



Harrow Community Improvement Plan Implementation Strategy

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Harrow Community Improvement Plan Implementation Strategy

1.0 Community Improvement Plan Background

1.1 Harrow Community Strategic Plan

The Harrow Community Strategic Plan was initiated by Council in January 2011 to develop 'Pride of Place' for Harrow as a distinctive urban centre within the municipality and a prosperous and sustainable member of the larger community, the Town of Essex. It establishes a strategic direction for Harrow that sets goals and objectives for the community and Council to work towards. It incorporates a policy framework to be ultimately included in the Town of Essex Official Plan.

The development of the strategic plan engaged the general public, business operators, service agencies and other stakeholders in a pro-active and positive exercise to establish a vision for Harrow based on its historical roots and its association with the other urban centres in the Town, its large rural hinterland and the region.

Through the development of the strategic plan, the community identified the need to commit to the rejuvenation and revitalization of the downtown core of Harrow.

The business community and cultural organizations, in particular, desired improved communication amongst various agencies and organizations, heritage preservation, new economic stimuli and tourism promotion and greater efforts to develop the downtown as a destination for commerce and culture, as well as for more residential accommodation, as important priorities.

1.2 Harrow Community Strategic Plan Background

Under Section 28 of The Planning Act of Ontario (1990), municipalities are given authority to create community improvement plans with supporting programs for identified community improvement plan project areas. In accordance with Section 28, a municipality may use any

of the following strategies in administering the community improvement plan, hereby referred to as the Plan:

- Acquire, hold, clear, grade or otherwise prepare land for community improvement;
- Construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on land acquired or held by it in the community project area;
- Sell, lease or otherwise dispose of any such buildings and the land associated with it in the community project area;
- Sell, lease or otherwise dispose of any lands acquired or held by it in the community improvement project area for use in conformity with the community improvement plan;
- Make grants or loans in conformity with the community improvement project area for eligible costs associated with a project within the community improvement plan project area in conformity with the community improvement plan;
- Fund the costs of an environmental site assessment, environmental remediation, development or redevelopment, construction and reconstruction of lands and buildings for rehabilitation purposes or for the provision of energy efficient uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements or facilities.

Further Section 365.1 of the Municipal Act of Ontario (2001) permits municipalities to pass a by-law providing tax assistance to eligible properties in the form of deferral or cancellation of all or part of the municipal taxes levied on new assessment for a specified period of time. It works in partnership with the provisions of Section 28 of the Planning Act and its provisions are incorporated into it.

In July, 2011 Council for the Town of Essex adopted the Harrow Community Strategic Plan. Within the Strategic Plan was a draft plan outlining the following **Goals** for the Harrow Community Improvement Plan:

- Implement the Official Plan objectives for community improvement, redevelopment and revitalization, as stated in Section 7.1 of the Town of Essex Official Plan;
- Where feasible implement other Harrow Community Strategic Plan, Council and Official Plan policies and directives related to community health and prosperity;

- Achieve the community's vision of a prosperous and active downtown where residents and visitors live, work, shop and play;
- Foster an environment to promote and support the economic rejuvenation of the downtown and other project areas;
- Establish an implementation strategy, inclusive of financial incentive programs, to complement and assist private sector investment in the revitalization of the downtown, as defined in the Implementation Plan and forming part of this Plan.

From a planning perspective, the Harrow Community Improvement Plan, developed to help implement the objectives of the Strategic Plan and the wishes of residents and the business community, is a proven municipal tool that will assist the business operators and building owners of Harrow as well as the Town of Essex Council in achieving the principle goals set out above.

Within the Plan are the following **objectives** for the Town of Essex to be an active partner in supporting and providing financial incentives to those projects that will achieve the Goals of the Strategic Plan and the Official Plan:

- To provide for rehabilitation or improvement of existing buildings and properties, building facades, signage, landscaping, parking and other physical resources, through the use of municipal assisted programs and funding sources;
- To provide for development, redevelopment and adaptive re-use of older buildings and vacant and underutilized lands through the use of municipal assisted programs and funding sources;
- To complement private initiatives, the Town is committed to improving the walkability, amenities and attractiveness of local streetscapes and to develop safe streets that meet the needs of pedestrians, non-motorized and motorized traffic, in accordance with the goals of the Provincial Policy Statement for safe and healthy communities;
- To stimulate private investment in rehabilitation and community improvement in the downtown and elsewhere to support downtown sustainability and community health and prosperity;

- For property owners, investors and community organizations to undertake projects, programs and activities consistent with the Goals of the Strategic Plan and the Official Plan;
- To preserve, conserve and enhance the heritage and historical structures and streetscape of Harrow.

1.3 Harrow Community Improvement Plan Expansion

The boundaries of the Harrow Community Improvement Plan Project Areas are shown on the maps accompanying this Plan. The policies and programs set out in this Plan are applicable to this plan's project areas exclusively.

The implementation of the Harrow Community Improvement Plan is helping to address physical deterioration in the central core by providing grants and other financial incentives to stimulate private investment in building façade renewal and other physical improvements to make the downtown more attractive to residents and visitors. It also encourages investment in new and expanded land uses that complement existing activities downtown.

More recently, Council set out to further strengthen and support the downtown and to effect a good balance of employment opportunities, varied residential accommodation and local services to benefit the entire community, in a compact urban form. In other words the aim is to achieve a balanced, healthy and sustainable community. Incentives have been adopted to stimulate new economic development downtown and elsewhere in the community. This is directed particularly to the goal of generating new and expanded industrial and commercial uses that would provide employment opportunities and the economic spin-offs so critical for the continued health and prosperity of the community.

Harrow has small infill vacant industrially zoned lands and several highway commercial properties that have not been developed to their full potential. The industrially designated and zoned parcels, in particular, have limited visibility from a main road, are unserviced (but serviceable), may require environmental remediation and are bounded by mixed use

development such that landscape buffering may be required, depending on the potential uses. As such, they have limited appeal without some form of stimuli to help mitigate their physical limitations. As well, current business operators on older industrial and commercial lands should be given comparable incentives to expand and enhance their facilities and businesses. Many would benefit from property beautification, more efficient use of space, better accessibility and enhanced support facilities.

Currently Harrow has no tourist accommodation. New and expanded program incentives will encourage boutique hotel and bed and breakfast uses within the project areas.

Harrow's location in the centre of increasingly popular cycle tourism routes, wine and black history trails and other tourist related activities makes the provision of visitor accommodation a priority.

Affordable rental housing is needed. Currently, Harrow has only a very small percentage of its housing stock in the form of rental accommodation. What is offered is of modest size and configuration. In response to the mandates of the Planning Act, the Town's general zoning by-law was amended to permit second dwelling units in single-detached, semi-detached and townhome dwellings, subject to compliance with zoning regulations regarding second dwelling units.

Harrow has also experienced recent school closings rendering the school buildings and or site redundant for institutional purposes. They are suitable for redevelopment or re-use, particularly for mixed residential land uses. Harrow lacks a range of housing options and such sites provide the opportunity for addressing this deficiency.

Grant incentives have been adopted to encourage such residential accommodation in suitable underutilized commercial building space and in low density residential areas within the community improvement project areas.

Overall, the expanded goals are intended to encourage and stimulate new investment in employment activities in Harrow. Recent beautification efforts in the downtown through civic streetscape improvements, the efforts of the Chamber of Commerce, Communities in

Bloom and other active Harrow supporters, as well as several community improvement grants for façade treatments, have helped to maintain the attractiveness of the downtown.

But there is a need to attract new employment activities, to re-energize existing businesses and to provide varied accommodation for residents and visitors. Consequently, the Harrow Community Improvement Plan project area has been enlarged to meet these goals. As well, existing programs have been amended and new programs have been introduced to make the overall community improvement plan more attractive and relevant to the needs of businesses, visitors and residents of Harrow.

2.0 Harrow Community Improvement Plan Program Strategy

2.1 Clarifications:

Accessible means a barrier free entrance that permits a person with a disability full access to a building, in accordance with the Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

Acknowledgement Agreement means that all property owners making application(s) for grants are required to enter into a grant agreement with the Town of Essex. The grant agreement will specify such items as, but not be limited to, the specific purpose and amount of the grant applicable, the duration of the grant, if of the type spread out over time, and, in the event of a default of the agreement, the owner's obligation to repay through taxes or in such payment acceptable to the Town of Essex any monies received. The agreement is intended to encapsulate all of the terms and conditions included in the specified grant guidelines. It may be registered on title and applicable to present and subsequent owners of the property should the property be sold within a stated period of time.

Alley means a highway, having a maximum width of less than 7 metres (23 feet), providing a means of access to a lot.

Combined Use Building refers to a building having, as a main uses, both a dwelling unit(s) and a non-residential use(s).

Consistent with the Goals of the Plan refers to the overall goals of the Harrow Centre Community Improvement Plan, as described in the Plan.

Conversion means to create a new rental dwelling unit(s) or hotel or bed and breakfast accommodation in a dwelling or a combined use building by the addition of new building space to an existing building or the conversion of space within the existing building, in a manner acceptable to the Town and in compliance with the general zoning by-law, By-law 1037, and the Ontario Building Code.

Dwelling means a building or structure or part of a building or structure that is occupied, in whole or in part, for the purposes of human habitation, but does not include a hotel, motel or mobile home.

Facade means the exterior walls of a building directly visible from a street or public area.

Final Inspection and Approval means that the work as described in the Acknowledgment Agreement has been completed in the manner approved by the Town of Essex and has received final inspection and approval from the Town.

Highway means all roads dedicated for public use.

Municipal Wide Services Component of Development Charges means the municipal wide service component of the development charges fees, as set out in the Town of Essex Development Charges By-law for current rates and fees.

Project Area means the geographic area of the Harrow Community Improvement Plan delineated by by-law, as may be amended from time to time.

Property Owner means the owner of the land and or building, located in a Harrow Community Improvement Plan Project Area, which is the subject of a program application within this plan. A person having signing authority and lawfully designated by the owner to make a program application on behalf of the property owner will also be deemed to be the property owner for the purposes of this Plan.

Public Parking Area refers to a free standing parking area available to the public or a shared parking area in which public and private use is available.

Rehabilitation means functional or aesthetic site improvements to the property approved by the Town, including for example: new information or identity signage; parking lot striping and sealing; public benches; landscaping and screening and accessible pedestrian entrances.

Urban Design Guidelines means the architectural and functional guidelines and objectives set out in subsection 5.3, Downtown Urban Design Guidelines, of the Harrow Community Improvement Plan.

2.2 Program Start Date

For all Grant programs dealing with financial commitments, the program start date is based upon the annual Council approval of budget funding for the Plan.

2.3 Retroactivity

Program funding is only available after Town of Essex approval of the program(s) and the site specific application. The grant programs or architectural services will not be retroactively applied to works started prior to commencement of the program, unless otherwise authorized by Council.

2.4 Allocation Grants and Architectural Services

Grants: Unless otherwise specifically stated, all grants will be paid to the property owner after the application is approved by the Town and the approved work is successfully completed to the satisfaction of the Town.

3.0 Qualification Criteria for All Programs

All owners of properties within the Harrow Community Improvement Plan Project Area are eligible to apply for funding, subject to meeting the following eligibility criteria, and the availability of funding as approved by Council. When an applicant is applying for a grant or architectural design service under the Plan, the following criteria must be met to the satisfaction of the Town of Essex.

The following terms and conditions apply to all programs:

- Each of the programs outlined are application based, with review, evaluation and decision-making to be done by the Town on a site specific basis.
- The applicant must be the registered owner of the property for which the application is being made or an agent authorized by the registered owner.
- A property owner who is in arrears of property tax or any other municipal financial obligation cannot participate in a program.
- Any outstanding orders against the subject property must be satisfied prior to the grant application being made or other services rendered under this Plan, unless fulfillment of the order is part of the proposed work.
- Only one application can be made for a property under each applicable grant program, unless the project is phased in a manner satisfactory to the Town of Essex or the Town determines that a further application is merited.
- Proposed work will conform to all municipal policies, standards and procedures of the Town including: its current applicable Official Plan policies, relevant zoning, design guidelines and development manual policies and the necessary planning and development approvals and building permits pursuant to the Ontario Building Code.
- A grant program application must be submitted to the Town of Essex prior to the commencement of any works and prior to application for a building permit directly related to program funding, unless otherwise permitted by Council.

- Such program application will include plans, estimates, contracts and other details as may be required to satisfy the Town with respect to the costs of the project and conformity of the project to the Plan.
- A property owner may be requested to provide a business or development plan for the proposed work, as part of the program application.
- As a condition of approval, the Town of Essex may also require the submission of professional design and architectural drawings, which satisfy the applicable Urban Design Guidelines of the Plan, as well as, impact studies or mitigation criteria, such as a traffic impact study or an environmental screening report.
- The Town of Essex will require the applicant to provide information on CIP program grants previously received for the subject property from all sources and the amount of the grants will be taken into account in consideration of an application.
- The total value of all grants and services received from the Town of Essex for a subject property shall not exceed the total value of the project or such other minimum level established in the respective program(s), whichever is less.
- All property owners participating in any program will be required to enter into an Acknowledgement Agreement with the Town of Essex. The Council of the Town of Essex will be the approval authority for the execution of an agreement. The agreement will be registered on title and will specify the terms of the grant or services.
- All completed works must comply with the description of the works set out in the related Acknowledgment Agreement.
- Where applicable, when a grant is to be given, the owner will submit, for final approval, a copy of all paid invoices for work that is completed. Grants will be made upon successful completion of the approved work and acceptance of all documentation of the costs associated with the work, in accordance with the provisions of the program.
- The Town of Essex may undertake an audit of work done and associated costs if it deems it necessary. The cost of the audit will be deducted from the approved grant amount.

- Unless the Town deems it appropriate to enter into an agreement with a subsequent owner or transferee for continuation of the grant, if a building, erected or improved with the assistance of a program grant or services, is demolished, sold or its ownership transferred prior to the expiry of the grant or service agreement period, stated in the Acknowledgement Agreement, at the discretion of the Town, the grant or services are forfeited and monies will be recovered by the Town either through posting the fees on the property taxes or by the owner paying a lump sum payment to the Town of Essex.
- The Town may at any time discontinue a program; however, any participants in the program, who have an Acknowledgment Agreement executed prior to program discontinuation, will continue to receive grants or services as approved for their property, in accordance with the provisions of the program and acknowledgment agreement.

4.0 Administration

The following general steps will guide Town of Essex staff in review, evaluation and administration of applications:

- Applicants will be required to have a pre-consultation meeting with appropriate Town of Essex staff in order to determine program eligibility, proposed scope of work, project timing and compliance with the Urban Design Guidelines.
- The Town may request that applications be accompanied by one or more of the following supporting documentation:
 - a site plan and professional design or architectural drawings;
 - specification of the proposed works, and if requested, any construction drawings;
 - estimated project construction costs, including a breakdown of said costs;
 - impact studies such as traffic and parking impact assessments;
 - environmental reports or a record of site condition;
 - incorporation documents;
 - financial information or a market feasibility study, including, but not necessarily limited to:
 - sources and uses of funds;
 - financial statements;
 - purchase price of property;
 - appraised value of property;
 - owner equity;
 - registered mortgages;
 - details of primary construction lending and secondary financing; and,
 - projected unit sale prices and/or rental rates
 - Projected employment levels.
- Before accepting an application, Town staff will screen the application. If the lot affected is outside of a Harrow Community Improvement Plan Project Area or the

application clearly does not meet the program eligibility criteria, the application will not be accepted. Acceptance of the application by the Town does not imply approval under the Plan.

- Town staff will perform an initial site visit and inspection of the building or property, if deemed necessary.
- The owner must provide evidence of financial capability to develop the property according to the terms of the program.
- If all criteria are met, the Town of Essex will approve the Program Application request, and an Acknowledgement Agreement between the Town of Essex and the property owner will be prepared for execution.
- Once the Town has approved the Program Application request and Acknowledgement Agreement, the Agreement will first be executed by the property owner and then by the Town of Essex.
- Preparation for the release of grants will be processed after:
 - the Agreement has been executed and registered on title;
 - staff have inspected the property and documented the pre-development state and/or completion of the approved works;
 - staff are satisfied with all reports and documentation submitted;
 - A building permit has been issued, if required for the approved works.
- The monies or services will be advanced to the property owner on satisfactory completion of the project in accordance with the terms of the program and, if required, proof of payment of all related invoices and a copy of the invoice(s) have been presented to the Town.

4.1 Resource Implications

The allocation of grant and staff resources towards the programs included in the Harrow Community Improvement Plan will be at the sole discretion of the Council for The Corporation of the Town of Essex and:

- It is anticipated that the Harrow Community Improvement Plan will be implemented until 2021. Town of Essex Council may elect to extend the implementation period, discontinue or amend the Plan, as it deems appropriate or necessary.
- The Plan and its Implementation Strategy will be reviewed and assessed by Development Services Staff annually and may be amended from time to time by Council resolution and/or by-law amendment to the Plan, at Council's discretion.
- Council has adopted Urban Design Guidelines to provide guidance to the property owner as well as staff and Council to ensure, where applicable, that all applications conform to desired design concepts and strategies for the development of lands within the boundaries of the Plan.
- The Implementation Strategy establishes the details of and obligations under each program available. Please refer below to Section 5.2 Program Descriptions.
- Council will establish the level of incentives offered and will, as part of its annual budget process, determine if changes in the incentive levels are necessary, desirable or warranted.
- Any substantive changes to the project area boundaries or the introduction of new programs will require an amendment to the Plan by by-law. .
- Based on the program package described above, the resource requirements are:
 - Staff and professional resources to administer the program package;
 - Marketing, advertising and other delivery costs for the Plan;
 - Town approval to grant monies under the following programs.

5.0 Program Details

A description of each of the Plan programs is provided in this section. The allocation of resources toward all programs and to each program in the Harrow Community Improvement Plan will be entirely at the discretion of Council for the Town of Essex.

A property owner may make application for a grant or services under one or more programs, subject to eligibility. Only one application can be made for a property under any program, unless development is phased in a manner acceptable to the Town. Owners must make application in writing to the Town and meet all of the information requirements set out in the application package or as required by the Town.

All property owners participating in any program will be required to enter into an Acknowledgement Agreement with the Town of Essex. The Economic Development Officer for the Town of Essex or the Manager of Planning Services in his or her absence will be the approval authority for the execution of an Agreement. The Agreement will specify the terms of the grant and services and set out a description of the works approved. Depending on the program, the Agreement will be registered on title. All completed works must comply with the description of the works set out in the related Agreement and the terms and conditions therein.

5.1 Program Groups

Exclusively for lands within a Harrow Community Improvement Plan Project Area, an eligible property owner has access to one or more of the following eight financial incentive programs:

Development Grant Programs

- Development Permit Fee Grant Program
- Development Charges Grant Program
- Tax Increment Equivalent Grant Program

- Parks Levy Equivalent Grant Program

Revitalization Grant Programs

- Façade Improvement Grant Program
- Outdoor Cafe, Patio, and Commercial Outdoor Space Grant Program
- Conversion and Rehabilitation Grant Program
- Professional Design Services Grant Program

5.2 Program Descriptions:

5.2.1 Development Permit Fee Grant Program

The **Development Permit Fee Grant Program** provides a grant to property owners undertaking works that require approval under the Planning Act or the Building Code Act or both. This program applies to Planning Act applications or construction permits to which fees, hereby referred to as development permit fees, apply.

Program Specific Provisions:

- Owners of a dwelling or other building to be converted to a bed and breakfast dwelling or to which a rental dwelling unit is to be added or of an institutional, a commercial or industrial property or a redundant institutional building which is intended to be re-purposed, which is the subject of this grant application, and when in combination with an executed development agreement, are eligible to participate in this program.
- Eligible development permits are applications for any one or more of:
an Official Plan Amendment; a Zoning By-Law Amendment; a Minor Variance; a Site Plan Control Agreement; Consent or Plan of Subdivision Approval; Removal of the Holding (h) designation; a Demolition Permit; a Building Permit; a Plumbing Permit; a Sign Permit and/or a Driveway Permit.

- The property owner will receive the grant equivalent of the development permit fee or combination of fees charged by the Town for the approved project.
- The grant payment is normally made to the property owner within 30 working days following final inspection and approval of the completed works.

5.2.2 Development Charges Grant Program

The **Development Charges Grant Program** provides a grant up to the equivalent of the municipal wide services component of the development charges fee applicable to the property owner undertaking works to which Development Charges apply.

Program Specific Provisions:

- Where development charges are applicable, eligible works include:
new rental dwelling units; development and redevelopment of commercial, Industrial or Institutional zoned lands or the expansion of existing commercial, Industrial or Institutional buildings and facilities; development and redevelopment of industrially zoned lands or the expansion of existing industrial buildings and facilities and redevelopment of an institutional building formally declared to be redundant and intended to be re-purposed;
- The municipal wide services component of development charges paid by the property owner is returned by means of a grant equivalent to the lesser of 100 percent of that component or the agreed upon and subsequently verified costs of development or redevelopment accepted by the Town;
- The grant payment is normally made to the property owner within 30 working days following final inspection and approval of the completed works.

5.2.3 Tax Increment Equivalent Grant Program

The **Tax Increment Equivalent Grant Program** provides a grant equivalent to the municipality's annual incremental tax increase from a development that increases the assessed value of the

property. This program does not apply to Greenfield lands, namely, farmed lands that require an Official Plan amendment and rezoning to permit an intended principal use or uses.

Program Specific Provisions:

- The Tax Increment Equivalent Grant Program applies to:
New commercial and industrial development and the expansion of existing commercial and industrial buildings, and new industrial development and the expansion of existing industrial buildings and facilities.
- Grants will only be made to property owners undertaking work consistent with the Urban Design Guidelines, where applicable.
- Development of the land must result in an increase of a minimum of \$500,000 in the assessed value of the property.
- The pre-approved assessed value of the land will be the value of the land on the date of application for a building permit.
- The municipal grant amount is determined by the incremental property tax increase applied to the property as a direct result of the works set out in the grant application approved by the Town of Essex.
- A maximum grant equal to 100 percent of the incremental property tax increase payable to the Town is given for each of the first 5 years. Another period of time and payment schedule may be set by Council; however, the total amount of the grant will not exceed the total grant equivalent of 100 percent of the incremental property tax increase payable to the Town for the first 5 years, nor will it be less than 100 percent of the incremental tax increase for the first year.
- Council will determine the total amount of the grant based on, the employment generation potential of the project within the community, the level of investment, the costs of construction and land preparation, and, where applicable, the cost of building rehabilitation.
- The grant is paid annually to the property owner at such time and in such manner as approved by the Town of Essex for the time period set out in the agreement; however, the date of the first payment shall be one year after the Town, upon

confirmation that all taxes owing have been paid by the owner, has received the Notice of Reassessment and, in subsequent years, after confirmation that the taxes owing for each year have been paid in full by the owner.

- If the use of the property changes while the acknowledgement agreement grant time period is in effect, such that the purpose and intent of the grant is declared by the Town to be null and void, the grant is immediately cancelled and any grant monies received will be recovered by the Town in such manner available to it, unless the Town deems it appropriate to enter into a new agreement with the property owner for continuation of the grant.

5.2.5 Façade Improvement Grant Program

The **Facade Improvement Grant Program** offers assistance to property owners who are undertaking institutional, commercial or industrial building façade improvements.

Program Specific Provisions:

- Eligible works include:
any repairs or rehabilitation of a building front façade, as approved by the Town, including the repairing, repainting or cleaning for the façade, restoring a facade with masonry, brickwork, wood and metal cladding, replacing cornices, eaves, parapets and other architectural features, repairing and replacing windows, entranceway modifications for accessibility, redesigning the store front restoring the original facade appearance, replacing or repairing canopies and awnings, installing exterior lighting and installing energy-efficient fixtures or cladding.
The removal of inappropriate or out dated signage and installation of a new sign structure are eligible works under this grant when used in combination with any of the works described above.
- Grants will be made to property owners undertaking façade improvements consistent with the Urban Design Guidelines of the Plan.

- The grant amount is 50 percent of the total cost of the approved works to a maximum grant of \$12,000 per building.
- Notwithstanding the provisions for the payment of grant monies under the Façade Improvement Grant set out immediately above, a 100 percent refurbishing grant amount of up to \$2,000 per building is available for any of the above-listed actions. Only works that are \$2000 or less will be eligible for this grant. Payment of this grant does not prejudice a subsequent application for the larger façade improvement grant above at the end of a twelve month interim period before such application will be accepted. The twelve month interim period may be reduced if, in that period, there is a change of ownership of the property or a new business replaces the business for which the grant was given. A property for which a Façade Improvement Grant was given or approved is not eligible for this refurbishing grant.
- Side and rear façade improvements are eligible, if the façade faces and abuts an alley or highway or a public parking area or there is direct public access to outdoor facilities accessory and complementary to the main use of the building, such as an outdoor patio or dining area.
- The grant payment is normally made to the property owner within 30 working days following final inspection and approval of the completed works.

5.2.6 Outdoor Café, Patio and Commercial Outdoor Space Grant Program

The **Outdoor Café, Patio and Commercial Open Space Grant Program** offers assistance to property owners who are undertaking the construction of outdoor cafes, patios or other commercial open space, that is accessory and complementary to a commercial use within a building on the same lot.

Program Specific Provisions:

- Eligible works include: hardscaping and landscaping and other features to define, shelter, delineate and otherwise enhance the outdoor space.

- The following works are also eligible when used in combination with the items above: new accessible entrances to and from the designated outdoor area, new identification and directional signage, and facilities or structures for the storage or parking of bicycles. Furniture or other facilities that are not fixed in place are not eligible for this grant
- Grants will be made to institutional property owners undertaking work consistent with the goals of the Harrow Community Improvement Plan and the Urban Design Guidelines therein.
- The grant amount is 50 percent of the total cost of the approved works to a maximum grant of \$4,000.
- If the use of the property changes within 5 years after the giving of the grant, such that the purpose and intent of the grant is declared by the Town to be null and void, the grant is immediately cancelled and any grant monies received will be recovered by the Town in such manner available to it, unless the Town deems it appropriate to enter into a new agreement with the property owner for continuation of the grant.
- Where the improvements encroach onto municipal property or a public right of way, the property owner and business operator must enter into an Encroachment Agreement with the Town. The property owner and business operator must indemnify and save the Corporation harmless from all claims for damages sustained by any person, by reason of the permission granted in the encroachment agreement. The property owner and business operator must maintain public liability and property damage coverage in the said encroachment area structure with the Corporation as a named insured and to provide proof thereof annually to the Town.
- The grant payment is normally made to the property owner within 30 working days following final inspection and approval of the completed works.

5.2.7 Conversion, Rehabilitation and Enhancement and Building Demolition Grant Program

Conversion Grant Component

The **conversion component of this Program** offers assistance to property owners who are:

- creating a bed and breakfast operation;
- intending to utilize existing above the ground floor commercial building space or an existing dwelling to create a new rental dwelling unit(s), hotel rooms or suites or bed and breakfast rooms, where permitted by the general zoning by-law;
- Converting an institutional building in whole or in part to accommodate multiple dwelling units and or a residential care facility.

When related to these conversions, grant monies may also be made available for the provision of additional on-site parking, exterior security lighting and other external safety features mandated by the works required to complete the conversion approved under this application.

Program Specific Provisions:

- The grant amount for conversion is 50 percent of the total cost of the approved conversion to a maximum grant of \$5,000 per rental dwelling unit or per hotel unit or suite of rooms to a maximum total grant of \$50,000 and
- \$1000 for a bed and breakfast bedroom or suite of rooms to a maximum total grant of \$5,000 in a converted dwelling and
- \$1000 per bed in a residential care facility to a maximum total grant of \$50,000.
- The grant payment is normally made to the property owner within 30 working days following final inspection and approval of the completed works.

Rehabilitation Grant Component

Dwelling Unit Rehabilitation:

The **rehabilitation component of this Program** offers assistance to property owners to bring existing rental dwelling units in a combined use building or dwelling up to the current minimum standards of energy efficiency under the Ontario Building Code.

- The grant amount for the rehabilitation of existing rental dwelling units is 50 percent of the total cost of the approved rehabilitation works to a maximum grant of \$2,000 per rental dwelling unit.

Accessible Entrance:

- A grant is available for the reconstruction of an existing public entrance to make it accessible at an amount equal to 50 percent of the total cost to a maximum of \$6,000.
- The grant payment is normally made to the property owner within 30 working days following final inspection and approval of the completed works.

Landscaping and Buffering;

Grant monies can also be used by business operators for new landscaping, the screening and buffering of parking areas, the erection of a ground identification sign with peripheral landscaping and other works that are specifically intended to improve the aesthetic appearance of the property from the street or to mitigate nuisances impacting an adjacent residential areas.

- For aesthetic and buffering improvements to commercial, institutional or industrial properties, the grant amount is 50 percent of the total cost of the approved rehabilitation to a maximum of \$6,000 for the property. If the use of the building changes within 5 years after the giving of the grant, such that the purpose and intent of the grant is declared by the Town to be null and void, the grant is immediately cancelled and any grant monies received will be recovered by the Town in such manner available to it, unless the Town deems it appropriate to enter into a new agreement with the property owner for continuation of the grant.
- The grant payment is normally made to the property owner within 30 working days following final inspection and approval of the completed works.

Demolition Grant Component

Grant monies are available for the complete or partial demolition of an institutional, commercial or industrial building, including external components, such as storage facilities, steps or a vestibule, which are integral to the functioning of the building. Proposals for a complete demolition must be accompanied by an executed development agreement, unless the demolition will result in the fulfillment of a work order. Partial demolition is subject to approval by the Chief Building Official who must determine that demolition is

necessary for public safety or that the demolition is necessary to permit the reconstruction of a principal component of the building.

- The grant amount equal to 50 percent of the cost of demolition for the first \$12,000.00 in total demolition costs plus 15 percent of the cost of demolition thereafter to a maximum grant of \$25,000.
- Grant approval will be conditional upon acceptance of a redevelopment plan for the site, if substantial or complete demolition is proposed. Council may also consider the giving of a larger grant of up to \$25,000 when the cost of demolition exceeds \$250,000, upon acceptance of a redevelopment plan for the re-use of the site and or building.
- The grant payment is normally made to the property owner within 30 working days following final inspection and approval of the completed works.

5.2.8 Professional Design Services Grant Program

The Professional Design Services Grant Program is intended to provide a financial incentive in the form of a grant to help offset the cost of professional design services required or encouraged by the Town.

The Town may provide a grant for the services of an architect, landscape architect or similar design professional to property owners for the preparation of a conceptual design for the building facade and exterior restoration, including heritage restoration, and for improvements to the property's grounds, including new landscaping and the addition of outdoor facilities that enhance the business operation and the streetscape.

The professional service provided must be consistent with the Town's Urban Design Guidelines and utilized in combination with one of the following grant programs: Facade Improvement Grant Program, Outdoor Café, Patio and Commercial Outdoor Space Grant Program or the Conversion and Rehabilitation Grant Program.

Program Specific Provisions:

- Grants will only be made on behalf of property owners undertaking work consistent with the goals of the Town of Essex Urban Design Guidelines.
- This program offers reimbursement for professional design services to a maximum fee for service of \$2,000 per property for the development of a conceptual design plan or plans.
- The property owner must sign an Acknowledgement Agreement form at the time that the grant is approved.

6.0 Monitoring and Assessment

The Town will conduct periodic reviews of the programs being implemented under the Harrow Community Strategic Plan and, on an annual basis, determine their effectiveness and whether modifications to a program should be made. Development Services staff for the Town of Essex will provide Council with a regular status report for grant applications received under the Harrow Community Improvement Plan. Planning staff for the Town of Essex will also monitor the HCIP program and report to Council on an annual basis each year with a recommendation on the future level of funding to ensure funding sources are considered with each annual budget.

Development Services staff will maintain a database to include the following:

- number of approved applications and completed works for the year;
- the program utilized for each application;
- the amount of grant money provided for each program;
- the financial implications to the Town and budget for the above;
- Recommendations for the next years' budget requirements.

Development Services staff report will provide an annual recommendation on the merits of continuation, expansion or cessation of the Plan and its programs. Significant changes to the Plan proposed by staff or Council will require an amendment by by-law approved by Council. Administrative, technical changes and minor adjustments can be made without amendment.

7.0 Harrow Community Improvement Plan Project Area Maps

Map 1

Boundary Map of the Harrow Community improvement Plan Project Area

