 2111-50	stormy monday lundi brumeux 2112-50	pewter quartz enfumé 2121-30



### 3.9 LIGHTING

Nighttime light sources mounted on private buildings must take into the impact that lighting has on the public.

- Fixtures should ensure that their design, location, intensity and emitted colour are appropriate for the traditional aesthetic of the downtown area.
- The lighting should be low-light, LED lighting that illuminates only the signage band with no up-lighting or backlit lighting.
- LED lighting should have a Kelvin rating of between 3100 and 6000 which will provide a white type of light versus red or blue.
- Building lighting is not a replacement for street lighting and should not be of a style that is in keeping with the building character. Recommendations include fixtures that are appropriate to the architecture or that are contemporary within historical/traditional context.



### 3.10 AWNINGS

Historically, many businesses used fabric awnings to offer protection from sun, rain and snow. The use of appropriate fabric awnings is encouraged. The fabric itself should be made of colours that are traditional (ref: colour palette), of a durable fabric material and installed in a manner that does not alter the building. They can either be a solid colour or a simple pattern.

- Awnings and canopies should be designed to match the main structural elements of the lower facade. They should also match the overall design of the storefront.
- A single style of canopy or awning should be used for the length of the building's facade, regardless of how many actual storefronts exist within the frontage.
- Awnings should only be used for the business branding and cannot be used for advertising or promotional signage.



## 4.0 GENERAL SIGNAGE GUIDELINES

It is recognized that businesses within the downtown area should be able to identify themselves through individually distinct and recognizable signage. It is equally important that the quality, scale and style of signage be reflective of the area's character. The following are guidelines that should be applied when adding new signage or upgrading existing signage. These guidelines will apply to both existing and new buildings.

### 4.1 POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION

- Implement the existing sign by-law which is designed to complement the character of Downtown Paris.
- Circulate to businesses the permit applications and guidelines fact sheets that set out the design criteria for signage in the area.
- All permanent and temporary advertising, business, directional, incidental and identification signage associated with all new and existing buildings and developments within the Downtown Area will be implemented through the updated Sign By-law.

### 4.2 CONTENT

- Signs with removable letters or movable should not be used in the Downtown Area.
- Signs should only advertise the businesses within. Corporate signs, such as "Kit Kat", "Coca-Cola," etc., should not be allowed
- Secondary signs, such as portable signs (sandwich boards) can add life to the street, but these sign must be located to not interfere with pedestrian travel areas. It should also be of a traditional quality construction, not plastic marker board.
- Window signs should be limited to 25% of the window size and should not block the view of displays in windows.



EXAMPLE OF CLEAR, QUALITY SIGNAGE THAT USES THE SIGN BAND.

### 4.3 LOCATION

- Signage on existing buildings should be limited to the sign band as shown in the fascia or entablature sign. Branding can also be applied to an awning if it acts as a permanent element.
- New buildings shall incorporate signage to be an integral feature of the building facade, rather than a dominating overlay feature.

### 4.4 DESIGN AND MATERIALS

- Signage should consider pedestrian activities (orientation and as non-obstacles), vehicular needs (orientation and readability), building identification (street address), enhancing the desired character (design and materials), and reducing negative impacts (lighting levels, scrolling messaging, impeding views and vistas).
- The primary signage for the building should be located on the entablature (the horizontal band that separates the storefront windows from the upper facade) or on the awning if it is an existing permanent feature.
- The surface area of the signage band (fascia or entablature sign) should not exceed 15% of the storey's wall area.
- Sign lettering, graphics and colours should be visible from an appropriate distance based on the function and location of the sign.
- The text font should be easily legible, be non-reflective, and be of a strong contrasting colour to the background.



## 4.5 LIGHTING

- Only externally lit signs should be allowed. If the light source is visible, the fixture design should be suited to the historical/traditional character of the Downtown Paris architecture.
- Building/business signs do not necessarily need to be illuminated. Ambient lighting may be adequate in many situations.

## 4.6 PROHIBITED SIGNAGE

Not all types of signs can be allowed in the Downtown Paris area. The objective of creating a traditional yet contemporary aesthetic consistently for the area will ensure that the objectives of these guidelines are met. Signs should be purposeful, discreet, and of the highest quality. Signage that goes beyond sending a simple message should not be allowed.

The following are sign types that should be prohibited in the Downtown Area, unless approved by County of Brant Council:

- Roof signs
- Signage with removable lettering
- Pylon signs
- Any type of third party signage unless it relates to temporary window advertising for contractors when they are working on the building.
- Inflatable signs
- Obsolete or unsafe signs
- Handwritten signs (excluding sandwich boards)
- Digital, electronic, neon or otherwise internally illuminated signs, except for small “open for business” signs in retail windows.
- Buildings as signs
- Signs attached to street furnishings
- Animated signs
- Movable signs (excluding sandwich boards)



EXAMPLE OF PROHIBITED SIGNAGE



EXAMPLE OF PROHIBITED SIGNAGE

## 5.0 PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE

### 5.1 CIRCULATION

It is vital that the downtown area be an active and vibrant pedestrian friendly environment. This means that there must be a clearly defined pedestrian realm that is visually and physically separate from the vehicular traffic areas. These areas must also be easy to navigate, barrier-free, and include open spaces, walkways and well-marked crosswalks. The pedestrian areas should also be buffered from the street traffic through the use of on-street parking, street trees and the consistent use of street furniture/amenities.

### 5.2 PRIORITY AREAS

Pedestrians and pedestrian-friendly environments are essential components to a successful downtown. As such the downtown should be considered a Pedestrian Priority Area. Some of the characteristics should include:

- New and existing developments should maximize opportunities to create, define and enhance Pedestrian Priority Areas through the consistent use of materials and other cues for safe, continuous and comfortable pedestrian movement.
- There should be a consistent application of accent paving and pedestrian lighting used to clearly define pedestrian areas (sidewalks and walkways) and clearly identify areas where pedestrians may encounter vehicles along their route (at drive aisles, crosswalks and intersections).
- New and updated sidewalk and interior finish floor elevations should be close enough that steps will not be necessary to enter the building, and wherever possible should be flush to allow for wheelchair access.
- The use of raised planters can serve a number of purposes including: surrounding trees for protection and as rest area for pedestrians.



GRANITE CURBING



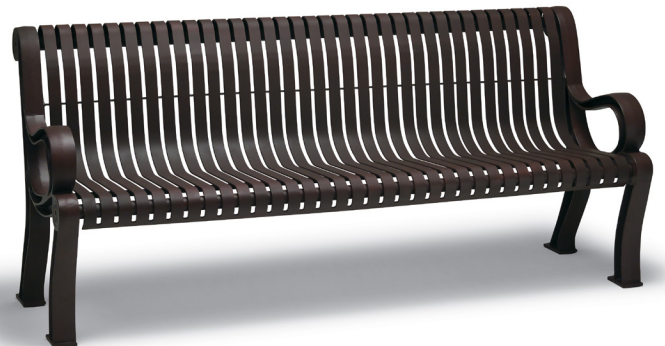
STONE PAVEMENT



EXISTING NITH RIVER BRIDGE



- The street should adhere to an aesthetic standard throughout the downtown area, and ideally throughout the whole of the downtown. Standardized lighting fixtures, street furniture, and paving materials are key to achieving this. Here are some examples of suitable components of the pedestrian realm:
- It is important to provide pedestrians with some protection from the wind in order to make the streetscape a comfortable and enjoyable environment year-round. This includes awnings, tree planting and sheltered areas.
- Buildings should incorporate features and design elements that achieve a ‘sense of arrival’, such as awnings, canopies or other architectural features. These design elements provide necessary amenities for pedestrians, including entry awnings, covered setbacks, landmark elements, and transparent glazing providing a view from the street into interior spaces.



## 6.0 PUBLIC ART

- Public art should be used to enhance the unique culture and history of Downtown Paris.
- Public art should be incorporated through new capital projects.
- Significant public art pieces should be the subject of design competitions to support local artists (where desired) and to promote excellence and innovation.
- Public art should be place-specific.
- Public art should be located at key destinations within the downtown area with a focus on reflecting the unique character of Downtown Paris.
- Public art is encouraged with private developments.
- Public art should be visibly and physically accessible.
- Public art should be durable and low-maintenance.
- Public art should not be permanent with the exception of statues/sculptures.
- Public art should be complemented by adjacent landscaping where appropriate.



EXAMPLE FROM CAMBRIDGE - DECORATING THE BRIDGE WITH KNITTING

## 7.0 APPENDIX ITEMS

### 7.1 DESIGN GUIDELINES CHECKLIST

The Design Guidelines Checklist is intended to assist both the business and building owners and the County of Brant in building appropriately designed development within the Downtown Paris Area. A page reference to the full guideline will be provided for each item in the checklist should the applicants require more information on the intent of that guideline. Applicants shall complete the guidelines by responding to each item on the checklist. When the guideline does not apply, check “N/A” and offer an explanation of exemption in the comments area.

The Design Guidelines Checklist will be created (VERSION 5) for final approval and implementation.

### 7.2 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

<b>ARTICULATION:</b>	Articulation refers to the layout or pattern of building elements, including walls, doors, roofs, windows and decorative elements, such as cornices.
<b>BUILDING TYPE:</b>	A typical building massing, organization and use that can be generally applied to a variety of contexts.
<b>PROJECTIONS:</b>	Refers to a component of external building design and articulation, where horizontal and/or vertical building elements extrude from the main structure of the building, creating an element of depth and visual complexity. Examples of projections include roof overhangs, awnings, and balconies.
<b>FACADE:</b>	The exterior wall of a building.
<b>PUBLIC REALM:</b>	Refers to spaces that are perceived as being publicly accessible, for example, sidewalks, parkettes and bike paths.
<b>MIXED-USE BUILDING:</b>	Refers to multiple types of uses within a building or set of buildings. This may include a combination of residential, employment, retail, institutional, or other land uses.
<b>RHYTHM:</b>	Refers to the pattern of building frontages along a streetscape, paying particular attention to lot widths, building entrance and glazing locations and proportions, etc.
<b>PEDESTRIAN-ORIENTED:</b>	An environment designed to make pedestrian movement safe, attractive and comfortable for all ages and abilities; considerations include separation of pedestrian and auto circulation, street furniture, clear signage, safety, visibility, shade, lighting, materials, trees, sidewalk width, intersection treatment, curb cuts, ramps and landscaping.
<b>SETBACKS:</b>	Typically refers to the distance between a property line and the front, side or rear of a building.
<b>STEPBACKS:</b>	Refers to the setting back of the upper storeys of a building. Front and side setbacks help to create a transition between built form of varying heights and provide appropriate separation between adjacent buildings and/or open spaces.
<b>STOREY:</b>	A habitable level within a building, excluding raised basements.

<b>STREETSCAPE:</b>	The distinguishing elements and character of a particular street as created by its width, degree of curvature, paving materials, design of street furniture, pedestrian amenities, landscape elements and the setback and form of surrounding buildings.
<b>STREETWALL:</b>	The condition of enclosure along a street created by the fronts of buildings, and enhanced by the continuity and height of the enclosing buildings.
<b>TRANSITION:</b>	Refers to the physical design elements of a building which contribute to a sense of transition between mid-rise buildings and adjacent buildings. Transitions may be achieved through use of building setbacks, step-backs, heights and massing.

### 7.3 CASE STUDIES

Future versions of the Design Guidelines will include Case Studies that will act as an useful reference tool.

### 7.4 HISTORICAL REFERENCES

Future versions of the Design Guidelines will include Historical References that will act as an useful reference tool.

### 7.5 SIGNAGE BYLAWS

Future versions of the Design Guidelines will include the updated County of Brant Signage By-law as it applies to the Downtown Paris Area.

### 7.6 DETAILED AREA MAP

Future versions of the Design Guidelines will include a Detailed Area Map with each building and business identified.

### 7.6 AUTHORS: PARIS RENAISSANCE TEAM

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Steve Pinkett  
David Powell  
Russell Press  
Shirley Simons  
Drew Skuce  
Marty Verhey

## 3.0 FINANCIAL INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

- Brownfield study grant; and
- Brownfield property tax assistance program.

The financial incentive programs are intended to encourage investment in private property. To be eligible for financial incentives, this Plan establishes eligibility criteria, including design-related criteria, to set a standard for aesthetics. This Plan works closely with the Downtown Paris Design Guidelines to establish design criteria.

### 3.1 PROGRAMS

This Plan establishes a broad series of grant programs to assist in private property improvements. The intent of having a broad set of programs is to enable the County to have access to a comprehensive ‘toolbox’ of programs, which may be required at varying times throughout the life of this Plan. As provided in Section 3.3.2, Council has the discretion to allocate funding to certain programs, based on demand or certain priorities in each year. These decisions should be based on the recommendations of the Administrator through the monitoring and evaluation strategy (Section 6.4).

The programs include:

- Façade improvement grant;
- Signage improvement grant;
- Upper storey apartment improvement grant;
- Property and private parking area improvement grant;
- Planning and building application fee grants;
- Tax increment equivalent grant;



### 3.1.1 Façade Improvement Grant

#### 3.1.1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the façade improvement grant is to encourage improvements to building façade elements, architectural articulation, and encourage restoration of historic attributes and materials. The program will result in greater longevity and viability of buildings in the downtown, restore historic character, and contribute significantly to the beautification of Downtown Paris, helping to attract more visitors and businesses.

#### 3.1.1.2 Eligible Properties

All commercial, institutional, mixed-use and multi-unit residential buildings with more than 3 units in the current Community Improvement Project Area are eligible for the façade improvement grant. Additionally, any other properties that may be designated under Part IV or V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* are eligible.

#### 3.1.1.3 Authority

The authority for administering this grant program is consistent with Section 28(7) of the *Planning Act*, and conforms to the policies of Section 2.6 of the Brant County Official Plan.

#### 3.1.1.4 Eligible Costs

The potential grant value shall be calculated based on the estimated value of any eligible costs, which may include:

- Repair, replacement or restoration of façade masonry, brickwork, architectural detailing or foundation improvements;
- Repair, replacement or new installation of awnings or canopies;

- Painting, cleaning or similar treatments to improve façade materials or enhance durability over the long-term, provided these improvements are part of a larger improvement project (i.e., are associated with other eligible projects listed herein);
- Window and door replacement, provided it is part of a larger façade improvement project (i.e., associated with other eligible projects lists herein) and provided the improvements represent an improvement in detailing (e.g., lattice), and not merely replacement of glass;
- Improvements which contribute to the accessibility and/or barrier-free access to the building (such as improvements to stairs/entrances or automatic doors), provided the project is a component of a broader façade improvement project, and the improvements are in accordance with the design eligibility criteria;
- Projects involving improved access and views of the rivers, including the development of new rooftop or rear yard patios, seating areas or public lookouts which will have significant river views; and/or
- Services of an architect, engineer or heritage professional to advise on the improvements listed above.

#### 3.1.1.5 Grant Value

The maximum value of a grant shall be:

- For properties located on a corner lot (at an intersection), the maximum value of a grant shall be 50% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$10,000, provided the façade improvement addresses both street-facing façades.
- For properties that back onto the Grand River (i.e., located on the east side of Grand River

Street North), the maximum value of a grant shall be 50% of eligible costs, to a maximum of \$12,500.

- For all other properties, the maximum grant shall be 50% of eligible costs, to a maximum of \$7,500.

Further, the services of an architect or heritage professional shall be a maximum of 20% of the value of the grant.

### 3.1.1.6 Payment of Grant

The grant shall be paid only upon completion of the project, to the satisfaction of the Plan's Administrator.

### 3.1.1.7 Program Eligibility Criteria

The policies of Section 3.2 – General Eligibility Criteria apply.

### 3.1.1.8 Design Eligibility Criteria

To be considered eligible, projects shall be in compliance with the following design requirements, as may be applicable, as referenced from the Downtown Paris Design Guidelines:

- **Façade articulation/composition** is to be in accordance with Sections 3.3 (Façade Articulation) and 3.4 (Façade Composition). As much as possible, concealed elements are to be reintroduced. Original materials and architectural elements are to be restored.
- **Building materials** shall be in accordance with Section 3.8 – Materials. In no case will synthetic siding, mirrored/tinted glass panels, unadorned concrete block, textured stucco or decorative marble/granite tiles except as an accent be used. In no case shall a project involve the removal of historic building

materials unless they are beyond repair. Modern economy materials such as vinyl and aluminum are not to be used.

- **Cleaning and other treatments** are to utilize techniques that will not damage the building materials, in accordance with bullet 3 under **Section 3.3 – Façade Articulation**.
- **Painting and colour schemes** should relate to the recommendations outlined in the **Downtown Paris Design Guidelines, pages 14-15**, with the goal of providing consistency and appeal.
- **Windows and doors** shall be in accordance with Section 3.6 – Windows and Doors. In all cases, where possible, original windows should be repaired and restored. Window replacements, where necessary, are to follow original window configurations. Additionally, Section 3.3 – Façade Articulation contains applicable guidelines for windows.
- **Awnings** shall be in accordance with Section 3.10 – Awnings. Proponents are encouraged to incorporate awnings into their project design where it considered appropriate.
- **Section 3.5 – Specific Recommendations** contains façade improvement recommendations for certain buildings and blocks which shall be implemented by proponents of these buildings (County Office at 66 Grand River St. N., 33-35 Grand River St. N., Red Brick Block on William Street and the John M. Hall Building at 39-43 Grand River St. N.).



## 3.1.2 Signage Improvement Grant

### 3.1.2.1 Purpose

The purpose of the signage improvement grant is to encourage improvements to building signage, in a manner that is aesthetically appealing, pedestrian-scaled and is pedestrian-scaled, and not designed for motor vehicle traffic.

### 3.1.2.2 Eligible Properties

All commercial uses in the currently designated Community Improvement Project Area are eligible for the signage improvement grant.

### 3.1.2.3 Authority

The authority for administering this grant program is consistent with Section 28(7) of the *Planning Act*, and conforms to the policies of Section 2.6 of the Brant County Official Plan.

### 3.1.2.4 Eligible Costs

The potential grant value shall be calculated based on the estimated value of any eligible costs, which may include:

- Repair, restoration or improvement to existing historic signage;
- Installation of new signage or replacement of signage;
- Costs associated with the removal of signage which does not comply with the Design Criteria of this Plan, provided there is a new sign installed in accordance with this Plan; and
- Costs for professional design/architectural services to design the sign.

### 3.1.2.5 Grant Value

The maximum value of a grant shall be 50% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$3,000.

The services of a professional design/architectural firm to design signage shall be a maximum of 20% of the value of the grant.

### 3.1.2.6 Payment of Grant

The grant shall be paid only upon completion of the project, to the satisfaction of the Administrator.

### 3.1.2.7 Program Eligibility Criteria

The policies of Section 3.2 – General Eligibility Criteria apply. The Design Criteria of Section 3.3 apply.

### 3.1.2.8 Design Eligibility Criteria

To be considered eligible, projects shall be in compliance with the following design requirements, as may be applicable, in the Downtown Paris Design Guidelines:

- **Signage** shall comply with the County's Sign By-law. Signage is to be in accordance with Section 4.0 – General Signage Guidelines, as applicable to the proposal. At a minimum, signage is to be limited to within the sign band and may be applied to an awning as a permanent element (Section 4.3). **Design and materials** are to be in accordance with Section 4.4. **Prohibited sign types** are outlined in Section 4.6. **Overhanging signs** may also be appropriate, provided they are in accordance with the requirements of the County's Sign By-law and any required permit.
- **Signage shall also be consistent with the principles of accessible and age-friendly**

**design.** Lettering should utilize large fonts which are appropriate for the size of the sign. Colours should be highly contrasting, with dark lettering on light backgrounds or light lettering on darker backgrounds. Complementary colours and analogous colours for both the background and the lettering should be avoided. Raised lettering is encouraged. If highly graphical or stylized signage is used in the principal sign, there should be a secondary sign with plain, clear lettering (such as lettering on the window or door).

- **Signage lighting shall be in accordance with Section 4.5 and Section 3.9.** In no case will backlit or neon signs be permitted. Proponents will be encouraged to incorporate external lighting to their signage, although ambient lighting may be sufficient for some signage types.
- **Secondary signs** may be used in accordance with Section 4.2. Window signs may be included, provided they are limited to 25% of the window size and do not block views into the store. Portable signs may be used provided they are of a traditional quality construction and not plastic marker board.

### **3.1.3 Upper Storey Apartment Improvement Grant**

#### **3.1.3.1 Purpose**

The purpose of the upper storey apartment improvement grant is to encourage the improvement of apartment units in the upper storeys of mixed use buildings. This program is intended to draw a mix of people to live in Downtown Paris.

#### **3.1.3.2 Eligible Properties**

Only 2+ storey buildings in the Community Improvement Project Area shall be eligible for this grant. Further, the ground floor of the building must be used for non-residential uses (commercial, office, or institutional).

#### **3.1.3.3 Authority**

The authority for administering this grant program is consistent with Section 28(7) of the *Planning Act*, and conforms to the policies of Section 2.6 of the Brant County Official Plan.

#### **3.1.3.4 Eligible Costs**

The potential grant value shall be calculated based on the estimated value of any eligible costs, which may include:

- Any works in existing upper storey residential unit(s) which bring the unit(s) into compliance with the Ontario Building Code; and
- Costs for the services of a professional engineer or architect as may be required in association with the improvements noted above.



In accordance with the policies of the Official Plan and the Special Policy Area, no new residential units may be created in the flood prone areas of the Downtown. It is not the intent of this Plan to permit uses that are not permitted in accordance with the Official Plan, Zoning By-law, and the Conservation Authority. However, should the policies evolve, this program may be utilized in accordance with applicable policy and law at the time of application for an incentive. Readers should consult the County to determine if their project is permitted before applying for financial incentives. The approval of financial incentives may be conditional upon other County and agency approvals.

encouraged to make façade improvements as part of their project, and may be eligible for an additional grant under the façade improvement grant program, provided the project complies with all eligibility requirements and design eligibility criteria outlined for that grant program.

### **3.1.3.5 Grant Value**

The maximum value of a grant shall be 50% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$5,000 per residential unit, whichever is greater. A maximum of three (3) units shall be eligible per property, leading to a maximum potential total grant of up to \$15,000 per property.

### **3.1.3.6 Payment of Grant**

The grant shall be paid only upon completion of the project, to the satisfaction of the Administrator.

### **3.1.3.7 Program Eligibility Criteria**

The policies of Section 3.2 – General Eligibility Criteria apply. The Design Criteria of Section 3.3 apply.

### **3.1.3.8 Design Eligibility Criteria**

The Upper Storey Apartment Improvement Grant principally relates to the interior use of the building, so design eligibility criteria are not specified for this grant program. Applicants will be

### **3.1.4 Property and Private Parking Area Improvement Grant**

#### **3.1.4.1 Purpose**

The purpose of the property and private parking area improvement grant is to encourage landscaping and promote the use of private parking areas in Downtown Paris as a source of parking, and reduce the strain on municipal parking lots. The grant also encourages sidewalk cafés to bring activity to the street.

#### **3.1.4.2 Eligible Properties**

All commercial, institutional and mixed-use properties in the currently designated community improvement project area are eligible.

#### **3.1.4.3 Authority**

The authority for administering this grant program is consistent with Section 28(7) of the *Planning Act*, and conforms to the policies of Section 2.6 of the Brant County Official Plan.

#### **3.1.4.4 Eligible Costs**

The potential grant value shall be calculated based on the estimated value of any eligible costs, which may include:

- Landscaping improvements associated with any side yard or rear yard parking lot, to buffer to the sidewalk from the parking area;
- Installation or improvements to permanent outdoor seating areas and sidewalk cafés, including fencing and landscaping, provided the seating area is located in a front or side yard or within the public right-of-way subject to approval from the County. Non-permanent

and moveable elements of an outdoor café area will not be considered an eligible cost;

- Improvements to existing parking surfaces, including paving with an improved material, curbing, repainting, lighting, and signage. For clarity, repaving of a parking area with the same material shall not be an eligible cost. Eligible works must represent an improvement over existing conditions and not merely a life cycle replacement. Further, only side and rear yard parking areas shall be eligible;
- Improvements to pedestrian connections, walkways and designated bicycle parking areas; and
- Costs for the services of a professional engineer, planner or landscape architect as may be required in association with the improvements noted above.

#### **3.1.4.5 Grant Value**

The maximum value of a grant shall be a maximum of 50% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$5,000.

#### **3.1.4.6 Payment of Grant**

The grant shall be paid only upon completion of the project, to the satisfaction of the Administrator.

#### **3.1.4.7 Program Eligibility Criteria**

To be eligible for grants related to parking area improvements, the parking area must be made available by the property owner for public parking during evenings and weekends or all hours, as indicated through signage installed and maintained on the site.

The policies of Section 3.2 – General Eligibility Criteria apply. The Design Criteria of Section 3.3 apply.



### 3.1.4.8 Design Eligibility Criteria

The Downtown Paris Design Guidelines does not specifically address guidelines for parking areas and landscaping features. Accordingly, improvements made under this Grant program shall be in accordance with the following requirements:

- **Landscape buffers** should be used between sidewalks and parking areas, except where driveways are required. Landscape buffers should be defined with curbing, stone or be in a permanent, raised planter. Trees are encouraged as part of the landscape buffers.
- **Sidewalk cafés/outdoor patios** should generally be enclosed by a decorative iron fence. The use of landscaping, hanging planters and other features is encouraged to further buffer and define the sidewalk café/outdoor patio.
- **Parking area improvements** will incorporate landscape buffers. Asphalt is a sufficient paving surface; however, decorative surface treatments are encouraged, including permeable paving surfaces. Where possible, one-way aisles through parking areas are preferred to minimize the size of the driveway required, and therefore minimize its interruption to the sidewalk. Parking areas should be defined by curbing. Landscaping and tree planting within the parking area and around the edges of the parking area is encouraged. Sufficient lighting should be incorporated to prevent crime, be downward facing, and light posts should not exceed 8 metres in height.

### 3.1.5 Planning and Building Application Fee Grants

#### 3.1.5.1 Purpose

Planning application and building permit fees may pose a barrier to private property investment where these applications are required.

#### 3.1.5.2 Eligible Properties

Any property in the community improvement project area is eligible for this grant. However, the grant must be in relation to a proposed commercial, institutional, mixed-use or multi-unit residential (at least four units) project.

#### 3.1.5.3 Authority

The authority for administering this grant program is consistent with Section 28(7) of the *Planning Act*, and conforms to the policies of Section 2.6 of the Brant County Official Plan.

#### 3.1.5.4 Eligible Costs

The potential grant value shall be calculated based on the estimated value of any eligible costs, which may include:

- Development of a vacant property (infill) for commercial, office, mixed-uses, institutional uses or multi-residential uses (at least four units);
- Redevelopment of a property for commercial, office, mixed-uses, institutional uses or multi-residential uses (at least four units);
- Major additions to a commercial or mixed use property, involving an increase of at least 25% of the gross floor area of the building;

- Infrastructure work including the improvement or reconstruction of existing on-site public infrastructure (water services, sanitary and storm sewers);
- Major improvements to parking areas, such as the re-planning or reconfiguration of parking areas which requires a site plan, minor variance, rezoning and/or building permit;
- Major property enhancements aimed at improving views and access to the waterfront, including the development of rooftop patios and other waterfront access projects; and
- Professional services by an engineer, architect, and/or planner.

#### 3.1.5.6 Grant Value

The maximum value of the grant shall be \$5,000 or 100% of the value of the County’s required building permit and/or planning application fees (Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment, Minor Variance or Site Plan), whichever is less.

#### 3.1.5.7 Payment of Grant

The grant shall be paid only upon completion of the project, to the satisfaction of the Administrator. The applicant will be responsible for paying the full value of any planning and building application fees. The grant is issued as a rebate for the fees.

#### 3.1.5.8 Program Eligibility Criteria

The policies of Section 3.2 – General Eligibility Criteria apply. The Design Criteria of Section 3.3 apply.

#### 3.1.5.9 Design Eligibility Criteria

This grant program could relate to a broad range of different improvements, including infill (new

development), redevelopment, building additions, property conversions or site planning (e.g., reconfiguration of parking areas). Accordingly, depending on the proposed improvements, the following design guidelines will be applicable:

- Infill development, new development, redevelopment and building additions will be in accordance with the following:
  - **Building height** shall be in accordance with Section 3.1. In no case will 1 storey buildings be permitted. This Plan encourages the development of 2-3 storey buildings.
  - **Building setbacks and stepbacks** will be in accordance with Section 3.2 – Setbacks and stepbacks.
  - **Façades** will be in accordance with Section 3.3 – Façade Articulation and Section 3.4 – Façade Composition, as applicable to new buildings. **Windows and doors** will be in accordance with Section 3.6, as applicable to new buildings.
  - **Roofs** for new buildings will be in accordance with Section 3.7 – Roofs.
  - **Building materials and colours** will be in accordance with Section 3.8 – Materials as applicable for new buildings.
  - **Awnings**, where proposed, will be in accordance with Section 3.10 - Awnings.
  - **Signage** as part of new buildings will be in accordance with Section 4.0 – General Signage Guidelines.
- Any parking area improvements and site planning will be in accordance with the design requirements for **parking area improvements** and **landscape buffers** in Section 3.1.4 – Design Eligibility Criteria for the Property and Parking Area Improvement Grant of this Plan.



### 3.1.6 Tax Increment Equivalent Grant

#### 3.1.6.1 Purpose

A tax increment equivalent grant is intended to encourage the development and redevelopment of properties where there will be a significant increase in property taxes as a result of the development or redevelopment project. The program helps to reduce tax increases as a barrier to property investment and help make development and redevelopment in the core as attractive as a greenfield development opportunity.

#### 3.1.6.2 Eligible Properties

Any property in the community improvement project area is eligible for this grant. However, the grant must be in relation to a proposed commercial, institutional, mixed-use or multi-unit residential (at least four units) project.

#### 3.1.6.3 Authority

The authority for administering this grant program is consistent with Section 28(7) of the *Planning Act*, and conforms to the policies of Section 2.6 of the Brant County Official Plan.

#### 3.1.6.4 Eligible Costs

The potential grant value shall be calculated based on the estimated value of any eligible costs, which may include:

- Development of a vacant property (infill) for commercial, office, mixed-uses, institutional uses or multi-residential uses (at least four units);

- Redevelopment of a property for commercial, office, mixed-uses, institutional uses or multi-residential uses (at least four units);
- Major additions to a commercial or mixed use property, involving an increase of at least 25% of the gross floor area of the building;
- Infrastructure work including the improvement or reconstruction of existing on-site public infrastructure (water services, sanitary and storm sewers);
- Structural rehabilitation works;
- Major improvements to parking areas, such as the re-planning or reconfiguration of parking areas which requires a site plan, minor variance, rezoning and/or building permit; and
- Professional services by an engineer, architect, and/or planner.

#### 3.1.6.5 Grant Value

The grant value shall be a percentage of the municipal tax increase which results from the improvements to the property (i.e., the tax increment). The grant will be paid to the owner each year for a maximum of 10 years or less, at the discretion of the Review Committee. In year one, the value of the grant may equal up to 100% of the tax increment. In subsequent years, the value of the grant shall decrease until it reaches 0% of the tax increment. In no case shall the total value of all grants issued over the grant period exceed 50% of the eligible costs of the project. A payment period of 10 years shall be the maximum with the grants being progressively reduced over the grant period.

In accordance with the policies of the Official Plan and the Special Policy Area, no new residential units may be created in the flood prone areas of the Downtown. It is not the intent of this Plan to permit uses that are not permitted in accordance

with the Official Plan, Zoning By-law, and the Conservation Authority. However, should the policies evolve, this program may be utilized in accordance with applicable policy and law at the time of application for an incentive. Readers should consult the County to determine if their project is permitted before applying for financial incentives. The approval of financial incentives may be conditional upon other County and agency approvals.

### 3.1.6.6 Payment of Grant

The grant shall be paid only upon completion of the project, to the satisfaction of the Administrator. The applicant will be responsible for paying the full value of property taxes in any given year. The grants shall be issued annually upon full payment of property taxes.

### 3.1.6.7 Program Eligibility Criteria

- The policies of Section 3.2 – General Eligibility Criteria apply. The Design Criteria of Section 3.3 apply.
- This program anticipates various forms of development, which will be subject to permissions under the Official Plan, Zoning By-law, and potentially a permit from the Conservation Authority. This program is not intended to indicate that uses or structures not permitted under policy and zoning is permitted.
- To be eligible, the proposed development or redevelopment project must result in a significant increase in the municipal property taxes. Applicants may be required to submit a business plan and an estimate of the potential amount of the tax increment, based on current assessment values and the anticipated value of the investment.

- This grant program shall not be combined with any other grant program outlined in this Plan. However, applicants may rescind their application for the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant and re-apply for other grants under this Plan, as may be applicable.
- If an eligible applicant is approved for the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant, and if the subject property is sold, in whole or in part, before the original grant period lapses, the original owner may not be entitled to receive the remaining grant payments, in accordance with the terms of the program agreement. The payments are also non-transferrable to the new owner unless specifically stipulated as part of the Financial Incentives Program Agreement executed between the owner at the time the agreement was entered into with the Corporation of the County of Brant.

### 3.1.6.8 Design Eligibility Criteria

This grant program could relate to a broad range of different improvements, including infill (new development), redevelopment, building additions, property conversions or site planning (e.g., reconfiguration of parking areas). Accordingly, depending on the proposed improvements, the following design guidelines will be applicable:

- Infill development, new development, redevelopment and building additions will be in accordance with the following:
  - **Building height** shall be in accordance with Section 3.1. In no case will 1 storey buildings be eligible. This Plan encourages the development of 2-3 storey buildings.
  - **Building setbacks and stepbacks** will be in accordance with Section 3.2 – Setbacks and stepbacks.



- **Façades** will be in accordance with Section 3.3 – Façade Articulation and Section 3.4 – Façade Composition, as applicable to new buildings. **Windows and doors** will be in accordance with Section 3.6, as applicable to new buildings.
- **Roofs** for new buildings will be in accordance with Section 3.7 – Roofs.
- **Building materials and colours** will be in accordance with Section 3.8 – Materials as applicable for new buildings.
- **Awnings**, where proposed, will be in accordance with Section 3.10 - Awnings.
- **Signage** as part of new buildings will be in accordance with Section 4.0 – General Signage Guidelines.
- Any parking area improvements and site planning will be in accordance with the design requirements for **parking area improvements** and **landscape buffers** in Section 3.1.4 – Design Eligibility Criteria for the Property and Parking Area Improvement Grant of this Plan.

### 3.1.7 Brownfield Study Grant

#### 3.1.7.1 Purpose

The risks and costs associated with brownfield rehabilitation are often key barriers to the rehabilitation and redevelopment of brownfield properties. Additionally, the lack of information on specific properties, and the reluctance of property owners to undertake and fund environmental studies, could be a barrier to investment due to uncertain level of risk. The Brownfield Feasibility Grant Program will promote the completion of studies with respect to environmental conditions of properties by owners that otherwise may not occur due to cost premiums associated with these assessments.

#### 3.1.7.2 Eligible Properties

Any property in the community improvement project area is eligible for this grant, provided there is a rationale or basis for suspecting the site is a potential brownfield property (i.e., based on the results of a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment).

#### 3.1.7.3 Authority

The authority for administering this grant program is consistent with Section 28(7) of the *Planning Act*, and conforms to the policies of Section 2.6 of the Brant County Official Plan.

#### 3.1.7.4 Eligible Costs

The potential grant value shall be calculated based on the estimated value of any eligible costs, which may include:

- Preparation of a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment;

- Preparation of a Phase III Environmental Site Assessment (i.e., detailed remediation plans as an outcome or extension of the Phase II Environmental Site Assessment);
- Preparation of a work plan for remediation of the site; and
- Preparation of a risk assessment plan.

### 3.1.7.5 Grant Value

The maximum value of the grant shall be 50% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$15,000.

### 3.1.7.6 Payment of Grant

The grant shall be paid only upon submission and the Review Committee's acceptance of the applicable study/report.

### 3.1.7.7 Program Eligibility Criteria

The policies of Section 3.2 – General Eligibility Criteria apply.

To be eligible, a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment must be completed and indicate that contamination is likely.

All environmental studies must be completed by a qualified person as defined in Section 168.1 of the *Environmental Protection Act*, Ontario Regulation 153/04, as amended.

### 3.1.7.8 Design Eligibility Criteria

An understanding of the proposed development or design may not be known at the time of application for the brownfield study grant. Accordingly, there are no design eligibility criteria for this grant program.

## 3.1.8 Brownfield Property Tax Assistance Program

### 3.1.8.1 Purpose

The provision of tax assistance to brownfield property owners may encourage the remediation and redevelopment of these properties. Remediation of sites and their subsequent development may result in an increase in the assessed value of a property. The Brownfield Property Tax Assistance Program allows the County to cancel or defer all or a portion of municipal taxes during a set period. The Province offers a program in which the education portion of taxes may be cancelled or deferred, subject to approval by the Ministry of Finance.

### 3.1.8.2 Eligible Properties

Any property in the community improvement project area is eligible for this grant, provided remediation is required for development or redevelopment in accordance with the results of a Phase II or Phase III Environmental Site Assessment. Additionally, the development/redevelopment must be for commercial, mixed-use, institutional, or a multi-residential development with at least 4 units.

### 3.1.8.3 Authority

In accordance with Section 365.1 of the *Municipal Act*, the County may defer or cancel all or a portion of municipal taxes during the period in which the brownfield site is being cleaned up or redeveloped (the rehabilitation period and development period, as defined in the *Municipal Act*). The County may also apply to the Minister of Finance, on behalf of the property owner, to have the education portion of the property taxes deferred or cancelled.



### 3.1.8.4 Eligible Costs

The potential tax assistance shall be calculated based on the estimated value of any eligible costs, which may include:

- Preparation of a Phase III Environmental Site Assessment (i.e., detailed remediation plans as an outcome or extension of the Phase II Environmental Site Assessment), a work plan for remediation of the site and/or preparation of a risk assessment plan, unless such cost was included as an eligible cost under the Brownfield Study Grant program previously issued for the property;
- Environmental consultant fees or property insurance during the remediation period; and
- The costs of environmental remediation, including costs for preparing the Record of Site Condition; costs for demolition, costs for removing and disposing of contaminated soil and materials; costs for placing clean fill and grading; installing, maintaining, monitoring or operating environmental or engineering works as required in accordance with the Phase III Environmental Site Assessment or Risk Assessment Plan.

### 3.1.8.5 Value of Tax Assistance

The County may pass by-laws to provide a deferral or cancellation of all or a part of the municipal portion of taxes on a brownfield site during the Rehabilitation Period and Development Period, as defined in Section 365.1(1) of the *Municipal Act*. The total value of the tax assistance will not exceed the total eligible costs, which are defined in the eligibility requirements above. The property tax assistance may up to 100% of the municipal property taxes.

The value and duration of the tax assistance will be considered on a case-by-case basis and in accordance with the *Municipal Act*, and outlined in the implementing By-law.

Prior to passing the by-law approving the tax assistance, County staff will be required to notify the Ministry of Finance. Within 30 days of passing the by-law, County staff will also be required to notify the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Minister of Finance.

County staff may apply for Provincial Tax Assistance, on behalf of the owner, to cancel or freeze all or a portion of the education portion of property taxes (i.e., the Ontario Brownfields Financial Tax Incentive Program). The application will need to be approved by the Minister of Finance, and may be subject to a different timeline than the approved municipal tax assistance. The County must be offering municipal tax assistance in order for the owner to be eligible for Provincial tax assistance. An application to the Ministry of Finance to offer educational tax assistance must be made and approved prior to passing the tax assistance by-law. The matching Provincial tax assistance will generally be similar to the municipal tax assistance (e.g., if only 50% of the municipal taxes are cancelled, then likely only 50% of the education portion will be cancelled).

### 3.1.8.6 Payment

The terms and timing of tax assistance shall be as outlined in the by-law, prepared in accordance with the *Municipal Act*. The program is only a cancellation or deferral of taxes, and is not paid as a grant.

### 3.1.8.7 Program Eligibility Criteria

In no case shall the total amount of tax assistance exceed 50% of the total calculated eligible costs.

The Province may stipulate different eligible costs for the educational portion if pursued by the County.

### 3.1.8.8 Design Eligibility Criteria

This program could relate to a broad range of different improvements, including new development), redevelopment, building additions, property conversions or site planning (e.g., reconfiguration of parking areas). Accordingly, depending on the proposed improvements, the following design guidelines will be applicable and may be incorporated into the implementing tax assistance by-law as conditions:

- Infill development, new development, redevelopment and building additions will be in accordance with the following:
  - **Building height** shall be in accordance with Section 3.1. In no case will 1 storey buildings be permitted. This Plan encourages the development of 2-3 storey buildings.
  - **Building setbacks and stepbacks** will be in accordance with Section 3.2 – Setbacks and stepbacks.
  - **Façades** will be in accordance with Section 3.3 – Façade Articulation and Section 3.4 – Façade Composition, as applicable to new buildings. **Windows and doors** will be in accordance with Section 3.6, as applicable to new buildings.
  - **Roofs** for new buildings will be in accordance with Section 3.7 – Roofs.
  - **Building materials and colours** will be in accordance with Section 3.8 – Materials as applicable for new buildings.
  - **Awnings**, where proposed, will be in accordance with Section 3.10 - Awnings.
- **Signage** as part of new buildings will be in accordance with Section 4.0 – General Signage Guidelines.
- Any parking area improvements and site planning will be in accordance with the design requirements for **parking area improvements** and **landscape buffers** in Section 3.1.4 – Design Eligibility Criteria for the Property and Parking Area Improvement Grant of this Plan.



## 3.2 GENERAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible, all applications for financial incentives shall comply with the following general eligibility criteria:

1. The subject property shall not have outstanding tax arrears.
2. In no case will a completed project or a project underway be considered for a grant. Construction may only begin after application approval and the execution of the financial incentive program agreement, in accordance with the application process (Section 3.3.4).
3. The subject property shall be located within the currently designated Community Improvement Project Area (refer to Section 6.2).
4. Where an applicant is a tenant, the authorization and consent of the owner shall be required as part of the application form.
5. Where a subject property is designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, any planned improvements shall be consistent with the reasons for designation as set out in the by-law designating the property.
6. Projects shall be considered in the opinion of the Administrator and Review Committee to represent an improvement in quality, aesthetics, durability and/or restoration to historical authenticity, and not merely a life cycle replacement of what is existing.
7. At its sole discretion, the Review Committee may decline an application where the total calculated grant would be less than \$500.00.
8. The application shall conform to the Official Plan, Zoning By-law, and all other by-laws of the County, any permit from the Grand River Conservation Authority, and all laws and regulations of the Province of Ontario, and the Government of Canada, as may be applicable to the project.
9. Applicants may be able to apply for more than one grant. All grant programs may be combined, except that the tax increment equivalent grant shall not be combined with any other program.
10. Applicants shall disclose other funding and incentives being received for the project as part of the application for financial incentives. At its sole discretion, the Review Committee may deduct any other grants or incentives from the eligible grant amount.
11. It is recognized that other approvals may be required in relation to a community improvement project. Applicants may apply for financial incentives prior to receiving other required approvals (e.g., zoning, site plan, permit from the Conservation Authority, etc.). However, applicants will need to be aware of the risk that not receiving other approvals may mean that a grant may not be paid. Where approvals are required, the receipt of required approvals may be added by the Administrator as conditions for grant payment in the financial incentive program agreement.
12. It is recognized that this Plan incents certain forms of development within a designated Special policy Area (i.e., a flood prone area). All development will be subject to meeting the requirements of the Official Plan, the Zoning By-law, and a permit from the Conservation Authority as may be required. This Plan does not exempt any applicant from receiving other required approvals. This Plan shall not be construed as to indicate land use or development permissions.

13. In no case will the value of all grants exceed 50% of the total eligible costs.

### 3.3 ADMINISTRATION OF THE FINANCIAL INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

#### 3.3.1 Designation of the Administrator and Review Committee

1. Upon implementation of this Plan, Council shall appoint an **Administrator** to manage the day-to-day responsibilities of this Plan. The responsibilities of the Administrator shall be as outlined in this Plan, including: meeting with potential applicants for financial incentives; coordinating applications with the Review Committee and/or Council; and fulfilling the responsibilities of the Plan Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy (Section 6.4) and Marketing the Plan (Section 6.5). Generally, the Administrator should be a full-time staff member at the County of Brant to ensure consistent customer service and the maintenance of strong relationships with the business community. Potential persons who may be suitable for fulfilling the Administrator role could include:
  - a) The Chief Building Official or a designate;
  - b) The General Manager of Economic Development and Strategic Investments, an Economic Development Officer or a designate; or
  - c) The Director of Planning or a designate.
2. By default, Council is the authority who will make decisions on financial incentive applications. However, Council may appoint a **Review Committee** to make decisions on applications for financial incentives, as outlined in Section 3.3.3. The Review Committee may consist of any committee selected by Council



upon the recommendation of the Administrator and County staff. Members of the Review Committee should be impartial and be able to interpret and implement this Plan and the Downtown Paris Design Guidelines. Members of the Review Committee could include:

- a) The Downtown Revitalization Committee, if implemented under the recommendations of Section 5.4 of this Plan;
- b) Authors of the Downtown Paris Design Guidelines; or
- c) Representation from County staff (Economic Development & Strategic Investments, Development Services including Planning and Building, Public Works, as well as representation from Finance).

### 3.3.2 Financial Incentives Program Budget

1. The County shall be responsible for funding the financial incentive programs.
2. Council shall establish an annual budget for financial incentive programs as part of its annual budgeting process. This Plan does not specify the amount of the budget, as it may be subject to availability of funding and other priorities of Council.
3. Any unused portion of the budget may be carried forward to the following year.
4. At its sole discretion, and in consideration of recommendations by the Administrator through the Plan Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy (Section 6.4), Council may allocate portions of the budget to individual financial incentive programs. Further, Council may

choose to allocate no funding to certain programs.

### 3.3.3 Application Intake

1. By default, the process for accepting applications is considered to be an **open, year-round process**. When there is funding available for financial incentives, the Administrator will accept applications at any time during the year, and the Administrator and Review Committee will process and make decisions on applications in accordance with the process outlined in Section 3.3.4. Under this process, funding becomes available on a “first-come, first-served” basis.
2. Council, in consideration of a recommendation by the Administrator, may opt to implement an **application intake window process**. Under this application process, the Administrator will only accept financial incentive applications during one or more specified timeframe(s) during the year, with a hard deadline for accepting applications. Council and/or the Review Committee will hear applications all at once. Should there be more approved applications than there is funding available, there will be a need to prioritize applications. The prioritization of applications will be at the sole discretion of Council and/or the Review Committee, in consideration of the following prioritization criteria:
  - a) Applications related to designated heritage buildings under the *Ontario Heritage Act* may be considered as the first priority.
  - b) Applications involving projects that improve public access or views of the Grand/Nith Rivers may be considered as the second priority.

- c) Applications related to corner lot properties may be considered as the third priority.
- d) Finally, the order in which the applications were received during the intake window period may be considered as a fourth priority.

### 3.3.4 Application Process

1. Generally, applicants shall be required to meet with the Administrator to discuss their potential improvement project before an application will be accepted. The Administrator will confirm application requirements, eligibility, process and timing and will recommend design considerations.
2. An applicant will submit a completed application form along with any materials required by the Administrator in consultation with the Review Committee. The types of required supporting materials will depend on the proposed project and the grant(s) being applied for. Supporting materials may include:
  - a) Drawings/elevations/plans/sketches of the proposed improvements;
  - b) Current photos of the property;
  - c) A minimum of two quotes to complete the work;
  - d) Proof that the project complies with zoning/Official Plan and/or any other Provincial, Conservation Authority or Federal requirements as may be applicable;
  - e) Historical photos or other historical information about the property, as may be available (may be supplemented by the Administrator in consultation with other County staff);
3. The Administrator will review the application for completeness and eligibility, and inform the applicant that the application is considered “complete”. If the application is incomplete, the Administrator will inform the applicant of how to complete the application.
4. If the application is deemed complete, the Administrator will circulate the application to Council/Review Committee for review.
5. Council/Review Committee will meet to discuss and make a decision on the application. If the application is refused, it will be returned to the applicant with the reasons for refusal. The Applicant will be able to resubmit their application once they have addressed the reasons for refusal. Where the Review Committee is not Council, the Applicant will have the alternative option of appealing the Review Committee’s decision to Council for reconsideration.
6. If the application is approved, the Administrator will prepare and execute a financial incentive program agreement, which requires signature by the County and the
  - f) A completed Phase I or Phase II Environmental Site assessment (as may be required for the Brownfield Study Grant or the Brownfield Property Tax Assistance Program);
  - g) A project feasibility plan/pro forma as may be required in relation to a tax increment equivalent grant or the Brownfield Property Tax Assistance Program; and/or
  - h) A brownfield remediation work plan including description of remediation proposed and timelines for undertaking remediation and development is required for the Brownfield Property Tax Assistance Program.



applicant. The financial incentive program agreement will outline the terms and payment of the grant. The agreement also represents an important tool to ensure that the applicant is carrying out their project in accordance with their approved application.

7. The applicant may begin construction. Once complete, the applicant must inform the Administrator.
8. The Administrator may inspect the project to ensure compliance with the financial incentive program agreement. Alternatively, the Administrator may request photos. If the completed project does not comply with the Agreement, the Review Committee, at its sole discretion, may choose to not make payment.
9. If the Administrator is satisfied the Applicant has completed the project in accordance with the financial incentive program agreement, payment of the grant will be made in accordance with the terms and/or schedule outlined in the financial incentive program agreement.

# Status of Renaissance Application



**Application Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date Received:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date Deemed Complete:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date Presented to Committee:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Recommendation to Council:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Council Decision:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date Work Initiated:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date Work Completed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date Cheque Issued:** \_\_\_\_\_