

REPORT

REPORT TO: Chair and Members of the Community and Corporate Affairs Committee

REPORT FROM: Duncan Robertson, CPA, CMA, Budgets and Financial Reporting Supervisor

DATE: May 11, 2018

REPORT NO.: CORPSERV-2018-0032

RE: Main Street Revitalization Initiative Grant

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. CORPSERV-2018-0032 dated May 11, 2018 regarding Ontario's Main Street Revitalization Initiative Grant be received;

AND FURTHER THAT the Mayor and Clerk be authorized to sign the "Municipal Funding Agreement Ontario's Main Street Revitalization Initiative" on behalf of the Town of Halton Hills;

AND FURTHER THAT staff be authorized to bring forward a by-law to Council in order to execute the Municipal Funding Agreement between the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and the Town of Halton Hills, and all subsequent agreements or amendments with respect to Ontario's Main Street Revitalization Initiative Funds with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario;

AND FURTHER THAT funding received under Ontario's Main Street Revitalization Initiative be directed to support the Town of Halton Hills' Community Improvement Plan.

BACKGROUND:

On March 12th, 2018, the Association of Municipalities (AMO) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) entered into an agreement to execute the Main Street Revitalization Initiative. This initiative will provide \$26 million in funding to municipal governments to help undertake main street revitalization activities that support and benefit small businesses within their communities.

The initiative became effective April 1st, 2018 and extends eligibility to all lower and upper tier municipalities. The Town of Halton Hills has been approved to receive \$84,000 of funding in 2018. These funds will be allocated to the Town of Halton Hills Community Improvement Plan (CIP).

A CIP is a program that sets a framework for revitalization, redevelopment, or renewal of an area with financial incentives to help make those improvements happen.

The Town of Halton Hills introduced the Halton Hills Comprehensive Community Improvement Plan in 2010. The Plan offers a “Tool Box” of programs that, depending on demand and Town objectives, can be used to promote strategic business investments in designated areas of the Town. Categories include façade improvements, landscaping, environmental site assessments and others. The Town provides grants equal to a certain percentage of the cost of eligible facade and storefront improvements, restoration works and other projects that add economic impact to the community, under a set of prescribed eligibility guidelines and other conditions.

Beginning in 2014, Council approved an annual capital budget of \$75,000 in order to fund the CIP. When the CIP was activated in 2014, two of eleven programs were approved – the “Façade Improvement Grant” and the “Revitalization Grant”. In 2016, additional programs were introduced, namely, “Brownfield Parkland Dedication Reduction Program” and the “Landscape Improvement Program”. The balance of programs was activated in October of 2017.

Any unused funds in a given year are carried over to the next year. Initially, the program was not fully subscribed (2014 and 2015). The Program’s uptake increased significantly in the following two years as a result of the positive visual impact of façade improvements and additional marketing. In each of 2016 and 2017, the applications submitted accounted for not only the annual \$75,000, but the also the funding carried over from 2014 and 2015. The Town’s CIP is fully subscribed for 2018 with all funds approved in the 2018 Budget. The funds from the Main Street Revitalization Initiative would go towards supporting the backlog of demand for additional projects. Funding received under the Main Street Revitalization Initiative can be used to support CIP projects up to and including March 31, 2020.

Furthermore, programs were initially applicable only in Downtown Acton, Downtown Georgetown and the Guelph Street Corridor. In response to demand for the program, the Façade program now applies across the Town, rather than being area-specific.

Since 2014, about \$296,000 in loans/grants has been approved. In 2017, the most successful year to date, about \$136,000 was awarded to 8 projects resulting in a total community investment of about \$250,000. While the multiplier effect caused by every \$1 dollar of Town investment via the CIP program varies based on the unique characteristics of each project, it is estimated that each \$1 of Town CIP funding translates into a total of \$2 to \$5 in investment.

COMMENTS:

The Town is now in receipt of the new Municipal Funding Agreement (MFA) and it must be executed through a municipal by-law. The MFA sets out the requirements for which the municipality will agree to comply.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

This report supports the strategic objective:

Council's current "Top Eight" priorities, 2014-2018

Implement the approved Community Improvement Plan for employment areas.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The Town has been approved to receive \$84,000 of initiative funding in 2018. The Main Street Revitalization Initiative will provide additional funding to continue to implement the Community Improvement Plan.

CONSULTATION:

The Economic Development Office has been consulted in the preparation of this report. The financial impact of this report has been reviewed and agreed upon by the Town Treasurer.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

No public engagement required in reference to this report.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS:

The Town is committed to implementing our Community Sustainability Strategy, Imagine Halton Hills. Doing so will lead to a higher quality of life.

The recommendation outlined in this report advances the Strategy's implementation.

This report supports the Economic Prosperity pillar of Sustainability and in summary the alignment of this report with the Community Sustainability Strategy is good.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Two signed copies of the MFA, along with a copy of the authorizing by-law will be sent to AMO, in accordance with the terms set out in the agreement.

CONCLUSION:

Staff recommends that the requirements set by AMO be met as outlined in the MFA so that the provincial funding may be received.

Reviewed and Approved by,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. J. Leighton".

Moya Jane Leighton, Manager of Accounting and Town Treasurer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jane Diamanti".

Jane Diamanti, Commissioner of Corporate Services

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brent Marshall".

Brent Marshall, CAO