WELLINGTON COUNTY

Invest Well Programmes

October 2023

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

In 2018, the County of Wellington ("County") approved its first ever County-wide Community Improvement Programme, known as the Invest Well Programme. This Programme established a framework that allows the County to provide financial support to local municipal Community Improvement Plan (CIP) grant and loan programmes aimed at promoting revitalization, rehabilitation, development, redevelopment and other forms of community improvement in Wellington. The County's Invest Well Programme works together with the Member Municipal Community Improvement Plans (CIPs) to promote community improvement across Wellington.

All seven local municipalities in the County have had CIPs in place that were prepared between approximately five and eight years ago. The County Invest Well Programme was approved in 2018 and incorporated into the Local Municipal CIPs in 2019. Local Municipal CIPs and supporting upper tier Community Improvement Programmes, such as the County's Invest Well Programme, should be reviewed every five (5) years, similar to an Official Plan.

Furthermore, the County issued its Attainable Housing Strategy in 2019 and a Climate Change and Mitigation Plan in 2020. These newer policy documents combine with key directions in the County's Official Plan to highlight a number of important County-wide policy issues that have emerged over the last few years that could potentially be addressed by the County's Invest Well Programme. These policy issues include the need to:

- Increase residential intensification, including the supply of affordable/attainable housing;
- Encourage more sustainable development, including development and building improvements that are energy efficient and meet green building standards;
- Support more value-added agricultural and agri-business uses in the County's agricultural areas, and transition to climate-friendly best management farming practices and energy efficiency upgrades; and,
- Promote more economic growth and diversification.

Based on the passage of several years since the Invest Well Programme was approved, and other emerging policy issues as noted above, the County determined this an opportune time to review and update its Invest Well Programme. The update of the Invest Well Programme should also incorporate lessons learned from five years of implementing the Invest Well Programme, and address any incentive programme gaps and issues. The County retained RCI Consulting to conduct a comprehensive review and update of the Invest Well Programme to help ensure that it is more responsive to current and future community improvement needs in Wellington, and better coordinated with Local Municipal

CIPs. RCI Consulting worked very closely with senior County Staff, the Economic Development Committee and Council to help guide the review and update of the Invest Well Programme.

1.2 Purpose

The primary purpose of the update to the Invest Well Programme is to ensure that the County only funds community improvement projects that directly and strongly support the County's long-term planning and economic development goals and priorities. As such, based on the key Invest Well Programme review findings in Section 4 of this document, the following revisions were made to the Invest Well Programme:

a) Restructuring, reordering, and use of revised nomenclature in the incentive programmes to make them easier to understand and more user friendly;
b) Adjustment of incentive programme eligibility requirements, maximum grant amounts, and the introduction of "targeted programme stacking" to reflect best incentive programme practices elsewhere, and make the County incentive programmes more responsive, effective, and reflective of County planning and economic development policies;
c) Revision to the Application Evaluation Framework to ensure the County only invests in projects that directly and strongly support the County's long-term planning and economic development goals and priorities; and,
d) Introduction of enhanced administration practices to better coordinate the processing of incentive programme applications between the County and its Local Municipalities.

This Invest Well Programme document:

e) Presents the key findings of the review of the Invest Well Programme;
f) Outlines the legislative, planning, and policy framework that supports and guides the Invest Well Programme;
g) Identifies the guiding principle, key goals and priorities of the new Invest Well Programme;
h) Provides details of the updated incentive programmes contained in the Invest Well Programme, including general and programme specific requirements; and,
i) Includes an Implementation Plan that provides direction on funding, administration, coordination, marketing and monitoring of the Invest Well Programme.

1.3 Methodology

A comprehensive methodology was employed to review and update the County Invest Well Programme. The major tasks completed under this methodology included:

- A review and updating of the relevant legislative framework;
- A review of relevant sections of key County and Provincial planning and policy documents;

- A review of the historical uptake of the Invest Well Programme by lower tier municipalities in Wellington;
- Walking and driving tours, conducted with County staff, of downtown/commercial areas and other areas across the county to identify areas in need of community improvement, and the associated types of community improvement in these areas that would support the County's long-term term planning and economic development goals and priorities;
- A review of the community improvement goals, priorities, and incentive programme gaps/issues in the existing Invest Well Programme;
- A scoped review of incentive programmes in the existing Invest Well Programme against best incentive practices used by other upper tier Ontario municipalities with similar community improvement goals;
- A review of incentive programme implementation and administration issues based on discussions with County staff administering the Invest Well Programmes and staff administering CIP programmes in the local municipalities;
- Preparation of the key findings of the Invest Well Programme Review;
- Preparation of updated Goals, Priorities, Invest Well Programmes and Evaluation Framework;
- Ongoing consultation with senior County staff throughout the project via several project team meetings;
- Presentation of the Invest Well Programmes Review and Update, including the Draft Invest Well Programmes and Evaluation Framework to the County's Economic Development Committee on April 25, 2023, and receipt of comments and suggestions from the Committee;
- Preparation of the updated Draft Invest Well Programme document; and,
- Finalization of the Invest Well Programme document in consultation with the County senior staff project team, and based on input from the Economic Development Committee, and comments received from the local municipalities, and the public, as applicable.

1.5 Report Content

This document is divided into the following sections:

- Section 2 contains the review of the legislative framework for the Invest Well Programmes.
- Section 3 contains the review of relevant County and Provincial policies, plans and other studies that are applicable to Invest Well Programmes.
- Section 4 contains the key findings of the review of the Invest Well Programmes.
- Section 5 outlines the goals and priorities for the Invest Well Programmes.
- Section 6 contains a comprehensive set of financial incentive programmes specifically designed to help achieve the goals and priorities of the Invest Well Programmes.
- Section 7 contains a Plan to help guide Implementation of the Invest Well Programmes, including funding, administration, marketing, and monitoring.

2 Legislative Framework

2.1 Municipal Act, 2001

Section 106 (1) and (2) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* prohibits municipalities from directly or indirectly assisting any manufacturing business or other industrial or commercial enterprise through the granting of bonuses. Prohibited actions include giving or lending any property of the municipality, including money; guaranteeing borrowing; leasing or selling any municipal property at below fair market value; and giving a total or partial exemption from any levy, charge or fee. This prohibition is generally known as the "bonusing rule".

Section 106 (3) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* provides an exception to the bonusing rule for municipalities exercising powers under subsection 28 (6), (7) or (7.2) of the *Planning Act* or under section 365.1 of the *Municipal Act,* 2001. It is this exception under Section 28 of the *Planning Act* that allows municipalities with enabling provisions in their official plans to prepare and adopt community improvement plans (CIPs). CIPs provide municipalities with a comprehensive framework for the planning and provision of economic development incentives in areas requiring community improvement.

Section 365.1 of the *Municipal Act, 2001* operates within the framework of Section 28 of the *Planning Act*. A municipality with an approved CIP in place that contains provisions specifying tax assistance for environmental remediation costs can pass a by-law providing tax assistance to an eligible brownfield property in the form of a deferral or cancellation of part or all of the taxes levied on that property for municipal and education purposes during the rehabilitation period and the development period of the property, both as defined in Section 365.1 (1) of the Municipal Act, 2001. Municipalities may also apply to the Province to provide matching education property tax assistance through the Province's Brownfields Financial Tax Incentive Programme (BFTIP).

Section 107 of the *Municipal Act, 2001* describes the powers of a municipality to make a grant, including the power to make a grant by way of a loan or guaranteeing a loan, subject to Section 106 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*. In addition to the power to make a grant or loan, these powers also include the power to sell or lease land for nominal consideration or to make a grant of land; provide for the use by any person of land owned or occupied by the municipality, upon such terms as may be fixed by council; sell, lease or otherwise dispose of at a nominal price, or make a grant of, any personal property of the municipality or to provide for the use of the personal property on such terms as may be fixed by council.

In order to encourage good stewardship, maintenance and conservation of locally designated heritage properties, municipalities may, under Section 365.2 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, pass a by-law to establish a local Heritage Property Tax Relief (HPTR) programme to provide tax relief (10 to 40 per cent) to owners of eligible heritage properties, subject to an agreement to protect the heritage features of their property. This financial tool is designed to help owners of heritage properties maintain and restore their properties. An eligible heritage property for this programme is a property or portion of a property that is designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* or is part of a heritage conservation district under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* and that is subject to a heritage easement agreement. The Province shares in the cost of the programme by funding the education portion of the property tax relief. Municipalities that adopt the HPTR programme contribute to the programme by funding their portion of the property tax relief.

2.2 Planning Act

Section 28 of the *Planning Act* allows municipalities with provisions in their Official Plans relating to community improvement to designate by By-law a “community improvement project area” and prepare and adopt a CIP for the community improvement project area. Once the CIP has been adopted by the municipality and comes into effect, the municipality may exercise authority under Section 28 (6), (7) or (7.2) of the *Planning Act* or Section 365.1 of the *Municipal Act, 2001* in order that the exception provided for in Section 106 (3) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* will apply.

According to Section 28 (1), a “community improvement project area” is defined 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”. Therefore, there are a variety of reasons that an area can be designated as an area in need of community improvement.

Section 28 (1) defines “community improvement” as “the planning or replanning, design or redesign, resubdivision, clearance, development or redevelopment, construction, reconstruction and rehabilitation, improvement of energy efficiency, or any of them, of a community improvement project area, and the provision of such residential, commercial, industrial, public, recreational, institutional, religious, charitable, or other uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements or facilities, or spaces therefore, as may be appropriate or necessary”. This represents a wide range of possible municipal actions.

Once a CIP has come into effect, the municipality may:

i) acquire, hold, clear, grade or otherwise prepare land for community improvement (Section 28 (3) of the *Planning Act*);
ii) construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on land acquired or held by it in conformity with the CIP (Section 28 (6));
iii) sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of any land and buildings acquired or held by it in conformity with the CIP (Section 28 (6)); and,
iv) make grants or loans, in conformity with the CIP, to registered owners, assessed owners and tenants of land and buildings within the community improvement project area, and to any person to whom such an owner or tenant has assigned the right to receive a grant or loan, to pay for the whole or any part of the eligible costs of the CIP (Section 28 (7)).

Section 28 (2) permits upper-tier municipalities who are ‘prescribed’ by regulation (O. Reg. 221/07) to create a CIP. The County of Wellington is not currently a prescribed upper tier municipality under O. Reg 221/07. Section 28 (4.0.1) also specifies that upper tier CIPs can deal only with prescribed matters. O. Reg. 550/06 specifies that these prescribed matters can include only infrastructure within the upper tier municipality’s jurisdiction, land and buildings near existing or planned transit corridors, and affordable housing.

Section 28 (7.1) specifies that the eligible costs of a CIP for the purposes of Subsection 28 (7) may include costs related to environmental site assessment, environmental remediation, development, redevelopment, construction and reconstruction of lands and buildings for rehabilitation purposes or for the provision of energy efficient uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements or facilities. Again, this includes a wide range of activities that can be considered as eligible costs for grants and loans.

Section 28 (7.2) allows the council of an upper-tier municipality to make grants or loans to the council of a lower-tier municipality, and the council of a lower-tier municipality to make grants or loans to the council of the upper-tier municipality, for the purpose of carrying out a CIP that has come into effect, but only if the official plan of the municipality making the grant or loan contains provisions relating to the making of such grants or loans. This provision allows upper tier municipalities to help lower tier municipalities fund the grant and loan programmes in their lower tier CIPs.

Section 28 (7.3) specifies that the total of all grants and loans made in respect of particular lands and buildings under Section 28 (7) and (7.2) of the *Planning Act* and tax assistance provided under Section 365.1 of the *Municipal Act, 2001* in respect of the land and buildings shall not exceed the eligible cost of the CIP with respect to those lands and buildings.

Section 28 (11) allows a municipality to register an agreement concerning a grant or loan made under subsection 28 (7) or an agreement entered into under subsection 28 (10) against the land to which it applies and the municipality shall be entitled to enforce the provisions thereof against any party to the agreement and, subject to the provisions of the *Registry Act* and the *Land Titles Act*, against any and all subsequent owners or tenants of the land. It should be noted that while Section 28 (11) allows a municipality to register an agreement concerning a grant or loan against the land to which it applies, it does not require the municipality to do so.

Section 69 allows municipalities to reduce or waive the amount of a fee in respect of a planning application where it feels payment is unreasonable. Municipalities can use this tool to waive all matter of planning application fees to promote community improvement without inclusion in a CIP. Alternatively, a municipality can collect planning application fees and then provide a partial or total rebate of these fees in the form of a grant, but this must be done within a CIP.

2.3 Development Charges Act, 1997

While Section 26 (1) of the *Development Charges Act, 1997*, specifies that a development charge is payable for a development upon a building permit being issued for the development, this *Act* contains a number of mandatory development charge exemptions, reductions, and deferrals for specific types of development. Several of these development charge exemptions and reductions were introduced by the More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022, S.O. 2022 (Bill 23), which received Royal Assent on November 28, 2022.

As per the *Development Charges Act, 1997*, the following types of development are exempt from development charges:

a) A second and third residential unit in an existing or new detached house, semi-detached house or row house if there are no residential units in an ancillary building/structure; and one residential unit in an ancillary building/structure if the existing or new detached house, semi-detached house or row house contains no more than two residential units (Section 2);
b) Enlargement of an existing industrial building by up to 50% (Section 4);
c) An affordable residential unit[1] and attainable residential unit[2] (Section 4.1) (not yet in force); and,
d) Non-profit housing development (Section 4.2).

[1] An "affordable residential unit, rental" is defined as one where the rent is no greater than 80 per cent of the average market rent; and an "affordable residential unit, ownership" is defined as one where the price of the residential unit is no greater than 80 per cent of the average purchase price. See Sections 4.1 (5) and 4.1 (6) of the Development Charges Act, 1997, for further details.

[2] An "attainable residential unit" is a residential unit that is not an affordable residential unit, not a rental unit, and was developed as part of a prescribed development or class of developments.

Section 4.1 (8) and (9) of the *Development Charges Act, 1997* requires that for an "affordable residential unit", the person seeking the development charge exemption must enter into an agreement with the local municipality to maintain the residential unit as affordable for a period of 25 years from the date that the unit is first rented or sold. Section 4.1 (10) and (11) of the Act requires that for an "attainable residential unit", the person seeking the development charge exemption must enter into an agreement with the local municipality that requires the residential unit to be attainable at the time it is sold.

Development charges for rental housing development are reduced by 25% for residential units with 3+ bedrooms, 20% for 2 bedrooms, and 15% for 1 bedroom/bachelor units (Section 26.2 (1.1)). Section 26.1 also specifies that the development charge applicable to rental housing development and institutional development shall be deferred, i.e., paid in five (5) equal annual instalments starting on the date an occupancy permit is issued, or the date of occupancy, whichever comes first.

Section 26.2 of the *Development Charges Act* (and O. Reg. 82/98) also specifies that a development charge be frozen at the time a council receives a site plan application, or if a site plan is not submitted, at the time council receives the application for a zoning bylaw amendment, with the development charge frozen until two years from the date the site plan application or zoning by-law (as applicable) is approved.

Section 5 of the *Development Charges Act* allows a municipality to exempt a type(s) of development from a development charge, or to have a development charge that is lower than allowed, but any resulting shortfall cannot be made up through higher development charges for other types of development. This allows upper and lower tier municipalities to offer partial or total exemption from municipal development charges for certain types of development in order to promote community improvement, such as downtown redevelopment, brownfield redevelopment or intensification in core areas. Because this financial incentive is normally offered before construction, i.e., at the time of building permit issuance, it is a very powerful community improvement tool.

Municipalities can also use a CIP (Section 28 of the *Planning Act*) to offer a reduction in development charges in the form of a grant equivalent to part or all of the development charge normally payable. It is typically easier for a municipality to offer a reduction of development charges for certain types of development such as high priority/catalyst sites/projects, affordable and attainable housing projects, and/or projects that achieve desirable economic and/or sustainability performance criteria via a grant within a CIP, than via an exemption or deferral within a development charge by-law. In this regard, a CIP is inherently more flexible than a development charges by-law. A CIP can provide grants for certain types of development in certain geographic areas, and/or development that meets specific intensification, affordability, economic and sustainability performance criteria. And, the types of development and/or performance criteria can be changed without a formal amendment to the CIP. Conversely, development charge reductions within a development charge by-law are prescriptive and are usually based on the location of the development, e.g., downtown, or a specific type of development, e.g., brownfield redevelopment. And, a deferral offered within a development charge by-law cannot be changed without a formal amendment to the development charges by-law.

3 Policy Framework

3.1 Provincial Policy Statement, 2020

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) is issued under Section 3 of the *Planning Act* and provides direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. Section 3 of the *Planning Act* requires that, "decisions affecting planning matters shall be consistent with policy statements issued under the Act".

The Province of Ontario released the latest version of the PPS in February of 2020 and the policies took effect on May 1, 2020. The vision for land use planning in Ontario in the PPS states that "the long-term prosperity and social well-being of Ontarians depends on planning for strong, sustainable and resilient communities for people of all ages, a clean and healthy environment, and a strong competitive economy". To this end, key policies in the PPS promote:

- Land use patterns that support active transportation, promote energy efficiency, and minimize the negative impacts to air quality and climate change (Section 1.1.3.2);
- Opportunities for transit supportive development, intensification and redevelopment where this can be accommodated taking into account existing building stock or areas, including brownfield sites (Section 1.1.3.3);
- Planning for, protecting and preserving employment areas for current and future uses (Section 1.3.2.1);
- An appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities to meet projected market-based and affordable housing needs (Section 1.4.3);
- Long-term economic prosperity through the maintenance and enhancement of downtown and mainstreets (Section 1.7.1d) and the redevelopment of brownfield sites (Section 1.7.1f);
- Well-designed built form and conservation of features that help define character, including built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes (Section 1.7.1 e);
- Opportunities for sustainable tourism development (Section 1.7.1 h); and,
- Land use and development patterns that support energy conservation and efficiency, improved air quality, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and preparing for the impacts of changing climate (Section 1.8.1).

3.2 Ontario Housing Policy Statement, 2011

On July 1, 2016, the Province of Ontario replaced its Ontario Housing Policy Statement with the "Policy Statement: Service Manager Housing and Homelessness Plans" issued under Section 5 of the Housing Services Act, 2011. This Policy Statement recognizes municipalities as the largest contributors to funding for housing and homelessness services and developing more cost effective and efficient housing programmes.

The County of Wellington is the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager for the City of Guelph and the seven lower tier municipalities within the County. As the Service Manager for Guelph-Wellington, the County of Wellington is responsible for the delivery and administration of provincially mandated social and affordable housing programmes, as well as initiatives to prevent and address homelessness.

3.3 Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020)

The 2019 Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) (the "Growth Plan") came into effect on May 16, 2019 and was amended on August 28, 2020 (Amendment 1). The Growth Plan is the Province of Ontario's overall growth strategy for the GGH region to 2051, and the area covered by the Growth Plan includes the County of Wellington.

Policies in the Growth Plan build upon policy foundations in the PPS to direct municipalities to build vibrant and complete communities that:

- Ensure the development of high quality compact urban form to help manage growth;
- Integrate green infrastructure and low impact development to protect the natural environment; and,
- Support a strong and competitive economy.

The Growth Plan also stresses the need for municipalities to promote economic development by ensuring an adequate supply and variety of employment land.

The Growth Plan is implemented through municipal planning documents, primarily the Official Plan, as well as other planning documents and policies, such as Community Improvement Plans (CIPs).

The Growth Plan directs the vast majority of growth to delineated built-up areas within settlement areas and limits growth in undelineated built-up areas. The Growth Plan also contains policies that direct all municipalities to achieve minimum intensification and density targets, including targets for additional residential units and affordable housing. To this end, the Growth Plan identifies mechanisms, including land use planning and financial tools, to support implementation of its policies.

Therefore, a CIP can play an important role in helping municipalities conform to the Growth Plan, not only by achieving their intensification targets, but by ensuring that development achieves the various policy goals of the Growth Plan.

3.4 County of Wellington Official Plan

The Wellington County Official Plan (OP) contains a number of policies that are relevant to and helped guide the updating of the Invest Well Programmes. These policies are briefly outlined below. It should be noted that the Wellington County OP is currently being updated.

3.4.1 Planning Vision

The Planning Vision for Wellington County in Section 2 of the OP stresses the County will make planning decisions that promote sustainable development, properly balancing the natural environment, economic competitiveness, and a healthy community.

3.4.2 Growth Strategy

Section 3 of the County OP establishes priorities for directing growth as follows:

1. the majority of growth will be directed to urban centres that offer municipal water and sewage services;
2. growth will be limited in urban centres and hamlets that offer partial, private communal or individual on-site services;
3. to a lesser extent, growth will also be directed to secondary agricultural areas.

The County set targets for residential intensification of a minimum of 20% of all residential development annually within the built-up area, and a minimum of 25% of new housing in the County will be affordable to low and moderate income households.

3.4.3 Economic Development

The economic development policies in Section 4.2 of the County OP focus on ensuring an adequate supply and variety of employment lands is available in a variety of locations. These policies stress that the majority of employment opportunities will occur in urban areas where full municipal services are available. But, the policies also provide for suitable employment opportunities in the Rural Area.

3.4.4 Housing

The housing policies in Section 4.4 of the County OP stress that a variety of housing types be provided. The policies encourage residential intensification, primarily in urban centres, including brownfields and greyfields, but also to a much lesser extent, in hamlets. The policies encourage added housing above commercial uses in and near the downtown, in residential transition areas, and in other main commercial areas. Policies support the provision of affordable housing, including affordable rental housing, and opportunities for special needs housing.

3.4.5 Community Improvement

Section 4.12 of the County OP contains the County's Community Improvement policies (see **Appendix A**). The objectives of community improvement as they relate to incentive programmes are focussed on stimulating the maintenance and renewal of private property, enhancing the visual quality of the community, and fostering local economic growth.

The Community Improvement policies identify a number of criteria that local Councils should consider when designating Community Improvement Project Areas. This includes, but is not limited to:

a) a significant portion of the housing stock and other buildings are in need of maintenance, rehabilitation or redevelopment;
b) municipal services are inadequate and in need of repair;
c) within commercial areas, deterioration in the appearance of building facades, inadequate parking facilities or inadequate pedestrian access;
f) a significant portion of the buildings are considered heritage resources;
g) there is a need to remediate brownfields, improve the energy efficiency of buildings, or provide affordable housing; or
h) there are other environmental, social or community development reasons that have been identified by a Council.

The County OP notes that on the basis of the criteria above, a local Council may designate Community Improvement Project Areas, the boundaries of which may be the entire municipality or part of the municipality. In order to accomplish community improvement objectives, a local Council may then prepare, adopt and implement a Community Improvement Plan(s) within a designated Community Improvement Project Area(s). This may include the provision of public funds such as grants, loans and other financial instruments, as well as other actions for the purpose of achieving community improvement objectives.

Finally, Section 4.12.5 of the County OP specifies that County Council may participate in a local municipality's Community Improvement Plan (CIP), and may make grants and loans to the Council of a lower tier municipality for the purpose of carrying out a local CIP that has come into effect, on such terms as to security and otherwise as County Council considers appropriate. It is this provision that allows the County to make grants and loans to the lower tier municipalities for purpose of carrying out a local CIP that is in effect, as per Section 28 (7.2) of the *Planning Act*.

3.4.6 Rural Business and Employment

Section 6 of the County OP governs permitted uses in the Prime and Secondary Agricultural Areas. Section 6.4.3 notes that home businesses and farm businesses are permitted uses in Prime Agricultural Areas. Section 6.4.4 notes that farm businesses are small scale businesses that provide value-added products from the farm and may be allowed subject to zoning provisions. Section 6.5.3 of the County OP notes that small scale commercial, industrial and institutional uses may be permitted in Secondary Agricultural Areas, subject to meeting a number of requirements. Finally, the Rural Employment Area policies in Section 6.8 of the OP are intended to provide locations for business activities that may be better served by sites outside urban areas. Permitted uses in the Rural Employment Area are dry industrial and limited commercial uses requiring large lots, major road access or proximity to rural resources. Section 6.8.2 of the OP notes that such commercial uses will be service focused with limited accessory retail.

3.5 County of Wellington Attainable Housing Strategy

The County of Wellington issued its Attainable Housing Strategy in December of 2019. The Strategy provides recommendations designed to help increase the supply of attainable housing in Wellington County. While the Strategy does not define the term "attainable housing", the use of this term is meant to capture the type of rental or ownership units which the County's workforce is trying to obtain. The term "affordable" is used in the Strategy and is intended to be comparable with the term attainable. The Strategy does not contemplate opportunities to provide for social housing, which is housing that is subsidized by the government. Rather, the Strategy is focussed on encouraging private sector construction of attainable housing.

The Strategy recommends a comprehensive approach to increasing the supply of attainable housing that includes planning policy, financial incentive and action oriented initiatives. The recommended County financial incentives include:

a) Development Charge reduction or exemption;
b) Reduction in Parkland Dedication/Cash-in-Lieu requirements; and,
c) Planning Application and Building Permit fee reductions and/or exemptions.

3.6 County of Wellington Climate Change Mitigation Plan

The County released its Climate Change Mitigation Plan in 2020. The Plan is designed to help the County reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Plan targets a reduction of Community emissions of 6% by 2030. A number of recommendations in the Plan provide direction to the County to promote:

a) the use of the County's Community Improvement Programme funding for energy efficiency improvements in existing industrial and commercial buildings;
b) green building standards/guidelines to achieve net-zero/net-zero-ready designs for all new buildings with specific consideration of attainable housing needs;
c) implementation of bicycle infrastructure;
d) active transportation in urban areas; and,
e) investigate additional incentive programmes to support farmers' transition to climate-friendly best management farming practices and energy efficiency upgrades.

4 Invest Well Programme Review Findings

The review of the Invest Well Programme using the methodology outlined in Section 1.3 resulted in a number of key findings, as summarized below.

4.1 Report Issues

Review of the Invest Well Programme document and consultation with County staff identified a number of key report structure and presentation issues that should be addressed in the updated Invest Well Programme. These key issues are as follows:

- Section 3.0 (incentive Well Incentive Programmes) is cumbersome and confusing. While well intentioned, the “Invest Well”, “Invest Ready” and “Invest More” nomenclature does not clearly indicate the intent of the respective incentive programmes. For example, the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant (TIEG) and the Planning/Building Fees Grant are paid after development is completed, and yet are termed “Investment Ready” which suggests that these incentive programmes are designed to make properties more attractive or “investment ready”.
- The terminology “Phase One”, “Phase Two” and “Phase Three” Programmes is used with references to various other sections in the Invest Well Programme, requiring the reader to jump around within the document.
- Eligibility Requirements (Section 4.0) are listed after the incentive programmes (Section 3.0). This is the reverse of how CIPs are normally written, i.e., eligibility requirements are listed first, and then the incentive programmes. There is no sense in reading all about the incentive programmes only to find out a project is not eligible.

In summary, the Invest Well Programme document requires some restructuring/reordering to make it a more logical and user friendly document. The nomenclature around the various programme types also requires simplification to better indicate the intent of the respective incentive programmes.

4.2 Programme Issues

County staff comments on the gaps, weaknesses, and strengths of the Invest Well Programme also identified a number of key incentive programme issues, questions, and potential improvements. These are as follows:

- There has been poor take-up of the Invest Ready Programmes, especially the Study Grant Programme. The evaluation matrix makes it very difficult for a project to score high enough to receive a study grant.
- The $10,000 cap on Invest More applications is too low. It should be increased to $20,000 to address need and be more reflective of similar programmes in other upper tier municipalities.
- Applicants are sometimes made aware of the County incentive programmes too late in the process, or even after their project is completed. County staff should be contacted by local municipal staff and involved at the pre/early-development stage. A formalized system should be developed to accomplish this. A quarterly check-in with

local municipalities is a good start, while a more formal "early notification" system may be required.

- The scoring results produced by the Evaluation Scoring Matrix are not reflective of the relative contribution of different scaled projects to achievement of the County's long-term planning and economic development goals, e.g., a small café in Harriston scored higher than a large-scale agricultural manufacturing facility being built in Guelph/Eramosa. This suggests the scoring system needs to be revised to better reflect the County's key planning and economic development priorities.
- The Invest Well Programme and evaluation/scoring system need to put more emphasis on:
  i) The agricultural and industrial/manufacturing sectors;
  ii) Creation of housing, including rental housing; and,
  iii) Projects that mitigate climate change through the incorporation of sustainability features/green building standards.
- Consideration should be given to expanding County funding to stand alone affordable housing projects.

4.3 Policy Directions

The Policy Framework (previously provided Section 3) includes the County Official Plan, Attainable Housing Strategy, and the Climate Change Mitigation Plan which identified a number of key policy directions for the revised Invest Well Programme. These include:

- The main guiding principle of the Invest Well Programme is that the County only invest in projects that directly and strongly support the County's long-term planning and economic development priorities.
- The majority of employment opportunities will occur in urban areas where full municipal services are available, but policies should also provide for suitable employment opportunities in the Rural Area, including businesses that provide value-added products from the farm.
- Policies that encourage residential intensification, primarily in urban centres, but also to a much lesser extent, in hamlets.
- Policies that encourage added housing above commercial uses in and near the downtown, in residential transition areas, and in other main commercial areas.
- Policies that support the provision of affordable housing, including affordable rental housing, and opportunities for special needs housing.
- County incentives to promote affordable and attainable housing.
- County incentives to support energy efficiency improvements/ adaptation measures, and achievement of green building standards.

5 Invest Well Programme Goals and Priorities

5.1 Guiding Principle

The guiding principle that serves as the foundation for the Invest Well Incentive Programmes is that the County of Wellington will fund only community improvement projects that directly support the County's long-term planning and economic development goals and priorities. These long-term planning and economic development priorities are drawn from the key County policy documents summarized in Section 3.0 and are shown below.

5.2 Goals

Goal #1: Investing Comprehensively

To support smaller scale building and property improvement projects, as well as larger scale development, redevelopment, and adaptive reuse projects.

Goal #2: Investing Strategically

To support community improvement projects that directly and strongly support one or more of the County's long-term planning and economic development priorities.

Goal #3: Investing for Performance

To support community improvement projects that best meet performance criteria that are reflective of the County's long-term planning and economic development priorities.

5.3 Priorities

The long-term planning and economic development priorities for the County Invest Well Programme are drawn from key County and Provincial policy documents. These priorities have been developed to help ensure that County funding for community improvement projects is directed to projects that help create environmentally and economically sustainable and well-designed communities that will further attract people, jobs, and investment to Wellington. The priorities are listed below with the first three priorities being more general in nature, and the last three priorities being more specific and targeted.

PRIORITY #1: USE LAND STRATEGICALLY

The strategic use of land focuses on enhancing and intensifying the existing property fabric within built-up areas of the County and using existing infrastructure more efficiently. The emphasis is on redevelopment, infill, and intensification opportunities, and the integration of active transportation opportunities. The strategic use of land also focuses on targeting certain types of land uses, building types, employment sectors, and businesses.

PRIORITY #2: IMPROVE BUILDINGS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Physical, structural, and aesthetic improvements to existing commercial, industrial, and mixed-use buildings contribute to the overall beautification and revitalization of built-up areas. Improvements to on-site infrastructure (i.e., electric power supply distribution, water supply and sewage disposal systems) and the provision of publicly accessible spaces and active transportation opportunities will also enhance and sustain unique and vibrant places to live, work, play, and invest.

PRIORITY #3: DIVERSIFY THE ECONOMY

Building a stronger, more diversified economy and creating more high-quality local jobs is a top priority for the County. There is a need to diversify and cultivate new economic opportunities in strategic areas where Wellington has existing strengths – such as downtowns, industry/manufacturing, culture, tourism, healthcare, and agriculture – to create a diverse, prosperous, and resilient economy. Particular emphasis should be placed on innovative agriculture and agri-business uses and industrial/manufacturing employment uses.

PRIORITY #4: PROVIDE AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Across Wellington, there is a need to increase the housing stock, including a range of housing types and affordable housing options, especially in downtown areas. Rental housing includes upper floor apartments in mixed-use buildings, with easy access to jobs, shops, and recreation. Focusing on this priority will help meet the needs of households at varying income levels. The County aims to be pro-active and assist in accommodating the affordable housing needs of all residents and the broader labour force within the County.

PRIORITY #5: PROMOTE TOURISM

Tourism is important to Wellington County as it helps diversify the economic base, creates jobs for all ages, and provides customers for local businesses. By building on the existing tourism appeal and resources, and enhancing local tourism experiences, facilities, and services, visitors to the county can be encouraged to stay longer, meaning higher spending and more economic activity.

PRIORITY #6: INCORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY

It is important that community improvement projects that help the County achieve the five long-term planning and economic development priorities listed above also incorporate a well-designed built form that supports energy conservation and efficiency, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and adheres to green building standards to help mitigate the impacts of climate change. Development that is consistent with the County's Green Legacy Building Standards will make development more sustainable.

6 Financial Incentive Programmes

Based on the updated Policy Framework (Section 3.0), Invest Well Programme Review Findings (Section 4.0), and Goals and Priorities (Section 5.0), as well as best practices in other two tier municipalities, this section contains the new County Invest Well Programmes. This new Invest Well Programmes contain incentive programmes offered by the County of Wellington (upper tier) to the Local Municipalities (lower tier) in Wellington for the purposes of financially supporting the incentive programmes contained in Local Municipal CIPs. If Local Municipalities in Wellington wish to receive funding from the County to support incentive programme applications approved under their CIPs, they must apply to the County for funding under the new Invest Well Programmes.

As per Section 28 (7.2) of the *Planning Act*, an upper tier municipality can make grants or loans to a lower tier municipality for the purpose of carrying out a local CIP that has come into effect, on such terms as to security and otherwise as the upper tier council considers appropriate. Therefore, the County of Wellington may attach terms and conditions to its Invest Well Programmes.

Previous consultation with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on upper tier participation in lower tier CIP incentive programmes has confirmed that upper tier municipalities may decide on a case-by-case (application by application) basis whether or not to provide grants or loans to a lower tier municipality for funding of incentive programmes available in a lower tier CIP. Furthermore, the upper-tier municipality may also attach its own terms and conditions to such individual applications.

Therefore, with regard to the incentive programmes contained herein, the County retains the right to determine on an application by application basis, whether or not to provide a grant or loan to the local municipality, and furthermore, the terms and conditions in relation to such a grant or loan. Furthermore, Local Municipalities in Wellington may apply to the County for funding under any or all of the incentive programmes contained in the new Invest Well Programme, only if and as permitted herein, and subject to each incentive programme application meeting all general programme requirements and programme specific requirements.

6.1 Summary of Incentive Programmes

The new Invest Well Incentive Programmes were specifically developed to strategically direct County community improvement funding to local CIP projects that support the County's long-term planning and economic development goals and priorities as specified in Section 5. Once the new Invest Well Programmes have been approved by County Council, the Invest Well Programmes can be activated by Council, one or more at a time, based on Council approval of the implementation of each programme, subject to the availability of funding. In this regard, this Invest Well Programmes document, once approved, enables Council to implement the incentive programmes contained herein, but does not obligate Council to implement any or all of these incentive programmes. Furthermore, Council controls the implementation of the incentive programmes and Council will decide which programmes will be offered and the amount of funding allocated to the financial incentive programmes.

When implementing the incentive programmes, depending on budget considerations at the time, Council can set a maximum grant available for each incentive programme at or below any maximum specified for that programme herein. Council may also specify a maximum grant amount for any incentive programme where a maximum grant amount is not specified herein. Finally, all of the financial incentives described herein may be provided to the local municipalities applying for these programmes at the sole discretion of the County of Wellington.

General requirements that apply to all the incentive programmes and programme specific requirements have been included to help ensure that the goals and priorities of the County can be achieved while protecting the financial, planning, and other interests of the County. **Table 1** below summarizes basic programme details for each of the Invest Well Programmes. The balance of this section provides a description of the general programme requirements, and basic details for each incentive programme including the programme purpose, description, and requirements.

Appendices B to D contain supporting information for the Invest Well Programmes. These appendices do not form an operative part of the Invest Well Programmes and may be changed from time to time by the County, as required, without amendment to this document.

Table 1 Summary of Invest Well Programmes

Programme	Description	Eligible Projects
1) Study Grant Programme	***Grant equal up to 100% of cost of an eligible professionally prepared study to a maximum of $10,000 per study, and maximum of two (2) study grants per project.***	Proposed projects that would be eligible to apply for a Minor or Major Activity Grant, but applicants must clearly demonstrate a legitimate intention to improve, renovate, adaptively reuse, and/or develop/redevelop the property.
2) Minor Activity Grant Programme	***Grant equal to 50% of cost of eligible projects approved under non-Tax Increment Equivalent Grant (TIEG) Local Municipal CIP Programmes, to a maximum grant of $20,000 per project***. The "approved" and "as built project" must achieve the minimum evaluation score specified for a Minor Activity Grant Programme in Appendix C. The actual dollar amount of a Minor Activity Grant is determined based on the as built project score (see Appendix C). The County Minor Activity Grant Programme can be combined (stacked) with the County Major Activity Grant Programme **only** if: a) proposed land use is/includes one of following targeted uses: i) industrial/manufacturing; ii) affordable housing; iii) new/innovative farm related agriculture/agri-business use; **and**, b) the Local Municipal CIP permits, and the Local Municipality has approved, both a corresponding Local Minor Activity type Grant and a Local TIEG.	Improvement/expansion of existing commercial, industrial, institutional, and mixed use buildings/ properties. Creation of new affordable housing units. Improvement/expansion of existing agricultural buildings or construction of new agricultural buildings for the purpose of accommodating agricultural manufacturing, value added farm products, on-farm diversified uses, or new/innovative farm related agriculture and agri-business uses. Corresponding improvements identified as eligible within a Minor Activity Grant Programme in a Local Municipal CIP for which a Minor Activity Grant Programme application has been approved by the Local Municipality. Other improvements that may be deemed eligible by the County.

Table 1 Summary of Invest Well Programmes (Cont'd)

Programme	Description	Eligible Projects
3) Major Activity Grant Programme	***Annual County grant for up to 5 years after project completion (Grant equal to 100%, 80%, 60%, 40% and 20% in Years 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 respectively).***	Building rehabilitation/retrofit/ renovation, conversion, expansion and intensification of existing commercial, industrial, institutional and mixed use buildings.
	The "approved" and "as built project" must achieve the minimum evaluation score specified for a Major Activity Grant Programme in Appendix C	Redevelopment and infill on vacant and underutilized properties for new commercial, industrial, institutional and mixed use buildings.
	The County Major Activity Grant Programme can be combined (stacked) with the County Minor Activity Grant Programme **only** if: a) proposed land use is/includes one of following targeted uses: i) industrial/manufacturing; ii) affordable housing; iii) new/innovative farm related agriculture/agri-business use; **and**, b) the Local Municipal CIP permits, and the Local Municipality has approved, both a corresponding Local Minor Activity type Grant and a Local TIEG.	Creation of new affordable housing units (conversion or new construction); Improvement/expansion of existing agricultural buildings, or construction of new agricultural buildings for the purpose of accommodating agricultural manufacturing, value added farm products, on-farm diversified uses, or new/innovative farm related agriculture and agri-business uses. Corresponding major improvements that are identified as eligible within a TIEG Programme in a Local Municipal CIP for which a TIEG application has been approved by the Local Municipality. Other improvements that may be deemed eligible by the County.

6.2 General Programme Requirements

All of the Invest Well Programmes are subject to the following general programme requirements, as well as the individual requirements specified under each programme. The general and programme specific requirements contained in this document are not necessarily exhaustive, and the County reserves the right to include other requirements and conditions as deemed necessary on a programme and/or property specific basis.

a) Local municipalities can make application to the County for Invest Well Programme funding only for properties within a designated (by by-law) Community Improvement Project Area where there is an adopted Community Improvement Plan (CIP) in effect.

b) None of the Invest Well Programmes will be offered on a retroactive basis. This means that the County can only accept applications for the Invest Well Programmes contained herein after this document has been approved by County Council.This also means that an application for any of the financial incentives contained in the Invest Well Programmes must be submitted by the Local Municipality to the County, and approved by the County, prior to the commencement of any eligible studies or eligible works that are the subject of the application from the Local Municipality to the County.

c) The County may restrict eligibility for any of the Invest Well Programmes to certain land uses at certain times to help ensure that funded projects support the County's long-term planning and economic development priorities. Only the following types of existing or proposed land uses will be eligible for funding under the Invest Well Programmes:
   i. Commercial, including but not necessarily limited to retail and office use;
   ii. Industrial/manufacturing;
   iii. Institutional buildings;
   iv. Mixed use buildings;
   v. Upper floor rental housing units above commercial and mixed use buildings in downtown areas;
   vi. New affordable[3] housing units.
   vii. Agriculture related uses, including agricultural manufacturing, value added farm products, on-farm diversified uses, and new/innovative farm related agriculture/ agri-business uses;

d) The Invest Well Programmes will only be offered on eligible properties where there is a demonstrated potential for improvement, development, or redevelopment of the property. This may include, but is not necessarily limited to the submission of a letter to the Local Municipality and County specifying the applicant's intent to improve, renovate, adaptively reuse, and/or develop/redevelop the property, and submission of a preliminary concept/development plan (if planning applications have not yet been submitted).

e) Not all incentive programmes contained in Local Municipal CIPs may be eligible for funding under the Invest Well Programmes. Local Municipalities are encouraged to consult with the County when updating their CIPs to confirm which of their CIP incentive programmes will be eligible for Invest Well Programme funding.

f) Unless otherwise noted herein, applications from Local Municipalities for funding under the Invest Well Programmes must be for studies or community improvement works that are eligible under a corresponding incentive programme contained within the Local Municipal CIP.

[3] See **Appendix B** for the definition of "affordable housing units".

g) Applications from Local Municipalities for funding under the Invest Well Programmes must meet all the general and programme specific requirements of the Local Municipal CIP and the County Invest Well Programmes.

h) Applications for Invest Well funding submitted by a Local Municipality on behalf of an individual, corporation, or other party who has litigation pending against the County may be deemed by the County in its sole and absolute discretion to be ineligible for any of the Invest Well Programmes contained herein.

i) Where other sources of government and/or non-profit organization funding (Federal, Provincial, Municipal, Federation of Canadian Municipalities, etc…) that can be applied against the eligible costs that are subject of the application by the Local Municipality to the County are anticipated, or have been secured, these must be declared as part of the application by the Local Municipality. Accordingly, the Invest Well funding from the County may be reduced on a pro-rated basis.

j) The total of all grants, loans and tax assistance provided in respect of the particular property for which an applicant is making application under the Invest Well Programmes and the applicable Local Municipal CIP(s) shall not exceed the eligible cost of the improvements to that particular property under the applicable Local Municipal CIP and the Invest Well Programmes.

k) Property taxes must be in good standing and there must not be any other outstanding County charges or obligations at the time of programme application and throughout the entire length of the grant term.

l) All proposed works and associated improvements to buildings and/or land must conform to all applicable Official Plans, the Zoning By-law, other planning requirements and approvals, and Local Municipal and County standards, guidelines, by-laws, policies, procedures and standards.

m) If an individual applicant is in default of any of the general or programme specific requirements, or any other requirements of the County, the County may delay, reduce or cancel the approved grant, and require repayment of the approved grant, including the ability to add the repayment of the approved grant amount to the property tax roll.

n) The County may discontinue any of the Invest Well Programmes at any time, but applicants with an approved Invest Well application will still receive their approved funding, subject to meeting the general and programme specific requirements of the applicable Invest Well Programme.

6.3 Study Grant Programme

6.3.1 Purpose

To help promote the undertaking of professionally prepared studies, plans, designs, and assessments (collectively referred to as “studies”) that investigate the constraints to, and potential for, site-specific building/ property improvements, and provide new site-specific information.

6.3.2 Description

This programme will provide a grant equal to up to 100% of the cost of an eligible professionally prepared study to a maximum grant of $10,000 per study. A maximum of two (2) study grants per project will be permitted.

Applications for this programme must clearly demonstrate a legitimate intention to improve, renovate, adaptively reuse, and/or develop/redevelop the property. This may include, but is not necessarily limited to the submission of a letter to the Local Municipality and County specifying the applicant’s intent to improve, renovate, adaptively reuse, and/or develop/redevelop the property, and submission of a preliminary concept/development plan (if planning applications have not yet been submitted). Applications for this programme must be for the study, planning, design or assessment of proposed projects that would be eligible to apply for either the Minor Activity Grant Programme or the Major Activity Grant Programme.

6.3.3 Eligibility Requirements

a) The following types of studies are considered eligible for a grant under this programme:

   i) Urban design studies and architectural/design drawings;
   ii) Heritage impact assessments;
   iii) Concept plans and site plans;
   iv) Structural analyses and evaluation of existing and proposed mechanical, electrical, and other building systems;
   v) Energy efficiency and water conservation studies;
   vi) Geothermal energy design studies;
   vii) Blue/white/green roof studies;
   viii) Low impact development (LID) engineering and design studies;
   ix) Traffic impact assessments/studies;
   x) Studies of microclimatic conditions (sun, shadow, wind);
   xi) On-farm bio-digestor feasibility and design studies;
   xii) Phase Two environmental site assessments (ESA);
   xiii) Designated substance and hazardous materials surveys;
   xiv) Remedial work plans;
   xv) Risk assessment/risk management plans;

xvi) Other site-specific studies which may be required by the Local Municipality or County at the time of pre-consultation or site plan approval; and,

xvii) Any combination of the above.

b) The applicable Local Municipal CIP must contain a Grant Programme that includes the type of study for which a Study Grant is being requested from the County by the Local Municipality. However, the County Study Grant Programme is not a matching grant programme. The Local Municipality is not required to participate financially by providing or contributing toward a Study Grant in order to be eligible for the County Study Grant Programme. However, the Local Municipality must approve and endorse the study for which funding is being requested from the County.

c) All studies must be completed by a qualified professional as determined by the Local Municipality.

d) An electronic and hardcopy of all Study Grant funded studies must be submitted to, and retained by, the Local Municipality and the County.

6.4 Minor Activity Grant Programme

6.4.1 Purpose

To help promote the physical and aesthetic improvement and expansion of existing commercial, industrial, institutional and mixed use buildings/properties; the creation of affordable housing, especially in downtown areas; and, new and innovative farm related agriculture/agri-business uses.

6.4.2 Description

Subject to the approved and "as built" project achieving the minimum evaluation score specified for the Minor Activity Grant in the Invest Well Evaluation Framework contained in Appendix C, this programme will provide a grant equal to 50% of eligible building and property improvements up to a maximum grant of $20,000 per project, with the actual dollar amount of the Minor Activity Grant to be determined based on the project score as specified in Appendix C.

N.B. An application cannot be made to the County for a Minor Activity Grant and a Major Activity Grant (see Section 6.5) unless:

a) the proposed land use is/includes one of the following targeted uses:
   i) industrial/manufacturing;
   ii) affordable housing;
   iii) new and/or innovative farm related agriculture/agri-business use; AND,

b) the Local Municipal CIP permits, and the Local Municipality has approved, both a corresponding Local Minor Activity type Grant and a Local Tax Increment Equivalent Grant .

6.4.3 Eligibility Requirements

a) The following types of projects are considered eligible for a grant under this programme:

   i) Physical, structural, sustainability, and aesthetic improvements and building expansions to existing commercial, industrial, institutional and mixed use buildings/properties;
   ii) Creation of new affordable housing units (conversion or new construction);
   iii) Physical improvement/expansion of existing agricultural buildings, or construction of new agricultural buildings for the purpose of accommodating agricultural manufacturing, value added farm products, on-farm diversified uses, and new and innovative or circular farm related agriculture and agri-business uses.
   iv) Corresponding iimprovements that are identified as eligible within a Minor Activity type Grant Programme(s) in a Local Municipal CIP(s) for which a Minor Activity type Grant Programme application has been approved by the Local Municipality.
   v) Other improvements that may be deemed eligible by the County.

b) In order to be eligible for approval by the County, applications for the Minor Activity Grant Programme must achieve a minimum score when evaluated against the Invest Well Evaluation Framework as specified in **Appendix C.**

c) While the Minor Activity Grant Programme is not a matching grant programme, the applicable Local Municipal CIP must contain a corresponding Minor Activity type Grant Programme(s) (non-TIEG) that includes as eligible, the type of improvements for which a Minor Activity Grant is being requested from the County, and the Local Municipality must contribute funding through approval of a corresponding Minor Activity type Grant (non-TIEG) application under the Local Municipal CIP.

6.5 Major Activity Grant Programme (TIEG)

6.5.1 Purpose

To help promote larger/major community improvement projects such as building rehabilitation/retrofit/expansion, redevelopment, infill and intensification projects, affordable housing, and new/innovative farm related agriculture and agri-business uses. This is done by offering a Major Activity Grant, also referred to herein as a Tax Increment Equivalent Grant (TIEG). This annual grant for a set period of time after project completion significantly reduces the property tax increase that can result from various types of major community improvement projects. This incentive is also designed to assist in securing project financing.

6.5.2 Description

Subject to the approved and "as built" project achieving the minimum evaluation score specified for the Major Activity Grant in the Invest Well Evaluation Framework contained in **Appendix C**, this programme will provide an annual Tax Increment Equivalent Grant for five (5) years after project completion as shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2 County Tax Increment Equivalent Grant (TIEG) Amount

Year	County TIEG Amount as a % of the County Property Tax Increase (Increment) Resulting from the Project
1	100%
2	80%
3	60%
4	40%
5	20%

The approved applicant would first construct and complete the approved project. The County would then pay the grant annually once:

a) The Local Municipality has confirmed that:
   i) The project has been completed in accordance with the grant application;
   ii) Final building inspections have taken place;
   iii) An occupancy permit has been issued (as applicable);
   iv) All deficiencies have been addressed; and,
   v) All general and programme specific requirements and grant agreement requirements have been met, and continue to be met, to the Local Municipality's satisfaction.

b) The County in its sole discretion has evaluated the "as built" project against the Invest Well Evaluation Framework and determined that the as built project has achieved the minimum evaluation score specified in Appendix C for a Major Activity Grant;

c) The property has been reassessed by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC); and,

d) The new property taxes have been paid in full for the year.

Pre-project County taxes will be determined before commencement of the project at the time the application is approved by the County. For purposes of the grant calculation, the increase in County property taxes (tax increment) will be calculated as the difference between pre-project County property taxes and post-project County property taxes that are levied as a result of re-valuation of the property by the MPAC following project completion. The tax increment does not include any increase/decrease in municipal taxes due to a general tax increase/decrease, or a change in assessment for any other reason.

N.B. An application cannot be made to the County for a Major Activity Grant and a Minor Activity Grant (see Section 6.4) unless:

a) the proposed land use is/includes one of the following targeted uses:
   ii) industrial/manufacturing;
   iii) affordable housing;
   iv) new and/or innovative farm related agriculture/agri-business use; AND,
b) the Local Municipal CIP permits, and the Local Municipality has approved, both a corresponding Local Minor Activity type Grant and a Local Tax Increment Equivalent Grant .

6.5.3 Eligibility Requirements

a) The following types of projects are considered eligible for a grant under this programme:

   i) Building rehabilitation/retrofit/renovation, conversion, expansion and intensification of existing commercial, industrial, institutional and mixed use buildings;
   ii) Redevelopment and infill on vacant and underutilized properties for new commercial, industrial, institutional and mixed use buildings;
   iii) Creation of new affordable housing units (conversion or new construction);
   iv) Physical improvement/expansion of existing agricultural buildings, or construction of new agricultural buildings for the purpose of accommodating agricultural manufacturing, value added farm products, on-farm diversified uses, and new and innovative farm related agriculture and agri-business uses.
   v) Corresponding major improvements that are identified as eligible within a TIEG Programme in a Local Municipal CIP(s) for which a TIEG application has been approved by the Local Municipality.
   vi) Other improvements that may be deemed eligible by the County.

b) In order to be eligible for approval by the County, applications for the Major Activity Grant Programme must achieve a minimum score when evaluated against the Invest Well Evaluation Framework, as specified in **Appendix C.**

c) The County Major Activity Programme is not strictly a matching grant programme because the value of the Local Municipal portion of the property taxes will be different than the County portion, and the structure of a local municipality's TIEG Programme may differ from the County's Major Activity Grant (TIEG) Programme. However, the applicable Local Municipal CIP must contain a corresponding TIEG Programme that includes as eligible, the type of improvements for which a TIEG is being requested from the County, and the Local Municipality must contribute funding through approval of a corresponding TIEG application under the Local Municipal CIP.

d) The County may allow an Applicant with an approved Major Activity Grant (TIEG) to assign the County portion of the TIEG to an assignee as the result of the sale or other transfer of the property only if the Local Municipality also permits assignment of the Local Municipal portion of the TIEG to an assignee for the same reason. However, the approved TIEG will cease upon any subsequent sale or other transfer of the property.

7 Implementation

This section provides general guidelines for implementation of the Invest Well programmes. These guidelines are to be used by County staff, as well as local municipal staff, as applicable. Implementation of the original Invest Well Programmes since 2018 has clearly demonstrated that successful implementation of the Invest Well Programmes requires coordination between the County and local municipalities, starting at the pre/early-development stage at the local level, through to the preparation, submission and evaluation of incentive applications received from the Local Municipalities by County staff. Again, the County's guiding principle is that the County funding should support community improvement projects that directly support the County's long-term planning and economic development goals and priorities.

7.1 Term

It is anticipated that the new Invest Well Programme will be implemented over a 10-year period. Council may extend or reduce the implementation period as deemed appropriate or necessary, without amendment to this document.

Section 7.9 contains a Monitoring Programme designed to determine if the goals of the Invest Well Programmes are being met. While ongoing monitoring of the Invest Well Programmes is very important, it is also important to recognize that other guiding policy documents and the County's economic development and planning priorities may change during the implementation period. Therefore, while it is recommended that the Invest Well Programmes be continuously monitored in accordance with Section 7.9, it is also recommended that the Invest Well Programmes be formally reviewed and updated within five (5) years.

7.2 Funding

As noted in Section 6.1, once this Invest Well Programmes document has been approved by Council, this enables Council to implement the incentive programmes contained herein, but does not obligate Council to implement any or all of these incentive programmes. Council can set a maximum grant available for each incentive programme that is at or below any maximum specified for that programme herein. Council can also specify a maximum grant amount for any incentive programme where a maximum grant amount is not specified herein.

As part of the annual County budgeting exercise, Council will approve a community improvement budget for the Invest Well Programmes that have been put into effect for that year, if any. While the provision of any grant incentive shall be to the limit of the available funding for that year, any unused funding from previous years should be carried forward into subsequent years, in order to provide flexibility for variation in applications from year to year. This is of particular importance when new incentive programmes are launched or existing incentive programmes are updated, as there may be a “time lag effect” between programme launch and uptake, as potential applicants become aware of and knowledgeable with regard to the new/updated incentive programmes.

7.3 Local Community Improvement Plans

At the time Local Municipalities in Wellington update their CIPs, they should incorporate a section on “County Participation in Financial Incentives” as shown in **Appendix D**. In the interim, Local Municipalities will be able to apply for the updated Invest Well Programmes funding under their current CIPs, subject to meeting the general and programme specific requirements of the Invest Well Programmes.

In order to access funding available under the Invest Well Programmes, Local Municipalities must formally apply to the County for funding under the Invest Well Programmes. In addition to meeting the general and programme specific requirements contained herein, the County retains the right to determine on an application by application basis, whether or not to provide a grant or loan to the local municipality, and furthermore, the terms and conditions in relation to such a grant or loan.

7.4 Transition

If a local municipality has applied and been approved for community improvement project funding by the County prior to County approval of the new Invest Well Programmes, County funding provided to the local municipality will be based on the original Invest Well Programme document. All other applications for community improvement project funding from the local municipalities to the County will be administered and based on the new Invest Well Programmes contained herein.

7.5 Administration Process and Coordination

7.5.1 Early Notification

It is very important to the proper administration of the County Invest Well Programmes that County staff be contacted by local municipal staff and involved at the pre/early-development stage of eligible projects. Therefore, it is recommended that a formal “early notification system” be put in place where local municipal staff formally advise County staff at the time the local municipality receives an application for local CIP funding. This will allow County staff to be informed of the application details at an earlier stage in the process, thus allowing County staff to work with local municipal staff and the applicant to help ensure that the proposed community improvement project will meet the County Invest Well Programme requirements. For larger scale projects, this notification from local municipal staff to County staff should take place even prior to submission of the application for local CIP funding, i.e., at the project pre-consultation stage.

It is also recommended that County staff formally meet with local municipal staff administering CIPs on a quarterly basis to review local CIP programme applications submitted, in progress, and approved.

7.5.2 Member Municipalities

Local Municipal staff should complete a pre-screening of community improvement incentive programme applications they receive using the County's Invest Well Evaluation Framework. It is recommended that part of the pre-screening process involve one or more pre-consultation meetings with the applicant to discuss the details and merits of their proposed community improvement project application, including how the proposed project can meet the general, programme specific, and minimum scoring requirements of the County's Invest Well Evaluation Framework. Where required, Local municipal staff are encouraged to contact County staff at the pre-consultation meeting stage to assist in the process of informing the applicant regarding the requirements of the County's Invest Well Programmes, including the minimum scoring requirements of the County's Invest Well Evaluation Framework.

If a local municipality approves a community improvement project and makes an application to the County for a Minor Activity Grant and/or a Major Activity Grant, local municipal staff should include an explanation of the merits of the proposed project and the estimated score (detailed and total) that the project is expected to achieve under the County's Invest Well Evaluation Framework. Local Municipal staff are also encouraged to provide timely updates to County staff should any of the details of the proposed project change in a way that would affect the project score on the County's Invest Well Evaluation Framework.

7.5.3 Invest Well County Staff Team

County Council will appoint an Invest Well County Staff Team staff to assist with the implementation and administration of the County's Invest Well Programmes. The Invest Well Staff Team will consist of staff representatives from the following County Departments:

a) Economic Development;
b) Planning;
c) Chief Administrative Officer; and,
d) Treasury.

The review of applications for Invest Well Programme funding from local municipalities and the work of the Invest Well Staff Team will be coordinated by an Invest Well Programmes Coordinator. County staff with expertise on site-specific matters and/or external consultants may also be consulted to assist with the review and evaluation of Invest Well Programme applications.

The Invest Well Staff Team will be responsible for:

1) Reviewing and evaluating applications for the Invest Well Programmes that have been submitted to the County by a local municipality;

2) Making a recommendation to Committee with respect to the approval or refusal of applications for the Invest Well Programmes;

3) Marketing the CIP, in accordance with the Marketing Plan set out in Section 7.6;

4) Monitoring the CIP in accordance with the Monitoring Plan set out in Section 7.7, and providing annual reports to Council with respect to the effectiveness of the Invest Well Programmes, including required programme revisions, and need for/timing of a major review and update of the programmes; and,

5) Making recommendations to Council on:
   a) the Invest Well Incentive Programmes to be put into effect in any given year; and,
   b) Identifying an annual community improvement budget for the Invest Well Programmes.

Note:
Council may delegate approval authority to:
a) County staff for Study Grant Programme applications; and,
b) The County Team for Minor Activity Grant Programme applications.

Where County staff or the County Team decide not to approve an Invest Well Programme application, the local municipality has the right to appeal that decision to County Council.

7.5.4 County Council

County Council will contribute to the overall administration of the Invest Well Programmes (subject to the County's priorities and the availability of resources/funding) as follows:

1) Determining which of the Invest Well Programmes (if any) will be put into effect in any given year;

2) Identifying (as part of the annual budgeting process) a budget for the Invest Well Programmes for financial incentives that have been put into effect for that year, if any;

3) Where approval authority has been delegated to County staff or the County Invest Well Staff Team, and the local municipality wishes to appeal the decision of County staff or the County Team on an Invest Well Programme application , hearing that appeal and making a final decision with respect to approval or refusal of the application;

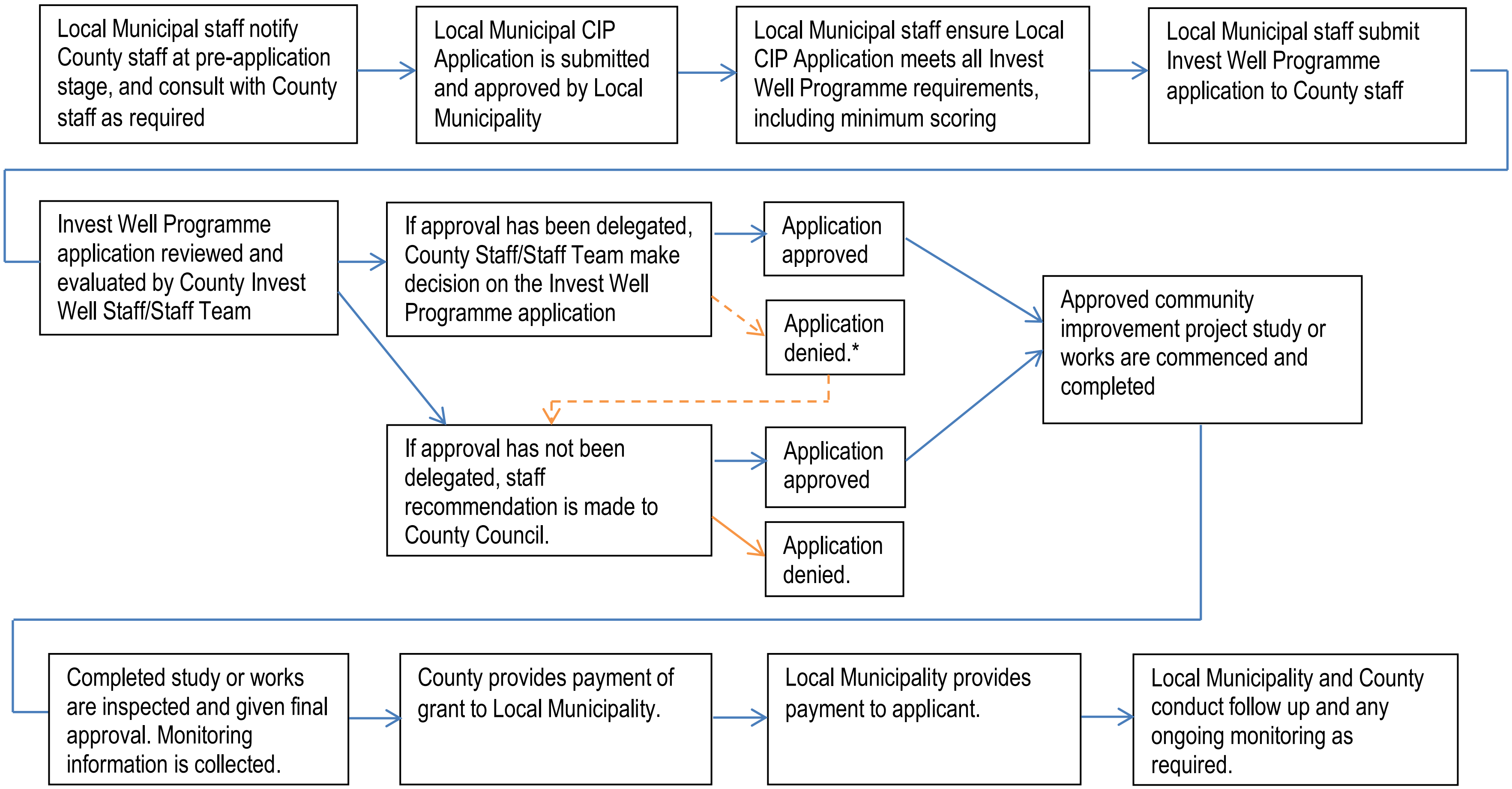
4) Where approval authority has not been delegated to County staff or the County Team, reviewing staff recommendations with respect to individual Invest Well Programme applications, and making a final decision with respect to approval or refusal of the application;

5) Reviewing annual monitoring reports from County staff and considering any recommendations for adjustments to the Invest Well Programmes contained in the annual monitoring reports.

7.5.5 Administration Process Summary

The flow chart below summarizes the process by which Invest Well Programme applications will be received, evaluated, and approved by the County.

Administration Process Summary



* Where County staff or the County Team decide not to approve an Invest Well Programme application, the local municipality has the right to appeal that decision to County Council.

7.6 Marketing Plan

Experience with upper tier and lower tier CIPs in Ontario over the last 25 years has demonstrated that it is very important to the successful implementation of the Invest Well Programmes and a Local CIP programmes that these incentive programmes be effectively and continuously marketed to property owners, business owners, developers, investors, and current and potential employers both within and outside Wellington. Consequently, it is recommended that the County develop and implement the following marketing materials to promote the Invest Well Programmes and support the local municipalities in marketing their CIP programmes and related opportunities:

a) A press release announcing the passing by County Council of the new Invest Well Programmes and when the new programmes will be launched;

b) An enhanced County webpage devoted to the Invest Well Programmes, including key details on the incentive programmes available to local municipalities, and the application process;

c) An information session with Local Municipalities to review the new Invest Well Programmes, and discuss enhanced information sharing, coordination, and monitoring of incentive programme applications between the County and Local Municipalities;

d) Participation with Local Municipal staff in periodic presentations/information sessions to property and business owners, developers, and support professionals to highlight the Invest Well Programme and the programme requirements;

e) In consultation with the Local Municipalities, the identification and targeting of businesses and properties where community improvements would be most desirable, and arrangement of short visits with business and property owners/managers, to ensure awareness and encourage take-up of Local Municipal CIP and Invest Well Programmes.

f) Inclusion of information on the Invest Well Programmes in planning and economic development publications produced by the County;

g) Information displays at local community events, conferences, and at municipal buildings, that promote the Invest Well Programmes;

h) Promotion of the Invest Well Programmes on the County Twitter and LinkedIn accounts, as applicable; and,

i) Preparation of an annual progress report that summarizes programme uptake and highlights projects that have been funded by the Invest Well Programmes, as well as providing useful tips and suggestions for future applicants.

7.7 Monitoring Plan

Information collected through the Monitoring Plan outlined below should be utilized to provide annual reports to Council on the amount of private sector investment being leveraged by the County and Local incentive programmes, and the economic benefits associated with these private sector projects. Ultimately, the purpose of the Monitoring Plan is to provide County staff and Council with the information required to make knowledgeable and well informed decisions about how to adjust the Invest Well Programmes in order to help ensure that the long-term planning and economic development goals and priorities of the Invest Well Programmes are met. The Invest Well Programmes are not intended to be static for the term of this document. Information obtained through the Monitoring Plan should be used by the County to periodically adjust the incentive programmes to make them even more relevant and effective.

Therefore, the collection of data related to projects taking advantage of the Invest Well Programmes should be on-going. The Monitoring Plan specified below has several key purposes. It is designed to:

a) Monitor funds dispersed through the Invest Well Programmes to determine which programmes are being most utilized, and whether or not the programmes are achieving the County's Invest Well Programmes goals and priorities;
b) Monitor the economic and other impacts of projects that take advantage of the Invest Well Programmes;
c) Obtain feedback from Local Municipalities and applicants regarding the Invest Well Programmes, including the application administration process;
d) Provide the basis for reporting the uptake and results of the Invest Well Programmes to Council; and,
e) Provide the information required to recommend and make adjustments to the Invest Well Programmes, as required.

Table 3 below presents a list of the variables that should be collected and monitored on an individual project and aggregate basis for the incentive programmes contained herein. In addition to these quantitative economic measures, via consultation with Local Municipal staff and Councils, the County should attempt to monitor the qualitative results of the Invest Well Programmes in terms of social and community benefits. This could include comments received from Local Municipal staff, applicants such as business owners, property owners, potential investors, and residents. These qualitative measures should be regularly monitored and reported to Council along with the quantitative measures specified in Table 3.

Table 3 Monitoring Variables

Programme	Monitoring Variable
1) Study Grant Programme	• Number and location of applications. • Type of study/plan/assessment. • Cost of the study/plan/assessment. • $ Amount of Local Municipal Grant. • $ Amount of County grant. • Number of County grants leading to facade improvement, property improvement, or other construction projects. • Number and $ Amount of County Programme defaults.
2) Minor Activity Grant Programme	• Number of applications by use and type of improvement. • $ Amount of Local Municipal Grant. • $ Amount of County grant. • Total cost ($) of grant funded improvements. • Total construction cost ($) of project. • $ Value of private sector investment leveraged. • Net number of residential units and square footage renovated or created. • Net number and square footage of rental and affordable housing units created by type (rental/ownership, bachelor, 1 bedroom, 2 bedroom, 2+ bedroom). • Net industrial, commercial, institutional, and farm related agriculture/agri-business space (square footage) rehabilitated or constructed; • Number of new businesses successfully occupying the space (1 year post project completion). • Increase in assessment value of participating property. • Increase in Local Municipal and County property taxes of participating property. • Number and $ Amount of County Programme defaults.
3) Major Activity Grant Programme	• Same monitoring variables as Minor Activity Grant Programme above.

7.8 Community Futures Invest Well Loan

7.8.1 Introduction

It is often the case that a property owner wishes to improve his/her building but does not have the cash flow to cover the required matching funds of a Community Improvement Plan. This can result in lack of uptake of the programme and a property which remains in a poor state. To remedy this and further enhance the County Invest Well Programme, the two local Community Futures organizations have committed to providing additional business funding and support.

The two Community Futures (CFs) organizations in Wellington County are Wellington Waterloo Community Futures Development Corporation and Saugeen Economic Development Corporation. They are non-profit organizations mandated to support businesses by providing loans, business coaching and training workshops to encourage entrepreneurship and stimulate economic activity in rural communities. As part of a network of 268 organizations across Canada, they also provide community planning and economic development support. The Community Futures contribution is an innovative and practical funding partnership as it can act as the catalyst to encourage business owners to invest in their property improvements. The Invest Well Programmes encourage this kind of coordination and enables the Community Futures to contribute loans to supplement a project outside of the contribution by the Local Municipalities and the County. Businesses that were previously unaware of the Community Futures fleet of services may then, through the Local Municipal CIP Programmes and the County Invest Well programmes, be stimulated to receive business advice or education.

7.8.2 The Process - Saugeen Economic Development Corporation (SEDC)

For those businesses located in Wellington North and Minto that have received formal written approval of a Local CIP programme application by the Local Municipality, the specific programme offered by the Saugeen Economic Development Corporation is as follows:

A Business Improvement Loan Fund to provide 50% of the matching funds required for a commercial and/or industrial revitalization project. The Fund would assist with:

- small business equipment purchases/upgrades;
- leasehold and façade improvements; and,
- IT needs including: Computers/Software/Websites/POS Systems.

Terms:

- Proof of Municipal CIP approval;
- Unsecured Business Loans up to $20,000;
- 5% Interest Rate;
- Simple Application Process;
- Flexible Repayment Terms; and,

- Personal Guarantee Required.

A further loan of 50% matching funds are available for residential improvements related to affordable housing and for infrastructure improvements up to $20,000 at an interest rate of 5%. The funding would be based on based on municipal approval and require a personal guarantee. Requests over $20,000 must be approved by SEDC and secured. For further information, please visit www.sbdc.ca

7.8.3 The Process – Wellington Waterloo Community Futures (WWCFDC)

For those businesses located in Mapleton, Centre Wellington, Erin, Guelph Eramosa and Puslinch that have received formal written approval of a Local CIP programme application by the Local Municipality, the specific programme offered by the Wellington Waterloo Community Futures Development Corporation is as follows:

A Business Development Fund to assist commercial and/or industrial projects related to the County's Invest Well priority three: improve buildings and infrastructure. If approved to receive grant funds from a Local Municipal CIP, the applicant will automatically be approved to receive funding to put towards upfront and/or matching costs related to the approved grant. The funds will be loaned at a 3% rate on a 5 year term.

Terms:

- Proof of Municipal CIP approval;
- Unsecured Business Loans up to $20,000;
- 3% Interest Rate;
- Simple Application Process;
- Flexible Repayment Terms; and,
- Personal Guarantee Required.

Requests over $20,000 must be approved by WWCFDC and secured. For further information, please visit www.wwcf.ca

Glossary of Terms

Agriculture-related uses: means those farm-related commercial and farm-related industrial uses that are directly related to farm operations in the area, support agriculture, benefit from being in close proximity to farm operations, and provide direct products and/or services to farm operations as a primary activity.

Adaptive reuse: means the recycling of a building and/or structure usually for a new function, such as the use of a former industrial building for residential purposes.

County Tourism Activities: As identified through the Experience Wellington tourism platform and/or the Taste Real local food initiatives.

Critical business: A business that is critical to Wellington's economy, tied in with the value-chain proposition.

Farm business: means small scale businesses that provide value- added products from the farm and may be permitted in accordance with the Wellington County Official Plan. Examples of farm businesses are provided in Section 6.4.4 of the County's Official Plan.

Green infrastructure: means natural and human made elements that provide ecological and hydrological functions and processes. Green infrastructure can include components such as natural heritage features and systems, parklands, storm-water management systems, street trees, urban forests, natural channels, permeable surfaces, and green roofs.

Landmark: A building, feature or landscape within the County that is easily seen and recognized, a critical asset in identifying our community.

Mixed use building/property/development: means any combination of commercial uses (retail, personal services, restaurants, etc.), offices, institutional uses and/or residential uses within a building, provided that there are commercial uses at grade.

On-farm diversified uses: means uses that are secondary to the principal agricultural use of the property, and are limited in area. On-farm diversified uses include, but are not limited to, home occupations, home industries, agri- tourism uses, and uses that produce value-added agricultural products.

Residential intensification: means intensification of a property, site or area which results in a net increase in residential units or accommodation and includes:

a. redevelopment, including the redevelopment of brownfield sites;
b. the development of vacant or underutilized lots within previously developed areas;
c. infill development;
d. the conversion or expansion of existing industrial, commercial, and institutional buildings for residential use; and

e. the conversion or expansion of existing residential buildings to create new residential units or accommodation, including accessory apartments, second units and rooming houses.

Short-term accommodation: accommodation or lodging that is provided to paying guests, and includes hotel businesses, hostels, pensions, bed and breakfasts, campgrounds, recreational vehicle parks, and vacation rentals.

Tourism asset: community assets that can or do attract and serve tourists and, in doing so, improve the community's quality of life

Utilities: means an essential public service such as electricity, gas, television or broadband/communications/ telecommunications that is provided by a regulated company or government agency.

Vacant/underutilized land/buildings: means developable land within a district that would otherwise qualify as substantially developed land, but which contains land, buildings, and/or structures that are not being used to their full potential and may potentially be converted, adaptively reused, or developed, into a better, more compatible use, such as a residential or mixed-use development. Part or all of a parcel of land shall be considered vacant and/ or underutilized if it is no longer necessary to support the current use, based on factors including but not limited to current and projected employment levels, vacancy rates, and parking demand.

Note: for the purpose of community improvement planning in the County, vacant/ underutilized lands will generally only be eligible for incentives if they are located in an existing built-up area and have previously been developed. County staff should be contacted to confirm eligibility.

APPENDIX A

Section 4.12 County Official Plan – Community Improvement

4.12 COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT

4.12.1 Introduction

The Community Improvement provisions of the Planning Act provide for and co-ordinate comprehensive improvements in identified areas of a community. Community improvement policies are intended to provide a planning mechanism for improvements, access to cost sharing programmes and encouragement for private investment.

Under the Planning Act, local councils may by by-law, designate “Community Improvement Project Areas” within which a local municipality may acquire land, prepare Community Improvement Plans and undertake various community improvement initiatives and works to implement those plans, including the provision of grants and loans to private landowners.

4.12.2 Objectives

Community Improvement Policies are intended to accomplish the following objectives:

a) promote the long term stability and viability of identified Community Improvement Project Areas by reducing land use conflicts and upgrading municipal services;

b) encourage coordinated municipal expenditures, planning and development activities within identified Community Improvement Project Areas;

c) stimulate the maintenance and renewal of private property;

d) enhance the visual quality of the community; and

e) foster local economic growth.

4.12.3 Identifying Areas

Councils shall consider the following criteria in the designation of Community Improvement Project Areas:

a) a significant portion of the housing stock and other buildings are in need of maintenance, rehabilitation or redevelopment;

b) municipal services including sanitary sewer, storm sewer, water supply systems, roads, sidewalks, curbs, gutters, street lighting or parking facilities are inadequate and in need of repair;

c) the supply of public open space or recreation facilities is deficient;

d) there are conflicting land uses in the area;

e) within commercial areas, deterioration in the appearance of building facades, inadequate parking facilities or inadequate pedestrian access;

f) a significant portion of the buildings are considered heritage resources;

g) there is a need to remediate brownfields, improve the energy efficiency of buildings, or provide affordable housing; or

h) there are other environmental, social or community development reasons that have been identified by a Council.

On the basis of the criteria above, a local Council may, by by-law, designate ‘Community Improvement Project Areas’, the boundaries of which may be the entire municipality or part of the municipality. These areas will be eligible for ‘Community Improvement’ as defined by the Planning Act.

4.12.4 Implementation

In order to accomplish the community improvement objectives set out in the Plan, a local Council may:

Prepare, adopt and implement a Community Improvement Plan(s) within a designated Community Improvement Project Area(s), pursuant to the Planning Act and the community improvement policies set out in this Plan;

Provide public funds such as grants, loans and other financial instruments;

take advantage of federal, provincial or County funding programmes which would benefit the community;

prepare and adopt a property standards by-law;

co-operate with groups and organizations whose objectives include community improvement;

undertake other municipal actions, programmes or investments for the purpose of achieving the community improvement objectives identified in Section 4.12.2.

4.12.5 County Participation

County Council may participate in a municipality’s Community Improvement Plan, and may make grants and loans to the Council of a lower tier municipality for the purpose of carrying out a Community Improvement Plan that has come into effect, on such terms as to security and otherwise as County Council considers appropriate.

APPENDIX B
Definition of Affordable Housing

For the purposes of the Invest Well Programmes, an “affordable housing unit” is defined as follows:

Affordable residential unit (rented) is a residential unit intended for use as a rented residential premises where:

1. the rent is no greater than 80% of the Average Market Rent (AMR); as determined by the County of Wellington; and,
2. The tenant is dealing at arm’s length with the landlord.

Affordable residential unit (ownership) is a residential unit not intended for use as a rented residential premises where:

3. The price of the residential unit is no greater than 80% of the Average Purchase Price (APP), as determined by the County of Wellington; and,
4. The residential unit is sold to a person who is dealing at arm’s length with the seller.

APPENDIX C

Invest Well Evaluation Framework

The minimum evaluation score for a **Minor Activity Grant Programme** Application to be eligible for County funding is **20/100**.

The minimum evaluation score for a **Major Activity Grant Programme** Application to be eligible for County funding is **40/100**.

INVESTMENT CRTERIA	SCORE	COMMENTS
PRIORITY #1: USE LAND STRATEGICALLY		
a. The project is located in one of the downtown areas.	/5	
b. The project involves adaptive reuse of a vacant/underutilized building, building expansion, or redevelopment of vacant/underutilized lands.	/5	
c. The project achieves a minimum construction value of $20,000 for Minor Activity Grants and $200,000 for Major Activity Grants (TIEGs).	/5	
TOTAL PRIORITY #1 SCORE	**/15**	
PRIORITY #2: IMPROVE BUILDINGS AND INFRASTRUCTURE		
a. The project includes improvements/upgrading of on-site services/ utilities.	/5	
b. The project includes publicly accessible space(s).	/5	
c. The project includes active and sustainable transportation opportunities, e.g., cycling infrastructure, vehicle charging stations, etc…	/5	
TOTAL PRIORITY #2 SCORE	**/15**	
PRIORITY #3: DIVERSIFY THE ECONOMY		
a. The project is for/includes one of the following targeted uses (**check one only**):		
i. Industrial/manufacturing;	/10	
ii. Agricultural manufacturing, value added farm products, on-farm diversified uses, new and innovative farm related agriculture/agri-business uses;	/10	
iii. Culture and tourism;	/4	
iv. New retail, restaurant, or other critical business in a downtown area.	/4	
v. Healthcare	/4	
b. If the project is one of the targeted uses listed in a. above and creates or retains the following number of new full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs (**check one only**):		
i. 1 to 4 jobs;	/5	
ii. 5-9 jobs	/7	
iii. 10+ jobs	/10	
TOTAL PRIORITY #3 SCORE	**/20**	

PRIORITY #4: PROVIDE HOUSING		
a. The project results in the upgrading of existing or creation of new residential units in a mixed use building or multi-residential building.	/5	
b. The project results in the creation of new rental residential units.	/8	
c. The project includes a minimum of 25% residential units that are affordable.	/7	
d. Add 5 points if project type is in one of the downtown areas	/5	
TOTAL PRIORITY #4 SCORE	**/25**	
PRIORITY #5: PROMOTE TOURISM		
a. The project results in an increase in short-term accommodation options.	/4	
b. The project results in the beautification/restoration/enhancement of key landmarks/tourism assets.	/5	
c. The applicant is a current or proposed participant in the County's Tourism Activities.	/4	
TOTAL PRIORITY #5 SCORE	**/13**	
PRIORITY #6: INCORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY		
a. The project involves environmental remediation activities.	/4	
b. The project includes heat reduction strategies in urban areas such as heat reflective building materials, and/or increased vegetation.	/4	
c. The project is consistent with the County's Green Building Standards or equivalent, as determined by the County.	/4	
TOTAL PRIORITY #6 SCORE	**/12**	
TOTAL PROJECT SCORE	**/100**	

Minor Activity Grant Funding by Evaluation Score

EVALUATION SCORE	MAXIMUM MINOR ACTIVITY GRANT AMOUNT
0-19	$0
20-25	$7,500
26-30	$12,500
31-35	$15,000
36-40	$17,500
41+	$20,000

APPENDIX D

County Participation in Financial Incentives

County Participation in Financial Incentives

The Wellington County Invest Well Programmes is a strategic planning and economic development framework that directly supports the County of Wellington's longer-term planning and economic development goals and priorities by strategically supporting the incentive programmes contained in Local Municipal CIPs. The updated Invest Well Programmes approved by the County in 2023 sets out the goals, priorities, incentive programmes framework for the County's participation in Local Municipal CIPs.

If Local Municipalities in Wellington wish to receive funding from the County to support incentive programme applications approved under their CIPs, they must apply to the County for funding under the Invest Well Programme. The County retains the right to determine on an application by application basis, whether or not to provide a grant or loan to the local municipality, and furthermore, the terms and conditions in relation to such a grant or loan. The full Invest Well Programmes are available on the County's website and should be reviewed for full details regarding the County's participation in the (Name of Local Municipality) CIP programmes. The County's Invest Well Programmes may be revised from time to time by the County.

It should be noted that any funding amount approved by the County under the Invest Well programmes to support an incentive programme application approved by the (Name of Local Municipality) is in addition to the applicable maximum grant/loan amount approved and available from the (Name of Local Municipality), as specified in this CIP.