

## St. Catharines introduces new Community Improvement Plan

**Nov. 12, 2020** — City Council has approved St. Catharines 2020 Community Improvement Plan (CIP) to provide funding for redevelopment projects that include the provision of affordable housing, commercial buildings and heritage preservation, in addition to brownfield sites to ensure contaminated land is cleaned up and restored.

The first St. Catharines CIP was launched in 2004 in order to offer financial incentive programs to the private sector to stimulate projects that support local community renewal objectives and strategies. The incentives offset a portion of project costs related to redevelopment, reuse and rehabilitation of the built environment.

“This latest version of the CIP is a progressive plan in alignment with the City’s Strategic Plan and the land use framework established in our Official Plan,” said Senior Planner Bruce Bellows. “It takes a proactive approach to revitalizing, reshaping and positioning our City as an attractive place to live and do business.”

Since 2004, the City has approved 98 CIP applications with a commitment of approximately \$20.75 million. Once all projects are completed as approved, they will represent the generation of approximately 2,100 new residential dwelling units, 280 permanent new jobs and an estimated increase in property tax assessment of approximately \$396 million.

The previous CIP, which was released in 2015, offered five financial incentive programs to the private sector to stimulate new investment in community renewal projects including brownfield remediation, building facade improvement and rehabilitation of vacant building space.

In spring of 2019 the City paused the CIP to undertake a full review of the program and its alignment with strategic plan objectives, long-term sustainability and maximizing value.

With the review complete, City Council has now signed off on changes that include a greater emphasis on redevelopment projects that include provision for affordable housing, rehabilitation of commercial buildings and aging plazas, heritage preservation and restoration, and brownfield remediation.

Formal passage of the by-law will be before Council on Nov. 16. Following the legislated procedures, the new CIP is expected to come into effect mid-December 2020.

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