

Municipality of  
**Brooke-Alvinston**

# Community Improvement Plan

June 2011





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## 1.0 OVERVIEW

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### **1.1 Background**

The Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston is located in eastern Lambton County. The Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston is 311 square km and contains a population of approximately 3,000 habitants. This rural community is serviced by the urban centers of Alvinston and Inwood. The Municipality is close to the large urban areas of Sarnia (20 minutes), London (45 minutes) as well as major transportation routes.

Alvinston is a fully serviced redeveloping urban area with restaurants, a bank, a farm machinery dealership, a modern machine shop, a plumbing and heating shop as well as church's, a library, post office, optimist club and an active legion.

Inwood is also a fully serviced redeveloping urban area with several businesses and is home to Brooke Telecom, a publicly owned telephone system offering regular phone service as well as cell phone, high speed internet and cable television services.

### **1.2 Purpose**

Although many of the buildings in the Commercial district of Alvinston have survived through time, many have been neglected, demolished, dilapidated or are in need of renovation. To address this, the Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston has designated the lands located in the commercial corridors of the Town of Alvinston and the Town of Inwood as a Community Improvement Plan (CIP). The purpose of this program is to encourage property owners to renovate, preserve, and beautify the central commercial corridor. The Community Improvement Plan (CIP) uses financial incentive programs to encourage investment and redevelopment of properties and ultimately improve the Towns of Alvinston and Inwood. To revitalize and encourage property owners, the Municipality may make grants to registered owners to provide relief for the financial cost of improving your structures within the Community Improvement Project Area.

Specifically this program is designed to:

- To encourage the restoration and rehabilitation of buildings and properties in the Alvinston and Inwood commercial corridors.
- To maintain and enhance the architectural heritage and character of the Alvinston and Inwood central commercial corridors;

- To encourage investment in Alvinston and Inwood to improve the pedestrian and shopper attractiveness and economic viability of the area and to contribute to the broader communities economic vitality.

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## 2.0 POLICY FRAMEWORK

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### **2.1 Legislation**

Provincial Legislation outlines the framework for Community Improvement Plans (CIP). Under Section 28 of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, the municipality has the ability to designate area of the municipality as a "community improvement project area". Section 28 of the Act states that "Where there is an official plan in effect in a local municipality that contains provisions relating to community improvement in the municipality, the council may, by by-law, designate the whole or any part of an area covered by such an official plan as a community improvement project area." The Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990 further defines a community improvement project area as "a municipality or an area within a municipality, the community improvement of which in the opinion of the council is desirable because of age, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement, unsuitability of buildings or for any other environmental, social or community economic development reason". The act further supports providing grants to administer Community Improvement areas; "Make grants or loans to registered or assessed owners, tenants and anyone else assigned by the owner or tenant to pay for the whole or any part of the cost of rehabilitating such lands and buildings in conformity with the Community Improvement Plan."

### **2.2 Official Plan**

The Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston Official Plan contains an outline for selecting and defining Community Improvement areas. Under *Part D; Community Development* of the Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston's Official Plan policies for identifying Community Improvement areas include:

Policies - "In addition to the General Criteria the following criteria should be utilized to define a Commercial Project Area:

- a) *areas where an active Business Improvement Association is operating;*
- b) *areas where streetscape improvements are needed;*
- c) *areas where the provision or improvement of links, particularly pedestrian linkages, to areas of recreational and community activities; is feasible;*
- d) *areas of under-utilized commercial buildings;*



- e) *areas where specific works are required to facilitate desired redevelopment; and*
- f) *areas where land use conflict exist."*

Under *Part D-Community Development* of the Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston's Official Plan; general policies for Community Improvement areas include:

*"In commercial areas the Municipality intends:*

- a) *to enhance their role as community centres;*
- b) *to encourage redevelopment, intensification and revitalization;*
- c) *to upgrade and improve municipal infrastructure where deficient;*
- d) *to enhance the commercial streetscape for improved aesthetics, commercial attractiveness, and to foster and improve pedestrian circulation systems;"*

*"it is the intent of the Municipality:*

- d) *to aid in fulfilling the potential of commercial districts in the Municipality; and*
- e) *to enhance the economic potential of the Municipality in order to foster employment generating activity."*

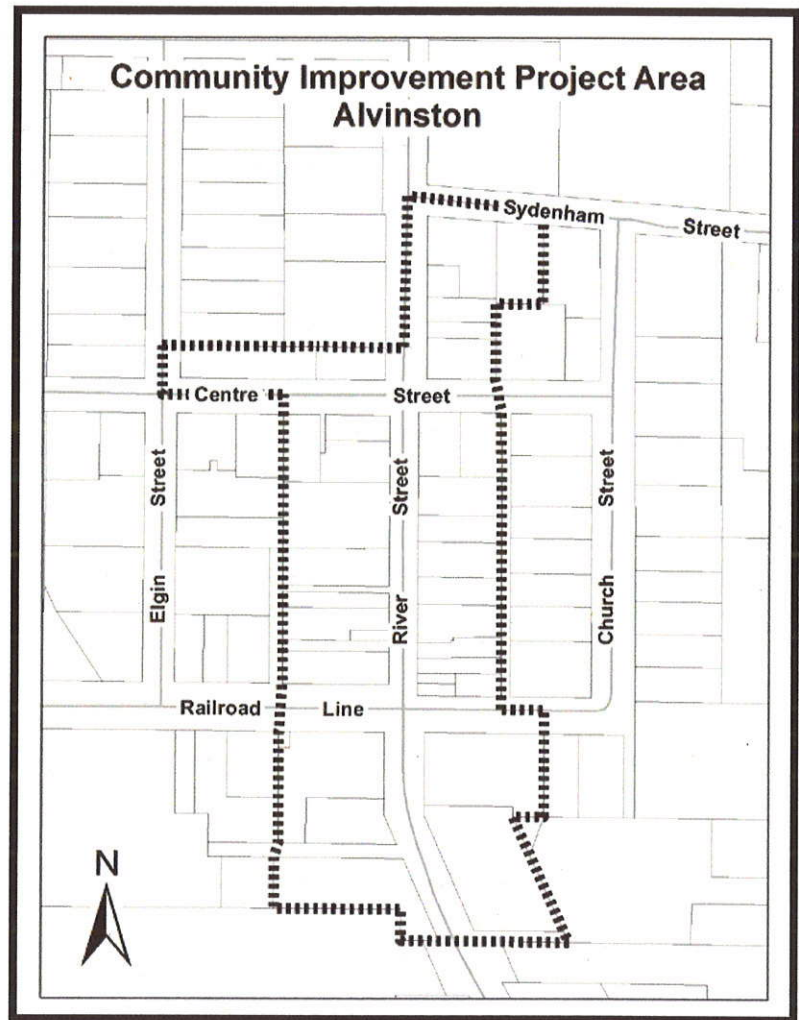
This Community Improvement Plan is expected to promote and implement a number of the goals and objectives of the Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston Official Plan. It will provide for improvement and rehabilitation of the commercial and other sectors; it will generate additional employment and business opportunities by creating a positive and cooperative investment climate; it will stimulate private investment; it will improve the appearance of the Town and it will eliminate deterioration and stimulate pride in ownership and occupancy.

### 3.0 COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT AREA

The extent of the community improvement project areas are as illustrated on the Maps below.

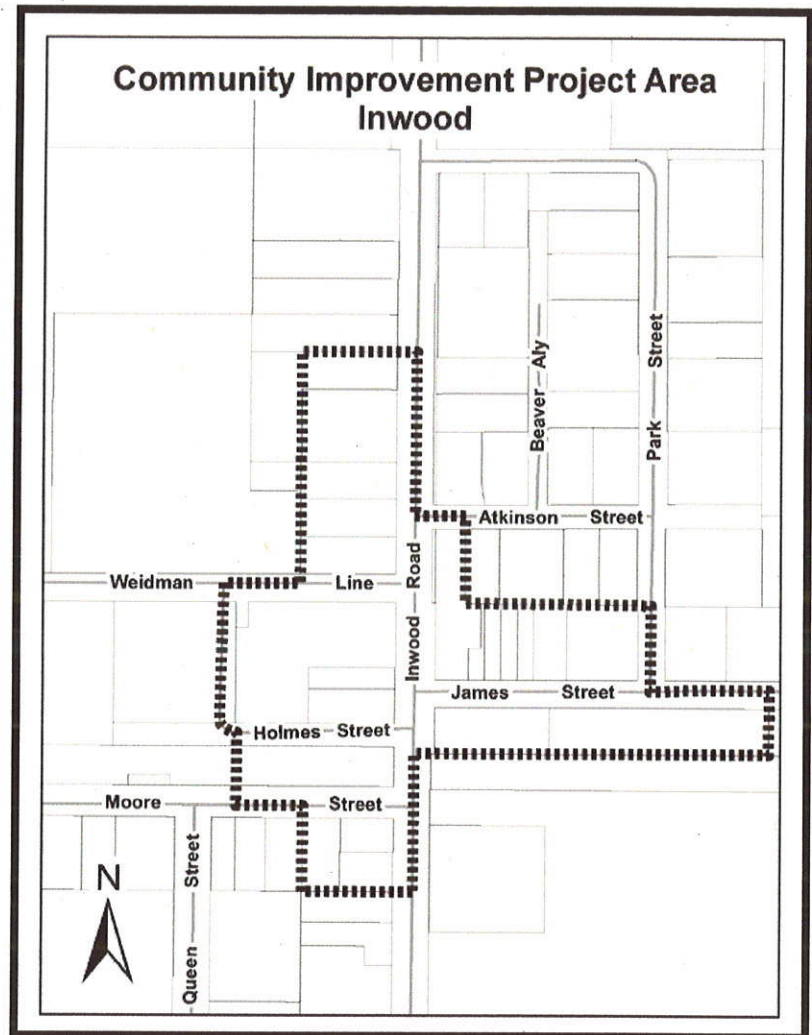
#### 3.1 ALVINSTON

The Alvinston Community Improvement Project Area is located in the Downtown corridor along River Street and bound by Sydenham Street on the North and the Hydro Corridor to the South.



### 3.2 INWOOD

The Inwood Community Improvement Project Area is located along the Inwood Road commercial corridor.





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#### 4.0 GRANTS AND PROGRAMS

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The Brooke-Alvinston Community Improvement Plan will consist of a ***Façade Grant Program*** and ***Tax Increment Incentive Grant Program***.

##### **4.1 Façade Improvement Grant Program**

The program allows a one-time grant available for registered owners, tenants and assignees to improve the façade of the building in accordance with the Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston Community improvement plan (CIP) and Municipality of Brooke-alvinston Official Plan.

Priorities will be given to existing commercial businesses or buildings that are being renovated for commercial purposes.

- Priority may be given for historic buildings used for commercial purposes;
- Significant improvement of the façade will be favored;
- Improvements that are aesthetically visible in the community improvement area; or
- Accessibility design/Barrier free access (may be considered as part of façade improvements).

Program Incentives:

- Grant of up to 50 % of the cost of front façade renewal up to a maximum of \$2500;
- Grant of up to 50 % for side and back facades up to a maximum of \$2000 if a façade faces onto a side street or back of building in public parking area;
- Grant to replace façade signs and street awnings of up to 50% of the replacement cost up to a \$2000 maximum.

At the time Council established its annual budget, Council will determine the maximum contribution to be allocated to the program for the current year. The Municipality is not obligated to fund any project. Funded requirements are subject to change at the discretion of the Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston. Each application will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to consider the public and economic benefit to providing incentives to the property. Approval of the incentives may be recommended where:

- There are no outstanding property taxes, municipal orders or by-law -infractions on the subject property;
- All relevant supporting documentation and reports have been provided to the Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston;
- The incentives are considered necessary to improve the condition of the property,

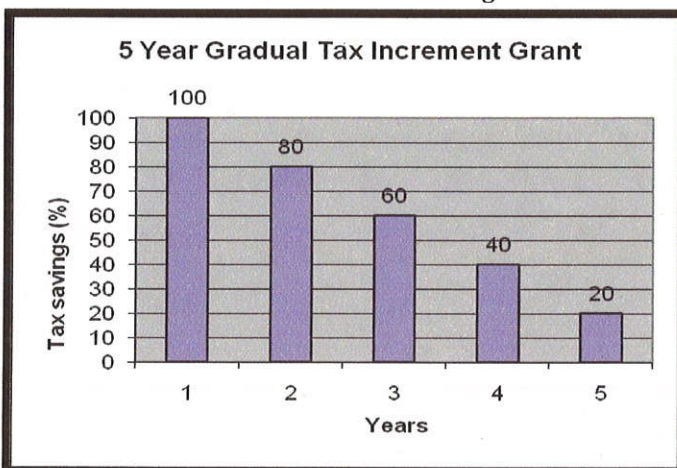


- The amount of available and budgeted municipal funding is sufficient to cover the total cost of all incentives that have been approved.
- Improvements must be for the façade of a building;
- Completing façade structural improvements necessary to maintain the safety and integrity of a structure;
- Replacing signs and awnings to a historical theme;

The applicant must obtain a building permit and any other required approvals from the Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston prior to undertaking building work activity on the subject property.

#### **4.2 Tax Incentive Increment Grant Program**

The second program offered by the Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston is the Tax Incentive Increment Grant. The program would apply only to pre approved properties undergoing major site rehabilitation resulting in an increase in the municipal share of the increased taxes. The Tax Incentive Increment Grant program will encourage investment in the project area by allowing applicants property tax relief from the portion of the taxes resulting from an increased assessment from redevelopment initiatives. The tax rebates would be given as a result of renovations, or reconstruction of buildings within the project area. The grant reduces the owner's municipal tax requirements as a result of the redevelopment at a rate of 20 % gradually over 5 years. Therefore the owner is receiving a 100% reimbursement on the municipal portion of the tax increment based on the assessment increase in year 1; 80% in year 2; 60 % in year 3; 40% in year 4; and 20 % in the last year (5) of the agreement. The tax rebates are only on the reassessed portion of the municipal tax and do not include any additional levies. The Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston may consider different time frame terms over the agreement.



The following outlines the percentage of savings from the grant:

Year 1: 100% of Municipal tax increment

Year 2: 80% of Municipal tax increment

Year 3: 60% of Municipal tax increment

Year 4: 40% of Municipal tax increment

Year 5: 20% of Municipal tax increment

At the time Council established its annual budget, Council will determine the maximum contribution to be allocated to the program for the current year. The Municipality is not obligated to fund any project. Funded requirements are subject to change at the discretion of the Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston.

All properties within the community improvement project area are eligible to apply for tax increment equivalent grants subject to the general eligibility criteria and requirements outlined in this plan, the specific criteria and requirements listed below and the availability of funding, as approved by Council.

Each application will be considered on a case-by-case basis to consider the public and economic benefit to providing one or more incentives to the property. Approval of the incentives may be recommended where:

- There are no outstanding property taxes, municipal orders or by-law -infractions on the subject property;
- All relevant supporting documentation and reports have been provided to the Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston;
- The incentives are considered necessary to improve the condition of the property,
- The amount of available and budgeted municipal funding is sufficient to cover the total cost of all incentives that have been approved.

The applicant must obtain a building permit and any other required approvals from the Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston prior to undertaking building work activity on the subject property.

Tax incentive increment grants become liable for payment in full, with interest, in cases where the owner defaults on by-law or agreement requirements.

Applicants remain eligible for the grant program provided they continue to operate a viable business on the subject site. In the event that a business ceases to operate, the full amount of the taxes due will become payable. In the event that a new business moves into those premises, that new business will be eligible for any remaining tax increment benefits under the original agreement.

The payment of the program will be further defined in an agreement between the Municipality and the applicant.



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## 5.0 GENERAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

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### **5.1 Eligibility Criteria**

The following general eligibility criteria apply to all grants outlined in this plan. The Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston reserves the right to establish other criteria requirements that may be deemed appropriate on a site or project-specific basis. Applicants may be denied if already receiving prior grants or tax incentives.

- Properties eligible for the financial components of the Community Improvement Plan must be within the community improvement project area.
- In accordance with legislative requirements, none of the financial incentives in this community improvement plan will be offered retroactively for site investigation, rehabilitation or development activities undertaken, or costs incurred prior to the approval of the community improvement plan. Only applications that are submitted for work or development undertaken subsequent to the approval date of this community improvement plan will be eligible for financial incentives.
- Applicants for the financial incentives provided in this community improvement plan will generally be the registered owner(s) of the subject property. Council may, at its sole discretion, allow for incentives to be provided directly to assessed owners, tenants of lands and/or buildings, or any person to whom the owner or tenant has assigned the right to receive such incentives. Such applications will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
- To be eligible for the grants provided in this community improvement plan, properties must not be in tax arrears or in arrears with regard to any other municipal financial obligation. All taxes owing shall be paid prior to the disbursement of any grant of tax assistance money offered under this program. All required local improvement charges, taxes and other charges of the Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston shall be paid for the duration of the incentives programs offered under this community improvement plan.
- All outstanding work orders and/or requests to comply from municipal departments and agencies shall be addressed to the satisfaction of the Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston prior to the disbursement of any financial incentives on the subject property. For the duration of the incentive program, failure to address any work orders and/or requests to comply from any municipal departments and agencies may result in the cancellation or postponement of the incentive(s).

- Applicants shall provide the Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston with all required information, reports and findings on the environmental condition of the subject property prior to receiving any financial incentives under this community improvement plan.
- The Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston may discontinue the incentive programs at any time; however, any participants in the program prior to its cancellation will continue to receive the grant or tax assistance incentives as were determined for their properties.
- All applicants for the grant and tax assistance incentives offered under this community improvement plan will be required to enter into an agreement with the Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston that will specify the terms, conditions and obligations of the applicant and the Municipality.

### **5.2 Design Criteria**

It is the intention of the plan to encourage maintaining consistency and strong architectural tradition upon which the original commercial districts were built. Maintenance includes preservation of the building inventory in the commercial district and provides opportunity for preservation and restoration. Traditional Facades improvement will be given prime consideration under this plan. The Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston believes that these commercial districts can benefit from the community improvement program.

- Consistencies with the design and structural guidelines of the original architectural design of the building.
- The extent to which a project improves the overall appearance of the property
- Overall benefit to the downtown and consistency with the Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston Official Plan.
- To the extent which a project incorporates and or promotes aspects of the Municipality's heritage through elements of design and construction as stated in the Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston Official Plan.



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## 6.0 ADMINISTRATION

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### **6.0 Administration**

Council will review each application with recommendations from staff and the Planning and Development Services Department.

### **6.1 Steering Committee**

In order to implement the provisions and programs of this plan in an effective, comprehensive and integrated manner, Council may appoint a Steering Committee. This committee may be made up of staff representatives from the Administration, Treasury, Public Works, Planning, Building, Legal and any other necessary departments, depending on the nature of the proposal or application before it.

The Steering Committee would be responsible for promotion and marketing related to this plan, for reviewing and assessing applications from eligible property owners, for reporting to Council, for assembling information and preparing implementing agreements and for undertaking ongoing monitoring of the community improvement program.

### **6.2 Applications**

An application must be submitted to the Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston prior to commencing of the project. All applications shall be submitted to the Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston staff, and shall include the following information:

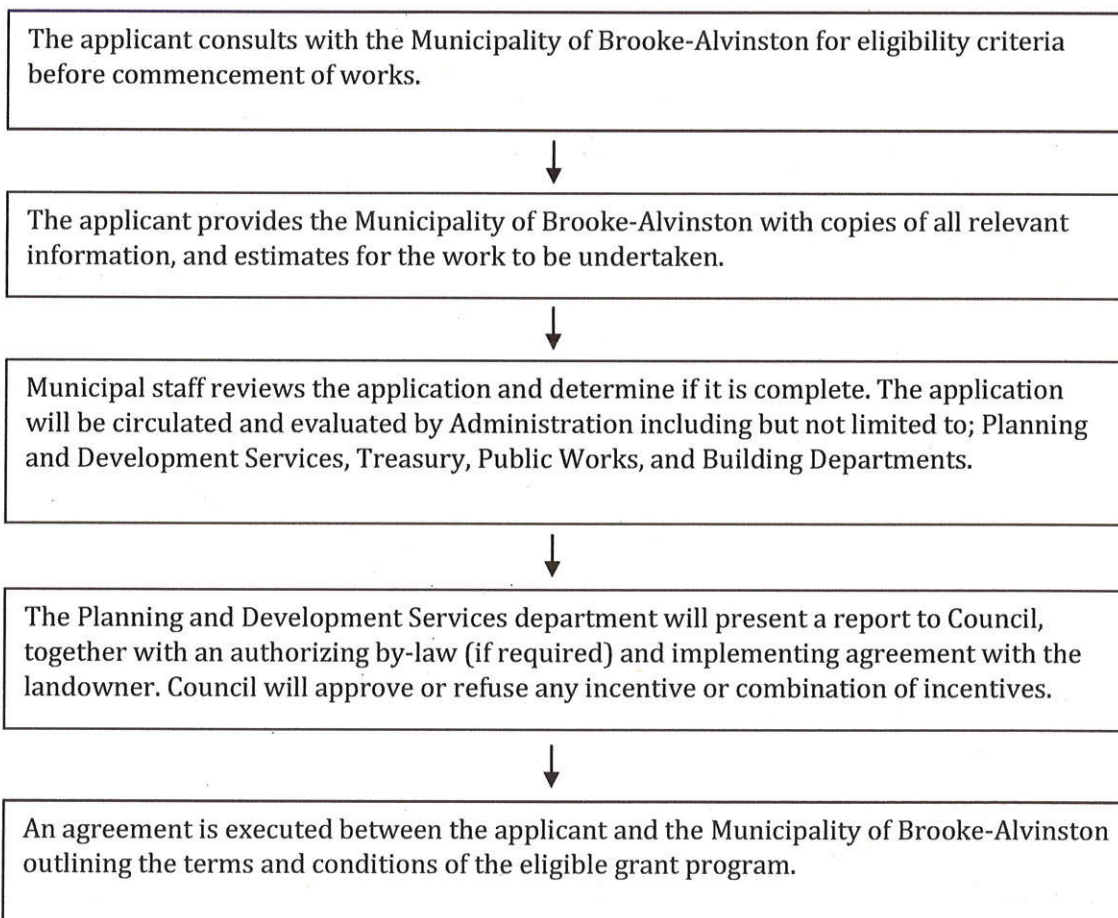
- Name and address of the property owner and agent
- Assessment roll number
- A plan showing the existing development and land uses on the subject property
- Legal description, including easements, restrictive covenants, rights-of-way and any other encumbrances or instruments registered on title
- Current Official Plan designation and zoning
- A description of the site restoration work that is proposed to be conducted on the property
- A cost estimate, name and qualifications of the consultant who will be conducting the proposed site work

### **6.3 Timeline**

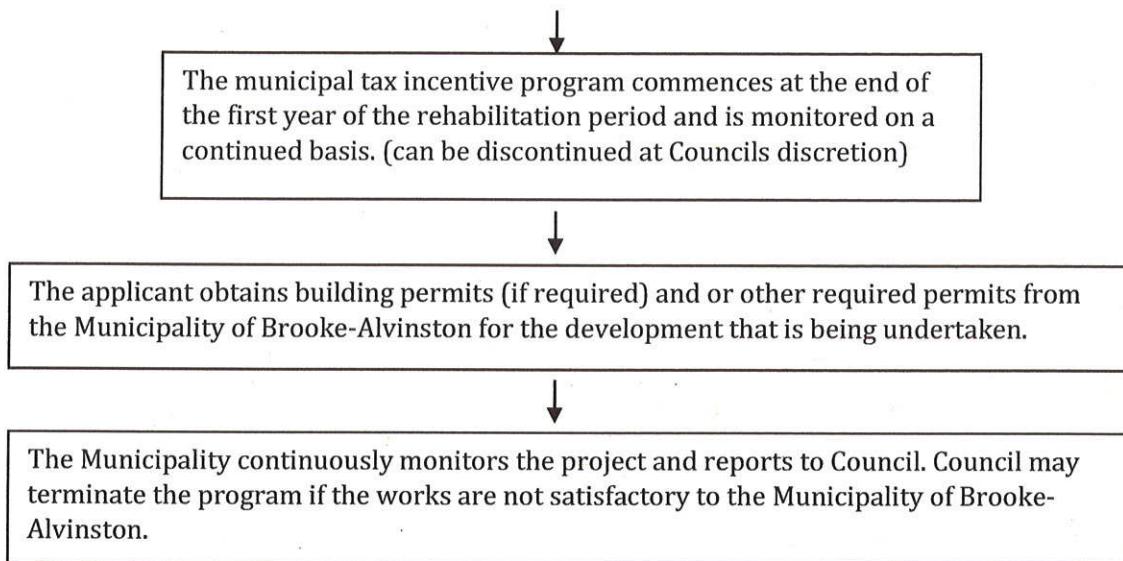
The Community Improvement Plan (CIP) will be active until the plan is terminated by the Council Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston at their discretion. The Municipality of Brooke Alvinston Community Improvement Plan (CIP) can be discontinued by Council at any time.

### **6.4 Program Workflow**

The following flowchart illustrates the general sequence of events in administering the grants available under this plan. The chart is provided for illustration purposes only; special circumstances may result in modifications being made in order to address individual applications or requirements:







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## 7.0 IMPLEMENTATION

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### **7.1 Monitoring and Implementation**

As with any plan, it will be important to monitor the results and progress of this community improvement plan. In this case, monitoring will serve two distinct, but equally important purposes:

It will ensure that the financial rules of this plan and of the applicable provincial legislation are complied with, through ongoing assessments of costs incurred by applicants so that claims made by those applicants do not exceed the amounts available through the various grant programs.

It will track the various applications and projects through the various stages of assessment, remediation/rehabilitation and development to determine over the longer term whether or not the financial incentive programs offered through this plan are achieving their goals.

### **7.2 Promotion and Marketing**

Municipality staff will develop and monitor a strategy to promote the plan to the stakeholders noted above and to the rest of the community. This strategy may include advertising and the production of promotional material.

### **7.3 Review of Community Improvement Plan (CIP)**

Council will conduct an annual review of the CIP, to assess the effectiveness, establish funding levels, consider amendments/modifications, or discontinuing the program.



# **APPENDICES**

- 8.0 Grant Application Form
- 8.1 By-law No.11 of 2011-- Designating the Community Improvement Project Areas
- 8.2 By-law No.18 of 2011-- Adopting the Community Improvement Plan



## Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston

Box 28, 3236 River St  
Alvinston, ON, N0N 1A0  
Telephone: 898-2173  
Fax: 898-5653

### Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston Community Improvement Plan (CIP) GRANT APPLICATION FORM

Consultation with municipal staff is required prior to submitting application. Council is not required to provide funding and may terminate this program at any time without notice.

Please indicate eligible grant applying for:

**Façade Improvement Grant** \_\_\_\_ **Tax Incentive Increment Grant** \_\_\_\_

NAME OF REGISTERED PROPERTY OWNER: \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS OF REGISTERED PROPERTY OWNER: \_\_\_\_\_

POSTAL CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ FAX: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS OF SUBJECT PROPERTY: \_\_\_\_\_

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: LOT NO. \_\_\_\_\_ PLAN NO. \_\_\_\_\_

ASSESSMENT ROLL NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF BUSINESS: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF APPLICANT'S SOLICITOR: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ FAX: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

**1. CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:**

- a) Is the subject property receiving any amounts of public funding?  
YES \_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_

If yes please describe: \_\_\_\_\_



2. DESCRIBE THE NATURE OF THE REHABILITATION WORK PROPOSED TO BE UNDERTAKEN:

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3. PROVIDE A DETAILED COST ESTIMATE OF THE WORK TO BE UNDERTAKEN (PLEASE ATTACH THE ESTIMATE).

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I/WE HEREBY CERTIFY that the information given herein is true, correct, and complete in every respect and I/WE UNDERTAKE to provide all information as required by the municipality to determine the amount of grant available under this program.

SIGNATURE OF REGISTERED OWNER: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

GRANT REFERENCE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE RECEIVED: \_\_\_\_\_

**CORPORATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY  
OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BROOKE-ALVINSTON**

**BY-LAW No. 11 of 2011**

**BEING A BY-LAW TO DESIGNATE A COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT  
PROJECT AREA RESPECTING A COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN  
FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF BROOKE-ALVINSTON**

**WHEREAS** Section 28(2) of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, provides that "where there is an official plan in effect in a local municipality that contains provisions relating to community improvement in the municipality, the Council may, by by-law, designate the whole or any part of an area covered by such an official plan as a community improvement project area";

**AND WHEREAS** Section 28(1) of the Planning Act defines a "community improvement project area" as "a municipality or area within a municipality, the community improvement of which is the opinion of the council is desirable because of age, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement, unsuitability of buildings or for any other environmental, social or community economic development reason";

**AND WHEREAS** the Township of Brooke-Alvinston Official Plan contains provisions enabling council to designate a community improvement project area, by by-law, for the purposes of preparing and undertaking a community improvement plan providing grants and economic rehabilitation;

**AND WHEREAS** the Council of the Township of Brooke-Alvinston has deemed it appropriate to designate parts of the municipality as a "community improvement project area" for the purposes of establishing a community improvement plan providing grants, and economic rehabilitation in accordance with Section 28(2) of the Planning Act;

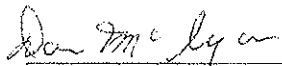
**NOW THEREFORE** the Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of the Township of Brooke-Alvinston enacts as follows:

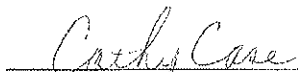
1. That parts of the Township of Brooke-Alvinston as illustrated on Schedule "A1" & "A2" attached hereto and forming part of this By-law, are hereby designated as the Community Improvement Project Area respecting economic rehabilitation, enhancement and community redevelopment.

This By-law shall come into force and effect upon the final passing thereof.

READ A FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD TIME AND FINALLY PASSED this 24 day  
of

February, 2011.

  
Don McGugan, Mayor

  
Cathy Case, Clerk



**Township of Brooke-Alvinston  
Schedule "A1"**

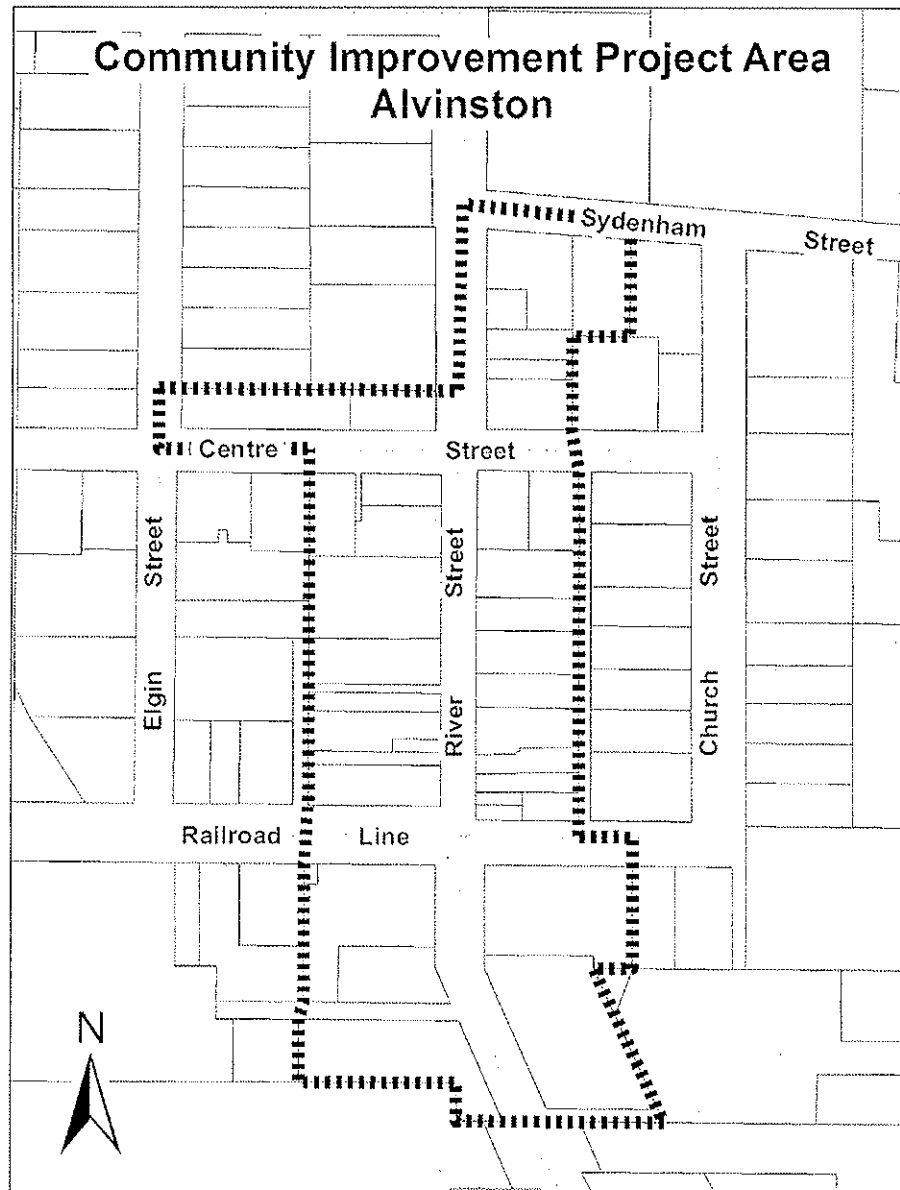
**to By-Law No. 11 of 2011**

Dated this 24 day of February, 2011.

Signed: Don McGugan  
Don McGugan, Mayor

Cathy Case  
Cathy Case, Clerk

**KEY MAP:**



**Township of Brooke-Alvinston  
Schedule "A2"**

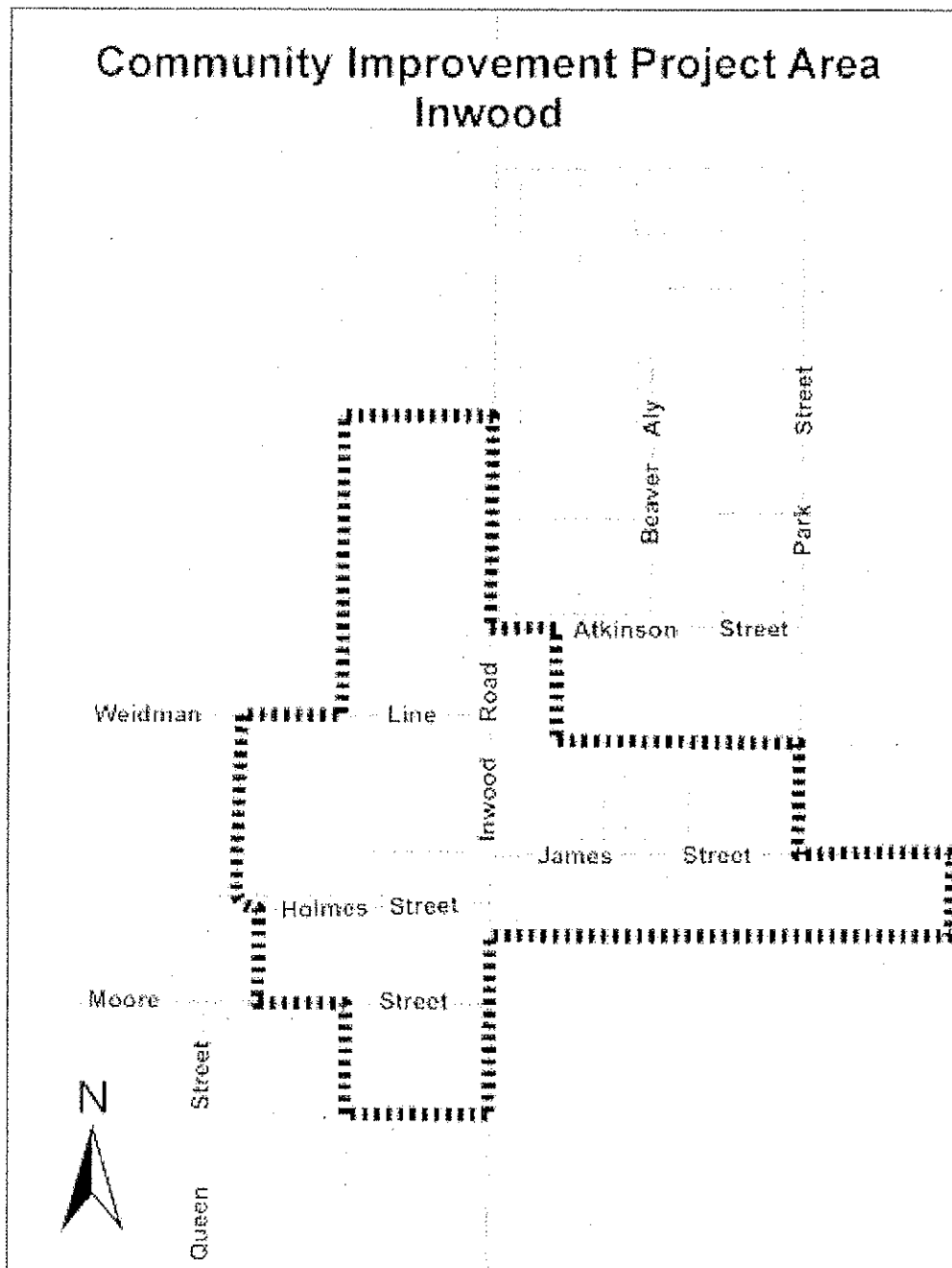
**to By-Law No. 11 of 2011**

Dated this 24 day of February, 2011.

Signed: Don McGugan  
Don McGugan, Mayor

Cathy Case  
Cathy Case, Clerk

**KEY MAP:**





**CORPORATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF BROOKE-ALVINSTON**

**BY-LAW NO. 18 OF 2011**

**BEING A BY-LAW TO DESIGNATE A COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN  
(CIP) FOR THE MUNICIPALITY OF BROOKE-ALVINSTON**

**WHEREAS** By-law No. 11 of 2011, passed on the 24<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2011 designated the Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston Community Improvement Project Areas for the purposes of preparing and implementing a Community Improvement Plan respecting redevelopment;

**AND WHEREAS** the Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston has deemed it appropriate to adopt a Community Improvement Plan for the established community improvement project areas, in accordance with Section 28 of the Planning Act for the purposed of carrying out community improvement through various municipal initiatives and incentives set forth in a Community Improvement Plan;

**AND WHEREAS** the Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston has fulfilled the requirements of Section 28 of the Planning Act;

**NOW THEREFORE** the Council of the Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston enacts as follows:

1. **THAT** the document attached hereto as Schedule "A" entitled "Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston Community Improvement Plan" is hereby adopted as a community improvement plan pursuant to Section 28(4) of the Planning Act.

This By-law shall come into force and effect upon the final passing thereof.

READ A FIRST AND SECOND TIME this 14 day of April, 2011.

READ A THIRD TIME AND FINALLY PASSED this 14 day of April, 2011.

  
Don McGugan, Mayor

  
Cathy Case, Clerk