



Staff Report

Strategic Initiatives – Special Projects & Strategic Initiatives

Report To: COW - Operations, Planning and Building Services
Meeting Date: December 9, 2025
Report Number: SI.25.038
Title: Community Improvement Plan Fall 2025 Applications
Prepared by: Lauren Potter, Communications Coordinator

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report SI.25.038, entitled “Community Improvement Plan Fall 2025 Applications”;

AND THAT Council approve the allocation of \$92,068.37 from the CIP Reserve Fund to support the following projects as recommended by the Community Improvement Plan Review Committee;

Recipient	Recommended 2025 Grant Funding
1. 43 Bruce Street South, Thornbury (Chris Bretzler)	\$15,000.00
2. 187 Marsh Street Clarksburg, ON (Marsh Street Centre)	\$10,000.00
3. 3 Grey Street North, Thornbury (Blue Mountain Chamber of Commerce)	\$3,774.20
4. 166 Russell St. E., Clarksburg (St. George's Anglican Church)	\$10,000.00
5. 53 Bruce Street S, Thornbury (Leeward House)	\$11,313.32
6. 190 Russell Street E, Clarksburg (Lemonade Collective)	\$9,689.00
7. 108 George Street, Clarksburg (IronWorks)	\$2,912.60
8. 188 Marsh Street, Clarksburg (Market on Marsh)	\$7,429.75
9. 828381 Grey Road 40, Clarksburg (David Wilding-Davies)	\$15,000.00
10. 39 Bruce St. South, Thornbury (Ashanti)	\$6,949.50

AND THAT Council delegates signing authority for executed Community Improvement Plan Agreements to the Mayor and Clerk.

B. Overview

This report provides Council with an overview of applications received for the Fall 2025 Intake of the Community Improvement Plan (CIP). The report seeks Council approval of the allocation of funding to support the applications. This report also summarizes the CIP program activity to date and provides an update for the Community Improvement Plan Review project, which received budget approval through the 2025 Budget process.

C. Background

As the final approval authority, this report provides Council with funding allocation recommendations from the CIP Review Committee for the Fall 2025 intake period.

For reference, in 2021, Council approved two CIPs: the [Housing Within Reach Community Improvement Plan](#) and the [Town-Wide Revitalization Community Improvement Plan](#). A CIP is a planning and economic development tool that municipalities use to facilitate broad community revitalization goals through grants or loans to private property owners and tenants.

Combined, the two CIPs feature 18 programs. The titles of each program are outlined in the chart below.

Housing Within Reach CIP Programs	Town-Wide Revitalization CIP Programs
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Attainable Housing Feasibility Grant2. Development Charges Grant Equivalent Program3. Tax Increment Equivalent Program4. Municipal Fees Grant or Loan Equivalent Program5. Downtown Apartment Rehabilitation or Conversion Program6. Additional Residential Unit Program7. Surplus Land Grant Program8. Landbanking Policy	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Study and Design Grant Program2. Building Façade and Signage Grant Program3. Building Improvement and Renovation Program4. Tax Increment Equivalent Program5. Brownfield Tax Assistance Program6. Municipal Fees Grant Equivalent Program7. Property Enhancement and Improvement Program8. Energy Efficiency Improvement Program9. Vacant Building Conversion or Expansion Program10. Destination Infrastructure Program

D. Analysis

The Fall 2025 CIP intake received ten applications, including nine under the Town-Wide Revitalization CIP and one under the Housing Within Reach CIP. Each application was reviewed in detail by the Community Improvement Plan Review Committee (CIPRC).

The CIPRC has recommended full or partial funding for each application. The 10 recommended applications include a total funding request of \$92,068.37. The total construction cost of all projects is estimated at \$252,468.11. If approved, the Town will leverage \$160,399.74 in private sector investment through this intake.

The application period was open from September 15, 2025, to October 17, 2025, with additional time provided until October 31, 2025, for applicants to obtain and submit required cost estimates and quotes. Each application required submission of a detailed application form, photos of the current building, drawings of the desired upgrades and two quotes for the proposed work. The amount of funding recommended by Town Staff is based on the lower of the two quotes submitted by the applicant.

The intake was promoted through the Town's website, a dedicated press release, social media accounts, the monthly E-Newsletter, the business E-Newsletter and outreach to local business associations.

The CIPRC comprised of staff from various departments, met on November 27, 2025, to review the submitted applications to confirm eligibility and determine a funding recommendation for Council.

If funding is approved by Council, the agreements will be signed by the applicant, the Mayor and the Clerk. The applicant may begin improvement works once the necessary approvals and permits have been secured. Payment of a grant, in accordance with the signed agreement, will be issued upon successful completion of the approved works. The applicant will be required to provide the Town with final supporting documentation, including, but not limited to, site visits and inspections, photographic evidence and documentation of the completed works satisfactory to the Town, as well as invoices for all eligible work done and proof of payment to contractors.

Approved projects must comply with all applicable Town By-laws, policies and procedures, as well as relevant provincial legislation and plans. Applicants are responsible for obtaining all required approvals and permits, including planning approvals, building permits and any other agency approvals, before starting community improvement work.

Application Summaries

Summaries are provided below to provide a brief understanding of each application. These summaries can be used in conjunction with Attachment 1 - Financial Incentive Program Value Guidelines.

Applications Recommended for Approval

#1 – Application #2025-1: 43 Bruce Street South, Thornbury (Chris Bretzler)

Programs: Building Façade and Signage Grant Program, Building Improvement and Renovation Program, Energy Efficiency Improvement Program

Total Funding Recommended: \$15,000.00

Total Estimated Project Cost: \$54,094.18

The application for 43 Bruce Street South includes the supply and replacement of four (4) exterior doors and eighteen (18) windows. The existing windows are dated and not energy efficient, with most being single-paned glass, and several of the doors are original, aging and drafty. The new windows and doors will enhance energy efficiency and indoor comfort for tenants, business owners and clients, while maintaining visual consistency with neighbouring buildings along Bruce Street. The property is a two-storey brick, mixed-use building located in downtown Thornbury at the corner of Bruce Street South and Louisa Street. The building contains six (6) commercial units and four (4) residential units. Current commercial tenants include a hair salon, a ladies' clothing boutique, a sushi take-out restaurant, an environmental office, a naturopathic doctor, and an engineering office.

This property previously received \$25,000.00 in funding through the Spring 2024 intake for the initial phase of window and door upgrades. The current application seeks support to complete the remaining work.

Based on the review, the CIPRC is recommending partial project funding in the amount of \$15,000 to support the request under the Building Façade and Signage Grant Program.

The CIPRC is not recommending funding for the balance of the request under the Energy Efficiency Improvement Program, as the application and quotes do not clearly demonstrate that energy efficiency standards will be achieved. Similarly, the CIPRC is not recommending funding for the balance of the request under the Building Improvement and Renovation Program as the property previously received CIP funding for the same work, and the CIPRC seeks to support equitable distribution of CIP funds across a variety of projects. This decision aligns with Section 4.9 of the Town-Wide Revitalization CIP, which allows the Town to reject applications for work previously approved.

#2 – Application #2025-2: 187 Marsh Street Clarksburg, ON (Marsh Street Centre)

Programs: Building Improvement & Renovation Program

Total Funding Recommended: \$10,000.00

Total Estimated Project Cost: \$33,984.63

The application for the Marsh Street Community Centre includes installation of new, high-quality vinyl plank flooring over the existing wood and tile floors in the auditorium and foyers. The auditorium currently has the original 98-year-old hardwood plank flooring, which is splintering, uneven, discoloured and beyond repair. The front and rear foyers have 25-year-old tile flooring that is cracked and chipping. The proposed flooring upgrades will eliminate safety hazards for community members of all ages, preserve the historic character of the building,

improve the appeal of the rental space and support the continued operation of the facility. The Marsh Street Community Centre is a non-profit, charitable organization located in Clarksburg. The facility provides affordable, accessible space for rentals, community programming and charitable activities within the Town of The Blue Mountains and the Georgian Bay area.

The Marsh Street Centre previously received \$15,198.72 in funding through the Spring 2024 CIP intake for façade repairs and the installation of two benches. This project is currently underway and is anticipated to be completed by the end of December 2025.

Based on the review, the CIPRC is recommending project funding in the amount of \$10,000 under the Building Improvement & Renovation Program.

#3 – Application #2025-3: 3 Grey Street North, Thornbury (Blue Mountain Chamber of Commerce)

Programs: Building Improvement & Renovation Program, Building Façade and Signage Program

Total Funding Recommended: \$3,774.20

Total Estimated Project Cost: \$7,548.40

The application for the Blue Mountains Chamber of Commerce includes repairing the building's roof to prevent water leakage and ensure the office remains functional, safe and well-maintained. The application also proposes the installation of a permanent sign above the existing billboard on the rear of the building to advertise that the space is available for monthly rentals. This aims to attract businesses and community groups interested in using the billboard as a marketing tool or platform to share community news and events more broadly. The Blue Mountains Chamber of Commerce owns and operates the commercial building at 3 Grey Street North in Thornbury. The building is used by the Chamber Board and members for meetings, and by the Director as a primary office. A portion of the building (approximately 300 sq ft) is leased to a tenant.

The Blue Mountains Chamber of Commerce previously received \$2,035.10 in funding through the Spring 2024 CIP Intake for exterior repainting and signage upgrades. The project is currently underway and expected to be completed by the end of December 2025.

Based on the review, the CIPRC is recommending project funding in the amount of \$3,774.20 under the Building Improvement & Renovation Program and the Building Façade and Signage Program.

#4 – Application #2025-4: 166 Russell St. E., Clarksburg (St. George's Anglican Church)

Programs: Building Façade and Signage Program, Property Enhancement and Improvement Program, Destination Infrastructure Grant

Total Funding Recommended: \$10,000.00

Total Estimated Project Cost: \$39,510.61

The application for St. George's Anglican Church includes transforming the unused portion of its property adjacent to Marsh Street into a community outreach parkette with amenities that support residents and visitors. The application seeks funding for the supply and installation of

two (2) park benches, a public water fountain with a bottle refill station and dog fountain, garbage and recycling bins, and a community services announcement board. The application also requests funding for the design, manufacture and installation of a new primary sign for the church. It is to be noted that the applicant has requested a maximum grant funding amount of \$10,000.00.

Based on the review, the CIPRC is recommending project funding in the amount of \$10,000.00 under the Building Improvement & Renovation Program, Property Enhancement and Improvement Program and the Destination Infrastructure Grant Program.

#5 – Application #2025-5: 53 Bruce Street S, Thornbury (Leeward House)

Programs: Building Façade and Signage Program, Building Improvement and Renovation Program, Municipal Fees Grant Equivalent, Property Enhancement and Improvement Program, Energy Efficiency Improvement Program, Destination Infrastructure Grant, Vacant Building Conversion or Expansion Program

Total Funding Recommended: \$11,313.32

Total Estimated Project Cost: \$15,908.64

The application for the Leeward House project includes the redevelopment of a long-vacant, deteriorated property into a nine-unit boutique hotel with a year-round outdoor pool, replacing an unsafe structure with two new, code-compliant buildings built with reinforced concrete and ICF for improved safety, energy efficiency and sustainability. The project also includes site enhancements such as landscaping, accessible walkways, benches, lighting, planters, and bicycle facilities to strengthen the pedestrian experience and reflect Thornbury's small-town character. The application seeks grant funding to support exterior window and door installation, roofing and siding, interior doors, flooring and drywall; development charges and site plan approval; ICF foundation and walls; and exterior improvements such as pool fencing, walkways, parking lot construction, a hardscaped art area, landscaping and installation of the pool, hot tub and cold plunge.

Based on the review, the CIPRC is recommending partial project funding in the amount of \$11,313.32 under the Municipal Fees Grant Equivalent Program and Property Enhancement and Improvement Program.

Funding under the Building Façade and Signage Program and the Building Improvement and Renovation Program is not recommended as both programs only apply to improvements made to existing buildings, not new construction (Sections 3.6.1 and 3.7.1).

Funding under the Municipal Fees Grant Equivalent Program is recommended in part for fees related to Site Plan Approval, but not for Development Charges, as this is not an eligible cost category of the program (Section 3.10.1).

Funding under the Property Enhancement and Improvement Program is being partially recommended, excluding the pool fencing due to limited visibility from the public street, as required under the program criteria, and excluding the parking lot work due to the submission of only one quote (Section 5.3.2).

Funding under the Energy Efficiency Improvement Program is not recommended, as the program only applies to existing buildings (Section 3.12.1).

Funding under the Destination Infrastructure Grant Program is not recommended due to inconsistencies in the submitted quotes and a lack of demonstrated enhancement to the public realm.

#6 – Application #2025-6: 190 Russell Street E, Clarksburg (Lemonade Collective)

Programs: Property Enhancement and Improvement Program, Building Improvement and Renovation Program

Total Funding Recommended: \$9,689.00

Total Estimated Project Cost: \$19,378.00

The application for Lemonade Collective includes front parking lot upgrades, such as paving, line painting, accessible parking spaces, protective barriers and the supply and installation of new pool stairs. These improvements will enhance safety, accessibility and the overall visitor experience, supporting the business's mission to make life sweeter, healthier and more inclusive for the entire community. Lemonade Collective is a membership-based fitness and wellness facility, offering retail, classes, workshops and services that are open to the public.

Lemonade Collective was previously approved for funding to install pool stairs under the Spring 2023 intake; however, the funding was forfeited by the applicant due to cost constraints at the time. The organization also received \$2,268.20 through the Energy Efficiency Program in the Fall 2023 intake for the installation of two Energy Star-certified exterior doors, and \$6,413.43 under the Building Improvement & Renovation Program in the Spring 2024 intake for the installation of two barrier-free shower stalls and associated tiling.

Based on the review, the CIPRC is recommending project funding in the amount of \$9,689.00 under the Building Improvement & Renovation Program and Property Enhancement and Improvement Program.

#7 – Application #2025-7: 108 George Street, Clarksburg (IronWorks)

Programs: Building Improvement and Renovation Program

Total Funding Recommended: \$2,912.60

Total Estimated Project Cost: \$5,825.15

The application for IronWorks includes supplying and installing five new windows to improve thermal efficiency in rooms used for community education programs, while also enhancing overall heat retention and reducing greenhouse gas emissions for the entire building. Located at 108 George Street in Clarksburg, IronWorks is an art center and educational facility.

Based on the review, the CIPRC is recommending project funding in the amount of \$2,912.60 under the Building Improvement & Renovation Program.

#8 – Application #2025-8: 188 Marsh Street, Clarksburg (Market on Marsh)

Programs: Property Enhancement and Improvement Program, Building Improvement and Renovation Program, Destination Infrastructure Grant

Total Funding Recommended: \$7,429.75
Total Estimated Project Cost: \$14,859.50

The application for Market on Marsh seeks funding to install a retractable front awning for shade and improved climate control, a new exterior side door to enhance staff safety and airflow and two outdoor “bubble domes” adjacent to the building to provide sheltered seating during the fall and winter months. Located at 188 Marsh Street in Clarksburg, the Market on Marsh is a mixed-use property featuring a grocery and takeaway food shop with a coffee counter at street level, with two residential units above.

Based on the review, the CIPRC is recommending partial project funding in the amount of \$7,429.75 under the Property Enhancement and Improvement Program and Building Improvement and Renovation Program.

Funding for the “bubble domes” is not recommended, as they were deemed ineligible costs under the Property Enhancement and Improvement Program and the Destination Infrastructure Program.

#9 – Application #2025-9: 828381 Grey Road 40, Clarksburg (David Wilding-Davies)

Programs: Additional Dwelling Unit Program

Total Funding Recommended: \$15,000.00
Total Estimated Project Cost: \$47,460.00

The application for 828381 Grey Road 40, Clarksburg, includes renovating a portion of the residential property to construct an affordable additional residential unit (ARU). The project involves converting the existing TV room into a kitchenette and living area and building a small addition to accommodate a new bedroom.

Based on the review, the CIPRC is recommending project funding in the amount of \$15,000.00 under the Additional Dwelling Unit Program.

In accordance with the Housing Within Reach CIP, following approval of the grant, the Town will enter into an agreement with the applicant to fulfill the required conditions.

#10 – Application #2025-10: 39 Bruce St. South, Thornbury (Ashanti)

Programs: Building Façade and Signage Program

Total Funding Recommended: \$6,949.50
Total Estimated Project Cost: \$13,899.00

The application for Ashanti, a local coffee retail shop in Thornbury, includes replacing the canvas on the storefront awning, replacing the upper front façade of the building, repairing the exterior door, installing upgraded façade lighting and repainting the façade to improve the overall visual appeal of the storefront.

Based on the review, the CIPRC is recommending project funding in the amount of \$6,949.50 under the Building Façade and Signage Program.

Community Improvement Plan Activity To Date

Following Council's approval of the two existing CIP programs in 2021, the Town has completed four successful intake periods: Spring 2023, Fall 2023, Spring 2024 and the current Fall 2025 intake. To date, 38 applications have been received, with 22 of the applications receiving approval and advancing to executed agreements. As of November 2025, \$200,077.65 in funding has been issued to applicants for completed CIP projects, supporting project costs totaling \$454,298.23 and leveraging \$254,220.58 in private-sector investment.

The most frequently accessed incentives have been the Building Façade & Signage Program and the Building Improvement & Renovation Program, with 11 and 10 successful applications, respectively. Interest in the Housing Within Reach CIP has been limited, with only two applications submitted across its various incentive programs.

Community Improvement Plan Review – Project Overview

As approved through the 2025 Budget, the Town has initiated a project to review and update the Community Improvement Plan. Based on the outcomes and feedback shared through completed CIP intakes, staff have identified opportunities to broaden eligibility, better align incentives with Town priorities and enhance overall community impact of the incentive programs. The purpose of the update project is to develop a new, comprehensive Community Improvement Plan that strengthens affordable and attainable housing incentive programs while continuing to support local businesses and diversify the economic base through innovative approaches that respond to current economic challenges.

A formal Request for Proposal (RFP) for this project was issued on August 27, 2025, and closed September 18, 2025, receiving eight submissions. Following a consensus evaluation meeting held on October 8, 2025, the Town awarded the contract to NPG Planning Solutions, supported by Tim Welch Consulting for housing-related research and Parcel Economics for economic development analysis. Together, the project team brings diverse and extensive experience in CIP development across a range of policy goals, municipal implementation, policy planning and economic and housing analytics. The Town Project Team and NPG held an initial kickoff meeting in November 2025 and are now working to finalize dates for engagement activities.

The CIP Review will be completed in four phases: Background Review and Study, Proposed Policy Direction and Incentive Programs, Draft Community Improvement Plan, and Refinement and Finalization. The background review includes a Housing Needs and Trends technical paper, which will provide a demographic analysis of the Town, confirm working definitions of attainable and affordable housing, identify barriers to development, review the objectives of the Housing Within Reach CIP and establish success metrics. An Economic Trends and Barriers technical paper will analyze the current non-residential environment, assess commercial demand, evaluate business permit and employment trends and identify barriers and opportunities for commercial development. The background stage will also include a jurisdictional scan of other municipal CIPs to identify best practices and program models relevant to housing and economic development.

Engagement opportunities will be incorporated throughout the project. The process will begin with an Interested Parties Survey targeted at key stakeholder groups to evaluate program effectiveness and identify challenges and opportunities; this survey will not be open to the general public. Stakeholder workshops will be held at multiple stages to engage members of the business community and development industry. Phase 1 workshops will focus on assessing the effectiveness of existing CIP programs and identifying gaps, while Phase 2 workshops will present proposed policy directions and incentive programs for feedback.

In addition, a public Open House will be held in late February 2026 at Town Hall, mid-week from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., to present findings to date and collect feedback from the community. A statutory Public Meeting, required under the Planning Act, will be held in May 2026 to present the draft Community Improvement Plan and Financial Implementation Plan to Council and the public. This meeting will provide the opportunity to make formal representations and comments in a public forum.

The final draft Community Improvement Plan is anticipated to be presented to Council for adoption in June 2026. Regular project updates will be posted to a dedicated project webpage and shared through Town communication channels where appropriate.

E. Strategic Priorities

1. Communication and Engagement

We will enhance communications and engagement between Town Staff, Town residents and stakeholders

2. Organizational Excellence

We will continually seek out ways to improve the internal organization of Town Staff and the management of Town assets.

3. Community

We will protect and enhance the community feel and the character of the Town, while ensuring the responsible use of resources and restoration of nature.

4. Quality of Life

We will foster a high quality of life for full-time and part-time residents of all ages and stages, while welcoming visitors.

F. Environmental Impacts

No environmental impacts are anticipated as a result of this report.

G. Financial Impacts

Staff recommend that Council approve the ten applications for a total of \$92,068.37 from the Community Improvement Plan Reserve Fund. The Reserve Fund currently holds a balance of approximately \$430,000. Approval of \$92,068.37 to support the Fall 2025 applications would leave an estimated balance of \$337,931.63 in the Community Improvement Plan Reserve Fund.

Once executed, the agreement requires projects to be completed by December 31, 2026. Applicants may request an extension through the Plan Administrator. Designated funds will only be provided to applicants following the successful completion of the project and successful inspection by the Town.

H. In Consultation With

Adam Smith, Chief Administrative Officer
Tim Hendry, Director of Strategic Initiatives
Shawn Postma, Manager of Community Planning
Tim Murawsky, Chief Building Official

I. Public Engagement

The topic of this Staff Report has not been the subject of a Public Meeting and/or a Public Information Centre as neither a Public Meeting nor a Public Information Centre are required. However, any comments regarding this report should be submitted to Lauren Potter, Communications Coordinator for Planning & Development Services, lpotter@thebluemountains.ca.

J. Attached

1. Attachment 1 – Financial Incentive Program Value Guidelines
2. Attachment 2 – 2025 CIP Application Statuses

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Potter
Communications Coordinator for Planning & Development Services

For more information, please contact:
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Report Approval Details

Document Title:	SI.25.038 Community Improvement Plan Fall 2025 Applications.docx
Attachments:	- Attachment 1 Financial Incentive Program Value Guidelines.pdf - Attachment 2 2025 CIP Application Statuses.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Nov 28, 2025

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Tim Hendry - Nov 28, 2025 - 9:49 AM

Adam Smith - Nov 28, 2025 - 11:36 AM