Information Report

Report From: Christina Tennyson, Regional Economic Development Coordinator for Bruce County

Meeting Date: December 12, 2022

Subject: SRECDEV.22.02 Review and Update of the Municipal Community Improvement Plan

Attachments: None.

Report Summary

As part of the Regional Economic Development Pilot, Bruce County will lead the review and update of Arran-Elderslie's Community Improvement Plan. The goal of this project includes modernization of Arran-Elderslie's Community Improvement Plan policies. This modernization will look to address the goals of Council as well as create the enabling policy needed for businesses to access grants available through Bruce County.

Background

A Community Improvement Plan is a powerful municipal tool that enables opportunities to encourage the revitalization of existing buildings and redevelopment of properties. When implemented these policies provide the municipality with the ability to support financial incentives within the defined Community Improvement Plan Area. By building a robust policy, it allows the municipality, to participate in or apply future financial incentives to stimulate improvements and investments within the communities.

County level government are not able to approve Community Improvement Policies without specific provincial permissions, something that Bruce County does not have currently.

Bruce County's Spruce the Bruce Program is enabled through municipal policies. Bruce County has recently added four grants to this program ([Agri-Food Innovation Grant](), [Business Accessibility Adaptability Grant](), [Product and Experience Development Grant](), and [Residential Improvement Grant]()) that extend past the traditional downtown cores. Arran-Elderslie has an active Community Improvement Plan however to access these new grants, an amendment to Arran-Elderslie's policy would be required. Simultaneously, language in the policy should be adjusted to readily support future financial incentives.

To move forward with redeveloping the Municipality's current Community Improvement Plan, consultations will help guide some of the decisions that need to be made. The data that will be collected will be centered on the following:

➤ If the additional Spruce the Bruce grants are supported, this will lead to adding a new Municipality-wide Community Improvement Plan area to the policy.

➤ Modifications to the current boundaries within communities of Chesley, Paisley, and Tara/Invermay should be made.

➤ Understanding the needs of community attraction and retention to determine which category of grants should be added to the framework.

➤ Based on the needs of the community the focus of who (commercial, vacant properties, etc.,) these grants will support and where the funding will come from would be better recognized.

Analysis

Arran-Elderslie and Bruce County have partnered to support and implement economic development projects. Reviewing and updating Arran-Elderslie's Community Improvement Plan policy is a key project of the Regional Support Economic Development Pilot. Building the foundation of the Community Improvement Plan requires defining the goals for the growth of the community.

The Community Improvement Plan review process will include a consultation process to identify the needs from business, local organizations, and internal municipal staff. Draft Policies are expected to be presented to Council in February 2023. After required adjustments are made, a formal public statutory meeting and appeal process will begin.

The intent of this report is to provide Council with an overview of the plan for work that will be undertaken towards modernization of this policy in Arran-Elderslie.

Link to Strategic/Master Plan

6.2 Supporting Businesses and the Local Economy

6.3 Facilitating Community Growth

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding

No financial impacts. This project will be led by the Regional Support Economic Development Coordinator, as part of the partnership between Arran-Elderslie and Bruce County.

Approved By: Sylvia Kirkwood, CAO