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# HALDIMAND COUNTY

## Report PED-EDT-04-2018 Rural Business and Tourism Community Improvement Plan – 243 Highway 54, Cayuga - Ruthven Park National Historic Site



For Consideration by Council in Committee on March 27, 2018

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### OBJECTIVE:

To seek Council approval of one (1) application for funding made under the Terms and Conditions of the Haldimand County Rural Business and Tourism Community Improvement Plan (RBTCIP).

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Report PED-EDT-04-2018 Rural Business and Tourism Community Improvement Plan – 243 Highway 54, Cayuga - Ruthven Park National Historic Site be received;
2. THAT the project as outlined in Report PED-EDT-04-2018 for the property at 243 Highway 54, Cayuga be approved for a grant to be funded from the Community Improvement Plan Reserve, to a maximum of \$12,077, pending Council approval of the ongoing contribution to the Community Improvement Plan Reserve, included in the Draft 2018 Tax Supported Operating Budget, to be ratified on April 3, 2018;
3. AND THAT the Mayor and Clerk be authorized to execute the Rural Business and Tourism Community Improvement Plan Financial Incentive Program Agreement with the respective property owner.

**Prepared by:** Zach Gable MAES, EcD, CEcD, Senior Economic Development Officer

**Reviewed by:** Lidy Romanuk, BA, EcD, CEcD, Manager, Economic Development and Tourism

**Respectfully submitted:** Craig Manley, MCIP, RPP, General Manager of Planning and Economic Development

**Approved:** Karen General, CPA, CGA, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The proposal is to facilitate the construction of an administration and orientation centre as an addition to an existing building at 243 Highway 54, Cayuga - Ruthven Park National Historic Site utilizing financial support from the Rural Business and Tourism Community Improvement Plan (RBTCIP) Financial Incentive Program. Economic Development and Tourism staff recommend that this application be approved for funding under the RBTCIP, as all program eligibility requirements have been met.

### BACKGROUND:

In May 2008, Haldimand County Council adopted the Haldimand County Downtown Areas Community Improvement Plan (CIP) and corresponding Downtown Community Improvement Project Areas

(CIPAs). The CIP provides Council with the ability to offer financial incentives to private property owners to revitalize, redevelop, and renovate properties and buildings within the CIPAs. The CIPAs are identified as the downtown areas of the communities of Caledonia, Cayuga, Dunnville, Hagersville, Jarvis and Selkirk. In September 2013, Council approved the Rural Business and Tourism Community Improvement Plan (RBTCIP). The RBTCIP targets key Haldimand County economic objectives by supporting hamlets, commercial roofed accommodations and value added agricultural businesses. Amendments in November 2014 added a new program to the Downtown Areas CIP to include interior renovations for places of assembly related to arts and culture, commercial roofed accommodations and restaurants, and expanded eligible costs for existing programs.

Economic Development and Tourism (EDT) staff continue to promote both financial incentive programs to the communities and stakeholders. EDT staff also assist proponents with their applications, in order to bring eligible projects before Council in a timely manner. Further, staff continue to work with applicants to ensure that their projects move forward to completion.

As of this report date, one hundred and eighteen (118) Downtown Areas CIP applications and nineteen (19) RBTCIP applications have been approved (which include this report PED-EDT-04-2018, PED-EDT-02-2018 and PED-EDT-03-2018). One Hundred and twenty-one (121) of the previously approved applications have been completed and the files have been closed on three (3) applications. Downtown area grants have been approved in Caledonia, Cayuga, Dunnville, Hagersville, Jarvis and Selkirk. Grants have been approved for value added agriculture projects in the rural areas of Haldimand County; as well, projects in the hamlets of Fisherville, Port Maitland and York have been approved under the RBTCIP.

**Summary of the 137 Downtown Areas CIP and RBTCIP Applications (including PED-EDT-02-2018, PED-EDT-03-2018, and PED-EDT-04-2018) Considered by Council:**

<b>Financial Incentive Program</b> <i>(Including PED-EDT-02-2018, PED-EDT-03-2018 and PED-EDT-04-2018)</i>	<b>Downtown Areas</b>	<b>Rural Business and Tourism</b>
Application and Permit Fees Refund	\$165,604	\$15,458
Building Restoration, Renovation and Improvement	\$48,527	\$120,712
Downtown Housing Grant	\$127,971	N/A
Heritage Improvement Grant	\$20,000	\$29,923
Façade Improvement Grant	\$710,764	\$77,412
<b>Total value of CIP grants provided by the County**</b>	<b>\$1,072,866</b>	<b>\$243,505</b>
Total construction value of CIP Projects	\$5,009,889	\$843,432
Grant values as a percentage of construction values	21%*	29%
Council approved transfers from CIP Reserve for other initiatives	\$6,360	
<b>Total funds remaining in CIP Reserve (Subject to approval of 2018 operating budget)</b>	<b>\$77,624</b>	

\* **Grant as a % of Construction** – This calculation shows the leveraging factor; basically, how much funding the County is contributing to the project compared to the total cost of the project. As it currently stands, for every dollar granted by the County, approximately \$5.00 of private funding has been invested. The Kinsmen Park Revitalization and Dunnville Farmers Market Project are not included in the total construction values.

\*\* Includes grant amounts related to staff approved projects under \$5,000.

## **ANALYSIS:**

The final completed application for the property known as 243 Highway 54, Cayuga was received in February 2018. A location map has been included in this report as Attachment 1. Contact with Economic Development and Tourism staff occurred in Spring 2017, and since that time, staff has worked with the applicant to finalize their plans and prepare the subject application for Council's consideration.

This application is for the Façade, Landscape & Signage Improvement Grant and Development Charges, and Planning Fees & Building Permit Grant programs. The property at 243 Highway 54, Cayuga is known as Ruthven Park National Historic Site and is of significance to the County from a cultural and tourism perspective. Ruthven National Park National Historic Site is owned and operated by the Lower Grand River Land Trust. The Lower Grand River Land Trust is a volunteer-driven, not for profit, non-government, charitable organization whose purpose is to conserve the cultural and natural landscapes for the enjoyment of visitors to the site. While Ruthven Park is named a national historic site, they do not receive any government funding for operations of the site. Funding to maintain the property is provided through the interest of an endowment fund, rental of agricultural lands, admissions, special events, grants, memberships, filming revenue and donations. The property has received no prior community improvement plan funding, but was previously a recipient of funds from the Mayor's Gala and accessed funds for wetland restoration through the County's Rural Water Quality Program.

Multiple buildings on the property are heritage designated including the mansion, coach house and gatehouse. Newer structures include a bird banding station and washroom building. The site hosts a variety of activities including historical tours, children's programming and weddings, as well as a variety of community functions. Attendance to the site is estimated at approximate 10,000 guests each year.

## **Proposed Improvements**

The proposed improvement for property at 253 Highway 54 includes the construction of an administration and orientation centre. The centre will be constructed as an addition to the existing washroom building on the property. A photo of the existing building can be found in Attachment 2.

Currently, visitor reception and all administration is conducted at the gatehouse building. The new centre will provide more space for administration, but will also create, a place for visitor orientation and education, meeting space for rental inquiries, as well as a small exhibit space and gift shop. The proposed improvements will not interfere with views of the historical mansion and are meant to reflect the spirit of the park. Eligible items of the new addition include façade elements such as windows, doors, board and batten siding, signage and exterior lighting. Construction drawings of the proposed addition can be found in Attachment 3.

## **Intent of the Rural Business and Tourism Community Improvement Plan**

The Rural Business and Tourism Community Improvement Plan was implemented in 2014 with a variety of objectives. Improving existing tourism infrastructure is a objective of the plan and this application meets the intent. This application is meant to improve the current visitor experience to Ruthven Park National Historic Site. This project also matches the intent of the Haldimand County

Tourism Strategic Plan which identified a lack of tourism infrastructure in the County. This administration and orientation centre will elevate the visitor's experience to Ruthven Park National Historic Site and align with other County tourism development initiatives such as marketing activities and experience development. Staff from the Ruthven Park National Historic site took part in the recent tourism experience training in addition to being the host site for the training. Staff anticipate that new tourism market-ready experiences will be developed onsite at Ruthven Park and that the proposed project will provide much needed space to accommodate these experiences.

Review Panel Recommendation			The application is complete and recommended for approval.		
File No.	Community	Address	Value of Project	Value of Grant	Grant as a % of Construction
19	Cayuga	243 Highway 54	\$175,000	\$12,077	7%
<b>Façade, Landscape &amp; Signage Improvement Grant</b>					<b>\$10,000</b>
<b>Development Charge, Planning Fees &amp; Building Permit Fees</b>					<b>\$2,077</b>
<b>Total Grant to 243 Highway 54, Cayuga</b>					<b><u>\$12,077</u></b>
<b>Project Description</b>	Construction of an administration and orientation centre as an addition to an existing building.				
<b>Conditions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Property taxes must be in good standing and the property must be in conformity with all County/Provincial/Federal by-laws and legislation throughout the term of the program – i.e. property standards, zoning by-laws, official plan, etc.</li> <li>2. Waiver of site plan will be required.</li> <li>3. Building permit will be required for proposed improvements.</li> </ol>				

## FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

Upon approval of this application, PED-EDT-02-2018 and PED-EDT-03-2018, Council will have approved a total of \$1,322,376 from this Reserve. This application requires \$12,077 in funding from the Reserve. There are currently insufficient funds within the Community Improvement Plan Reserve to accommodate this application.

The Downtown Areas Community Improvement Plan (CIP) was established in 2008, with an annual allocation of \$100,000 contributed to a Community Improvement Plan Reserve to be used to fund approved grant applications under the financial incentives component of the Downtown Areas CIP. In 2013, the annual contribution was increased to \$150,000, to incorporate the Downtown Areas CIP and the Rural Business and Tourism Community Improvement Plan. The contributions continued till 2017, at which time Council committed to evaluate the success of this ten year program before committing to ongoing funding.

Contained within the Draft 2018 Tax Supported Operating Budget is an ongoing contribution to this reserve of \$150,000. Council reviewed the 2018 Tax Supported Operating Budget on March 7, 2018, with ratification of the budget set for April 3, 2018. If the ongoing contribution is approved, this would bring the projected balance of the Community Improvement Plan Reserve to \$77,624 should PED-

EDT-02-2018, PED-EDT-03-2018, and PED-EDT-04-2018 receive Council approval. Staff proposed that this application be approved, contingent upon the approval of this ongoing funding.

Legal: A grant agreement will be prepared for execution by the Mayor and Clerk should Council approve this application. The grant agreement was reviewed by legal counsel in the Spring of 2008.

## **STAKEHOLDER IMPACTS:**

All Community Improvement projects are circulated and reviewed by a staff committee that consists of representatives from Building Controls and By-law Enforcement, Planning and Development, Community Development and Partnerships (Heritage and Culture) and Finance Divisions. Once this project has received Council approval, staff from the Building Controls and By-law Enforcement Division will be required to assist Economic Development and Tourism staff to ensure that all proposed works are carried out in the manner applied for and that terms and conditions are met.

## **REPORT IMPACTS:**

Agreement: Yes

By-law: No

Budget Amendment: No

Policy: No

## **ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Location Map of 243 Highway 54, Cayuga.
2. Existing Photos of 243 Highway 54, Cayuga.
3. Proposed Administration and Orientation Building drawings.