

TOWNSHIP OF SIOUX NARROWS-NESTOR FALLS

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN



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June, 2012

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TOWNSHIP OF SIOUX NARROWS-NESTOR FALLS

COMMERCIAL HIGHWAY CORRIDOR COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

1.0 BASIS

The Township of Sioux Narrows-Nestor Falls is a tourism based community in the District of Kenora and spans much of the eastern shoreline and interior along Lake of the Woods. The community initially developed in the late early to mid 1900's as a centre for forestry and mining activities, and as a recreational and sportfishing centre focused on the Lake of the Woods.

As the result of the downturn in the North American economy and the slow-down of resort and lodge based tourism, the Township has undertaken a wide range of economic development initiatives. In the last few years streetlights have been installed, and infrastructure improvements to roads and docks has been undertaken. To augment this action, the Township has drafted a Community Improvement Plan background report, to utilize the tools supplied under Section 28 of the Planning Act. This plan identifies significant improvements to the streetscape, roads, parklands, docking and other public amenity space in the downtown core and waterfront area of the Township. The Township will take action in obtaining grants from the Federal and Provincial Government to assist in financing these improvements.

With plans for the public spaces in the commercial highway corridors currently evolving, the Township has now turned its attention to private lands. This Community Improvement Plan has been prepared with the intention of attracting and supporting the rehabilitation and revitalization of private lands and buildings in the commercial highway corridors of Sioux Narrows and Nestor Falls. In order to provide financial incentives necessary encourage this private development, it is necessary for the Township to prepare a Community Improvement Plan under Section 28 of the Planning Act RSO 1990, c.P. 13.

The Community Improvement Plan provides objectives for public and private property improvements and public works, and establishes financial incentives for property owners to encourage the revitalization and continued economic stability of the commercial core of the Township. These areas are known as the commercial highway corridors.

This Community Improvement Plan is prepared in accordance with the requirements of Section 28 of the Planning Act RSO 1990, cP13, as amended, and implements the Community Improvement policies of the Official Plan for the Township of Sioux Narrows-Nestor Falls.

2.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this Community Improvement Plan is to establish a program for municipal financial incentives to encourage the rehabilitation and improvement to private lands and to coordinate public and private works in a manner that will make the most efficient use of public infrastructure. The intent of the plan is to target improvements to existing buildings and properties, and is not directed towards future new developments in the Commercial Highway Corridors.

3.0 COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT AREA

The Community Improvement Areas are shown on Schedule A to this Community Improvement Plan

4.0 OBJECTIVES

Throughout the entire Community Improvement Areas the following objectives shall apply:

1. To encourage the continued vitality and economic viability of the commercial core.
2. To stimulate new investment in public and private lands;
3. To encourage consistency in urban design and signage while recognizing the importance of diversity and character of the existing built form;
4. To create an attractive image of the Township that reflects the historic character and heritage of the community;
5. To reinforce the commercial core as a focus for the community, including commercial and residential uses;
6. To improve pedestrian and vehicular connections within the area
7. To provide incentives for rehabilitation of the commercial highway corridors and as an attractive destination for shopping, dining and sightseeing.

5.0 COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

In order to implement the objectives identified in Section 4.0, the Township will provide the following incentives to private property owners and business owners.

5.1 PLANNING AND DESIGN

A one-time grant of 50 per cent to a maximum of \$500 will be available toward the cost of the preparation of architectural plans for building façade improvements. The grant will be conditional on the architectural plans being approved by the Township to ensure that the guidelines outlined in the Community Improvement Plan Background Report are implemented.

In addition, a one-time grant of 50 per cent to a maximum of \$500 will be available toward the cost of the preparation of architectural designs and/or site plan suitable for approval by the Township in accordance with the traditional architectural style of the Townsite and regular site plan requirements.

These grants would be paid at 50 per cent (to a maximum of \$250 each) upon design completion, and the remaining 50 per cent after implementation.

5.2 BUILDING FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS

Façade Improvement Grant

The Town will provide a one-time grant of 50 per cent (to a maximum of \$2,500) of the costs to assist commercial building owners to improve a building façade in accordance with the Community Improvement Plan Background Report. Grants for buildings in excess of two stories would be structured to provide additional funding at a rate of \$1,000 per additional storey, once the grant exceeds the maximum \$2,500. The grant would include buildings materials, labour and professional fees.

Grants would be paid upon completion of the work.

5.3 IMPROVED SIGNAGE

A grant of 50 per cent (up to \$2,000) will be available toward the cost of replacing an existing sign that is in a state of disrepair. Grants would be paid upon completion and installation of the sign. The removal of derelict, or old unmaintained signs, is an eligible expense.

5.4 LANDSCAPING AND PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT

A grant of 50 per cent (up to a maximum of \$2,500) of the costs will be available for improving landscaping and docking spaces in the Community Improvement Area. Grants shall be provided the at a rate of \$500 per new slip created plus up to \$2,500 for landscape improvements. The grant will be payable upon completion of the works.

5.5 APPLICATION FEES

These are not CIP incentive programs but are intended to augment the grants and loan program under Section 28 of the Planning Act. In particular, the waiving of building permit fees is permitted per s. 7 of the Ontario Building Code Act.

Where a property owner or business is undertaking improvements to lands and buildings in accordance with this report, the Township will provide a grant equivalent to the cost of the normal application fees for approved projects in accordance with the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning Act and the Town's Tariff of fees by-law:

- Site Plan approval (\$550)
- Rezoning (\$550)
- Minor Variance (\$300)
- Building Permit (\$50)

The applicant will be responsible for all mapping and registration costs for agreements where applicable.

6.0 GRANT ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- 6.1 Council shall appoint the Township of Sioux Narrows-Nestor Falls Committee of Adjustment to review applications for financial incentives. The Committee shall review all applications based on these eligibility requirements and the degree to which the project implements the Township's Official Plan and Community Improvement Plan
- 6.2 No improvements carried out prior to the approval of the application will be eligible for funding. Only pre-approved projects will be eligible for grants.
- 6.3 Grants would be available to a property owner or business owner occupying an assessed building in the Community Improvement Area upon satisfactory completion of the project. Assistance granted under any of the financial incentive programs to a particular property is not transferable to any other property.
- 6.4 Building façade grants will be granted based on a grant for the building façade that forms the primary entrance to the building.

Where a building has more than two building faces abutting a street the Township may consider a further secondary grant based on funding availability.

Building Façade grants will only be provided to the building owner.

- 6.5 The building owner or business owner and the Township will be required to enter into an agreement specifying the amount to be paid and the payment period. Where the agreement is between a business owner and the Township, the building owner must consent to the agreement.
- 6.6 Properties and buildings shall not have any tax arrears, outstanding utility charges or any other legal claim, lien or order that may affect the title of the land. Appropriate building permits shall be in place, and there shall be no outstanding work orders against the property.
- 6.7 The grant programs outlined in Section 5.0 may be combined in a manner that will permit more than one grant per property. Where this is done, the total grant amount shall be based on the amounts listed in Section 5.0, however, the expenditure on each element of the grant shall be flexible, subject to the approval of the Township. However, in no instance shall grants exceed the cost of rehabilitation.
- 6.8 Grants will be available to business or property owners on the basis of one grant or combined grant (for example Planning and Design, improved signage and Façade Improvement, and landscaping/docking) per assessed building.
- 6.9 Façade Improvement grants will only be available for entire building faces. Partial improvements to a portion of a building face will be discouraged. However, one façade may be improved on buildings that have side or rear facades that are also eligible for grants.

- 6.10 The total of the grants and loans made in respect of particular lands and buildings under this Community Improvement Plan and the tax assistance as defined in section 365.1 of the Municipal Act, 2001 that is provided in respect of the lands and buildings in this CIP shall not exceed the cost of rehabilitating the lands and buildings.

7.0 STAGING OF COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENTS

- 7.1 All of the grant programs outlined in Section 5.0 shall be available to property and /or business owners in the Townsite, immediately upon approval of this Plan subject to the requirements of the Planning Act and the requirements of each grant program. No retroactivity of the program prior to its approval by Council.
- 7.2 Council may, by resolution, direct the Committee to give priorities to specific grant programs based on limits to available funding.
- 7.2 Development in the Community Improvement Area should generally be staged so that improvements to infrastructure and private lands occur in a comprehensive manner. Major investments in lands and buildings should not be undertaken until public infrastructure works are under way or completed to the satisfaction of the Township in consultation with the property owners.

Property owners should coordinate a private works in the Townsite areas on a comprehensive basis. Façade improvement and signage grants for this area under sections 6.1 and 6.3 of the Community Improvement Plan will be available for this purpose immediately upon approval of this Plan by Council. When considering applications for financial assistance, the Township shall give preferential consideration to applications that are within the areas where concurrent municipal public realm improvements are being undertaken.

Applications for financial incentives for single buildings or businesses will be considered in the context of the proposed improvements impact on a coordinated rehabilitation plan for the entire area.

8.0 PUBLIC WORKS AND PARTNERSHIPS

These are not CIP incentive programs but are intended to augment the grants and loan program under Section 28.

In conjunction with the incentives and to augment the CIP grants (and loan) program for encouraging private rehabilitation and improvements, the Township will participate in the improvements to public lands and facilities, further described as follows:

The township will undertake and complete conceptual highway corridor development plans and cost estimates.

9.0 IMPLEMENTATION

9.1 ADMINISTRATION

This Community Improvement Plan will be administered by the Township of Sioux Narrows-Nestor Falls as part of the implementation of the Community Improvement Policies of the Township's Official Plan.

9.2 FINANCING OF IMPROVEMENTS

Council will establish an annual budget for grants related to Community Improvement projects. Funds will be allocated to public works as well as incentive programs. The Heritage Committee will be appointed by and accountable to Council to implement the Community Improvement Plan Façade Improvement Program/Signage/landscape Program, and will be responsible for reviewing and approving applications and allocating funds based on area priorities in accordance with this Plan.

9.3 CORRIDOR DESIGN STANDARDS

The Township may complete more detailed Corridor Design Guidelines to guide future development in the Community Improvement Area to augment the revitalization and rehabilitation programs outlined in this report. The Corridor Design Guidelines would provide detailed recommendations to augment the policies of the Official Plan and establish a basis for reviewing new development and to ensure that that development is consistent with the Community Improvement Plan objectives. The guidelines may also include additional details regarding building and landscape design that may be used by Council to assess applications for grants provided under this program.

9.4 OFFICIAL PLAN AND ZONING BY-LAW

This Community Improvement Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Community Improvement policies of the Official Plan for the Township of Sioux Narrows-Nestor Falls. The Township may consider amendments to the Official plan and Zoning By-law to implement provisions of Bill 51, Amendments to the Planning Act that will enable the Township to require that development and redevelopment within the Community Improvement Area comply with guidelines outlined in the Community Improvement Plan and subsequent Corridor Design Guidelines.

9.5 SIGN BY-LAW

The Township may adopt a Sign By-law, to reflect this Community Improvement Plan.

9.6 MONITORING AND AMENDMENTS

Council will conduct periodic reviews of the programs and activities relating to Community Improvement to determine their effectiveness. Council may amend this Plan as is necessary to ensure that the Objectives outlined in this Plan are achieved. Any increase in program financing permitted under Section 28 will require an amendment to this Plan.

It is intended that the grant programs outlined will be made available to property and business owners until December 31, 2017 Council may extend this date by by-law without requiring an amendment to this Plan. Minor changes to the plan such as typographical errors, map corrections, and administrative procedures can be made without an amendment to plan. Major changes such as the addition of a new incentive program, or new public works improvement will require an amendment to the plan.

Appendix “A”: Design Guidelines

Introduction

Applicants are encouraged to undertake building, signage and landscape improvements that are in keeping with the aesthetics historically associated with the communities of Sioux Narrows and Nestor Falls. The “architectural vocabulary” typically consists of a log or timber frame style of construction, along with associated stonework that is reflective of the indigenous materials found in the areas.

These guidelines are to be used in developing “design patterns” for building, signage and landscape improvements, and do not reflect a prescriptive approach to contemplated improvements.

Building Improvements

Applications should include the renovation of the entire building face whenever feasible. New siding should be of natural wood materials, or alternatively, reflect a natural materials look as part of the finished building face. The use of stonework is to be encouraged on the building face, and as are large windows, awnings, recessed entryways and decorative cornice work. Painting of building faces should be use darker heritage colours, and avoid brighter colours and/or neon applications.

The use of vinyl siding and aluminum siding shall be discouraged, except in the case of window trim, soffit and fascia.

Landscape Improvements

Applications shall be considered for the rehabilitation and/or construction of patios, gardens, trees & shrubs, walkways, park benches, waste receptacles, fountains, retaining walls, fencing, outdoor lighting, accessibility structures and any other outdoor landscape related improvements. Grants will also be considered for parking areas, curbing and access/egress.

Building and Property Signage

New signage is a key component of the Community Improvement Plan. Signage shall generally be constructed of natural wood and stone materials whenever possible, and be reflective of the history and heritage attributes of the area. The only lighting considered for signs will be front lighting. Back lit signs will not be considered. Examples of eligible costs for building signs are; hanging signs, awning signs, band signs and sidewalk signs. Roadway signage is eligible, so long as it is located on the subject property. The removal of derelict, or old unmaintained signs, is an eligible expense.