CITY OF HAMILTON

PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
Downtown Renewal Division

Report to: Chair and Members Planning and Economic Development Committee
Submitted by: Lee Ann Coveyduck General Manager Planning and Economic Development Department

Date: April 28, 2006
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SUBJECT: The Comprehensive Downtown Hamilton, Community Downtowns and Business Improvement Areas Community Improvement Plan (PED06155) (Wards 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13 & 15)

RECOMMENDATION:

That Report PED06155 respecting “The Comprehensive Downtown Hamilton, Community Downtowns and Business Improvement Areas Community Improvement Plan” be received for information.

Lee Ann Coveyduck
General Manager
Planning and Economic Development Department

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

For ease of administration, it is desirable to prepare a new consolidated Community Improvement Plan (CIP) for the City. The Downtown Renewal Division was created at the time of municipal reorganization in 2001. Downtown Renewal’s mandate is to foster renewal in Downtown Hamilton, Community Downtowns as well as in the City’s 11 Business Improvement Areas (BIAs). The Division presently administers 12 Community Improvement Plans (CIPs) that allow the municipality to offer financial incentive programs such as the Commercial Property Improvement Grant program in the City’s BIAs as well as the Enterprise Zone and Hamilton Downtown Residential Loan Programs in Downtown Hamilton. The purpose of the new comprehensive Downtown Hamilton, Community Downtowns and Business Improvement Areas Community Improvement Plan is to repeal and replace the 12 existing CIPs with one comprehensive CIP. The new CIP will also be introduced to new Community Improvement Project Areas such as
the Ancaster and Binbrook Village Core areas in alignment with the mandate of the Downtown Renewal Division. A new program called the Main Street Housing Loan and Grant program will be introduced to the Community Downtowns and BIAs. Additionally, Downtown Renewal will undertake a 5 year review of the City's existing financial incentive programs and if warranted will adjust the programs accordingly. The Division will seek public input through a series of Public Open Houses in each Community that comprise the City of Hamilton as well as the statutory public meeting as required by the Planning Act.

**BACKGROUND:**

The purpose of the new comprehensive Downtown Hamilton, Community Downtowns and Business Improvement Areas Community Improvement Plan is to repeal and replace the 12 existing CIPs with one comprehensive CIP. The existing CIPs are dated as many existed prior to 2001. For example, many of the initiatives proposed in the Downtown Hamilton CIP have been completed or are no longer relevant. The Downtown Hamilton CIP was to “prime the pump” for revitalization and through City Council's commitment over the past several years, this has indeed been started and we need to move forward.

**ANALYSIS/RATIONALE:**

The new CIP will keep the revitalization momentum going strong. The new CIP will also be introduced to new Community Improvement Project Areas such as Ancaster and Binbrook Village Core areas. A new program called the Main Street Housing Loan and Grant program approved in principle by Planning and Economic Development Committee on February 21, 2006, will be introduced to the Community Downtowns and BIAs.

Additionally, Downtown Renewal will undertake a 5 year review of the City's existing financial incentive programs. The Division regularly monitors and evaluates the performance of the Enterprise Zone, Hamilton Downtown Residential Loan and Commercial Property Improvement Grant Programs through established performance measurements and applicant surveying. The feedback from this monitoring and evaluation program as well as the experience of program administrators will be considered and the programs will be enhanced/adjusted accordingly.

The Division will seek public input through a series of Public Open Houses in each Community that comprise the City of Hamilton as well as the statutory public meeting as required by the Planning Act. The 6 Public Open Houses will be held in Ancaster, Binbrook, Dundas, Hamilton, Stoney Creek, and Waterdown. The open houses and the public meeting will be advertised on the City’s Web-site, through Brabant Newspapers, the Hamilton Spectator as well as through Hamilton’s Association of Business Improvement Areas (HABIA). Downtown Renewal will also circulate internal and external departments and agencies.
Consideration to expanding the CIP and incentive programs to other areas in the City that are not Community Downtowns or BIAs will be addressed under a separate report for Committee’s consideration after base research has been conducted.

**ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION:**

Report PED06155 is for information purposes therefore there are no alternatives for consideration.

**FINANCIAL/STAFFING/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:**

**Financial:** There are no financial implications at this time.

**Staffing:** The development of the new comprehensive CIP can be accommodated within the Planning and Economic Development Department, Downtown Renewal Division.

**Legal:** The Downtown Renewal Division, in consultation with the City Solicitor, will prepare and process the necessary documentation and by-laws and hold the necessary Public Meetings as required under the Planning Act to implement the CIP.

**POLICIES AFFECTING PROPOSAL:**

**Provincial Policy Statement**

The Provincial Policy Statement sets the vision for Ontario’s land use planning system. It states that the long-term prosperity and social well-being of Ontarians depend on maintaining strong communities, a clean and healthy environment and a strong economy. Efficient development patterns optimize the use of land, resources and public investment in infrastructure and public service facilities. It is these land use patterns that promote a mix of housing, employment, parks and open spaces, and transportation choices that facilitate pedestrian mobility and other modes of travel. They also support the financial well-being of not only the Province but that of municipalities over the long term, and minimize the undesirable effects on air, water and other resources. The intent of the new CIP is to co-ordinate municipal decisions in Downtown Hamilton, Community Downtowns and BIAs as well as provide financial incentives for private landowners to increase and improve residential units, re-use vacant space and lands such as parking lots and improve the streetscape through façade improvements. The provision of such programs, lead to efficient use of land within the urban area of the City therefore, keeping in line with the Provincial government’s policy direction.
Regional Official Plan

The Regional Official Plan contains policies relating to Community Improvement. Therefore, undertaking the development of a new comprehensive CIP as described above is consistent with the policy direction of the Regional Official Plan.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION:

Preliminary discussions have occurred with the Corporate Services Department, the Planning and Economic Development Department as well as staff of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

CITY STRATEGIC COMMITMENT:

By evaluating the “Triple Bottom Line”, (community, environment, economic implications) we can make choices that create value across all three bottom lines, moving us closer to our vision for a sustainable community, and Provincial interests.

Community Well-Being is enhanced. ☑ Yes ☐ No
Partnerships are promoted. Public services and programs are delivered in an equitable manner. Downtown Renewal actively engages Downtown and BIA stakeholders in decision making as well as other City Departments (Police, Public Works, Tourism etc).

Environmental Well-Being is enhanced. ☑ Yes ☐ No
The initiatives help to improve the quality of life of the residents. Human health and safety are protected. The rehabilitation of the building stock and the development of properties in the Downtowns and BIAs makes efficient and effective use of City services as well as protecting human health and safety.

Economic Well-Being is enhanced. ☑ Yes ☐ No
Investment in Hamilton is enhanced and supported. Downtown Renewal programs lead to effective partnerships with community stakeholders and the development community. Developers and property owners invest in Downtown and BIA properties leading to property assessment increases through the rehabilitation of buildings and properties.

Does the option you are recommending create value across all three bottom lines?
☑ Yes ☐ No

Do the options you are recommending make Hamilton a City of choice for high performance public servants?
☑ Yes ☐ No

Through this staff initiative, Hamilton continues to lead initiatives related to renewal. Such initiatives are professionally stimulating and result in Hamilton being a choice for employment to those interested in bettering community life.

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