

TOWNSHIP OF  
HOWICK

# COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

*2026*



**Howick**  
TOWNSHIP

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# Preface

The Township of Howick is characterized by a strong agricultural economy, and rural communities, and an exceptional small-town quality of life. The municipality is home to the communities of Fordwich, Gorrie, and Wroxeter, as well as the hamlets of Belmore and Lakelet, all surrounded by productive agricultural lands.

Agriculture and agri-business form the backbone of Howick's economy, supported by a diverse range of small and medium-sized businesses, skilled trades, and service providers. Together, these sectors contribute to the Township's economic stability and continued growth.

Howick provides a supportive and welcoming environment for residents, businesses, and visitors alike through quality community services, recreational facilities, and a strong commitment to sustainable rural development. Located within Huron County and benefiting from access to regional markets, the Township continues to encourage economic development while preserving its rural heritage and close-knit community spirit.

## Scope of the Plan

Community Improvement Plans (CIPs) are widely used by municipalities across Ontario to support targeted change and development in areas of need. A CIP is designed to encourage private investment by promoting revitalization, redevelopment, and community enhancement through financial incentives and access to information for eligible projects within designated Community Improvement Project Areas. These project areas may encompass the entire municipality or focus on specific geographic areas within it.

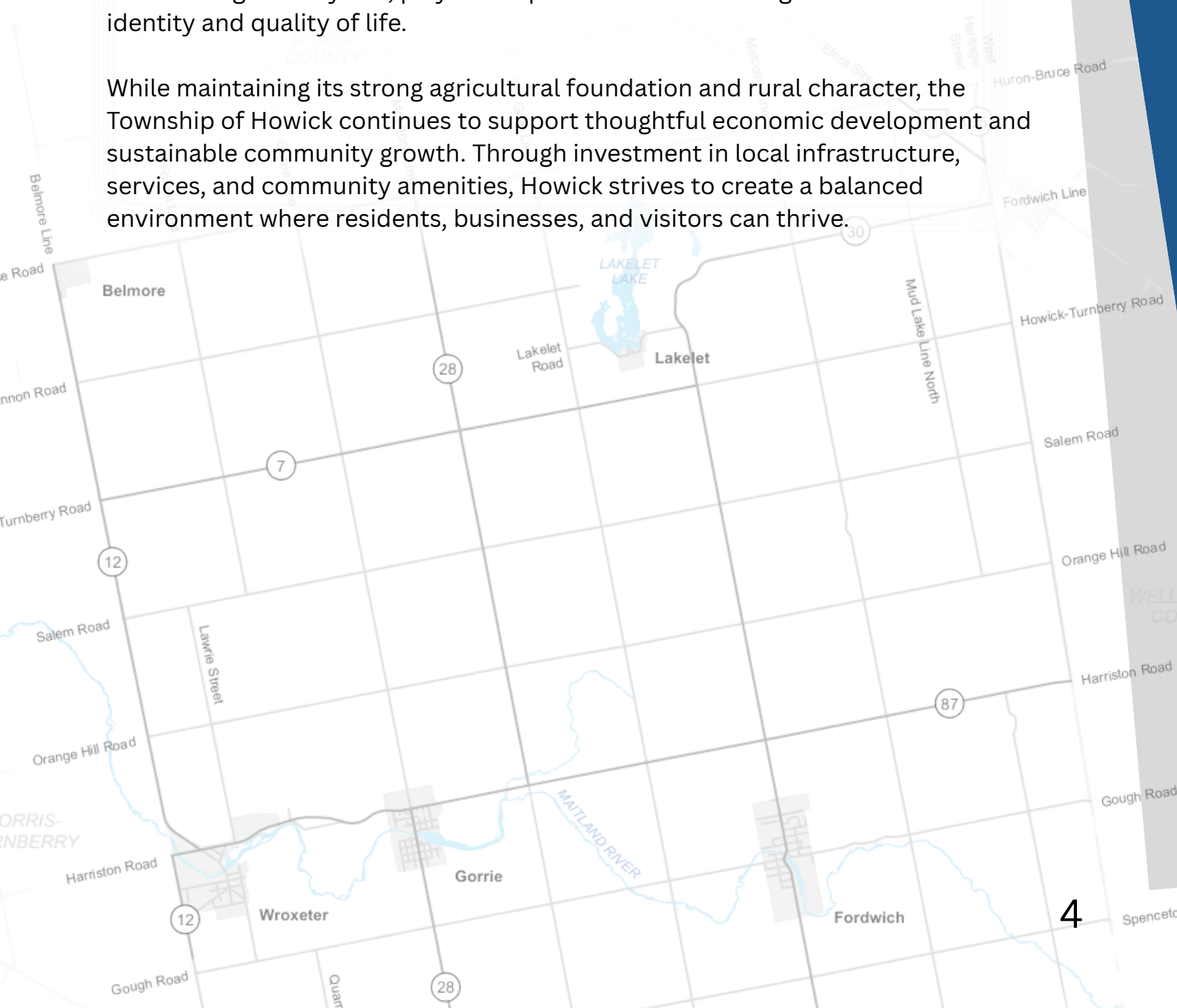
# Community Profile

The Township of Howick is a rural lower-tier municipality situated in the northeastern portion of Huron County in southwestern Ontario. Encompassing approximately 286 square kilometres, the Township is home to a population of just over 4,000 residents and offers a welcoming, close-knit community atmosphere rooted in rural traditions.

Howick is comprised of the villages of Fordwich, Gorrie, and Wroxeter, as well as the hamlets of Belmore and Lakelet, all surrounded by rich and productive agricultural lands. These communities each contribute to the Township's unique character, blending small-town charm with a strong sense of local pride and connection.

The Maitland River winds through portions of the Township, enhancing the natural landscape and providing opportunities for outdoor recreation such as fishing, paddling, and enjoying scenic green spaces. This natural feature, along with the surrounding countryside, plays an important role in defining Howick's rural identity and quality of life.

While maintaining its strong agricultural foundation and rural character, the Township of Howick continues to support thoughtful economic development and sustainable community growth. Through investment in local infrastructure, services, and community amenities, Howick strives to create a balanced environment where residents, businesses, and visitors can thrive.



# BUILDING OUR FUTURE

Township of Howick Strategic Action Plan

2024 - 2027



# SETTING PRIORITIES AND ACHIEVING RESULTS.



## A MESSAGE FROM YOUR REEVE

It is my pleasure to present the Township of Howick Strategic Action Plan. This is our roadmap to achieve positive results for our community within this term of Council and beyond.

The Township of Howick has been serving our community since 1856. Our rich heritage is reflected in our rural villages of Fordwich, Gorrie, and Wroxeter and hamlets Belmore and Lakelet. We are blessed with a thriving agricultural sector, picturesque landscapes, and most importantly, hard-working, friendly people. In Howick, we have an unofficial slogan "Proud to be Different". My Council colleagues and I share your pride in doing things our own way. We are committed to working hard with our staff to make our community an even better place to live, play, work, and raise a family. That is what this made-in-Howick Strategic Action Plan is all about.

We know that delivering exceptional services depends on spending our time, energy and money on the things that matter most to our residents. The input received from the citizen questionnaire and the community focus group sessions were extremely valuable to us. You told us how important community safety, bylaw enforcement, well-maintained roads, sidewalks, parks, playgrounds and recreation areas, and timely communication are to you and your family. You want us to find ways to grow our community to better support local businesses and to refresh our historic villages.

On behalf of myself, Members of Council and the entire Township of Howick Team, we are committed to working together to achieve positive results for our community.

*Reeve Doug Harding* Reeve Doug Harding

## WHAT WE HEARD FROM YOU

This project began with an invitation to our residents to tell us why Howick is a great place and what we can do to make it even better. Between March 18 – April 29, 2024, residents had the opportunity to provide their responses to an online questionnaire. We thank the 215 residents who provided valuable input that helped shape this Plan.

We asked you what local government services were most important to you and your household, you told us:

- EMERGENCY SERVICES**  
"Police, fire and emergency services" was the most popular selection, with an average score of just over 4.5/5.
- ROADS**  
"Safe and well-maintained roads" was the second most popular selection, with an average score of 4.4/5.
- PARKS**  
"Parks, trails, playgrounds, and open spaces" was the third most popular selection, with an average score of 4.1/5.
- COMMUNICATION**  
"Communication from the Township" was the fourth most popular selection, with an average score of 4/5.
- PUBLIC PROPERTY**  
"Maintenance of public property" was the fifth most popular selection, with an average score of just under 4/5.

## OUR STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN GOALS



Goal #1  
**SAFE & RELIABLE INFRASTRUCTURE**



Goal #2  
**WELCOMING & VIBRANT COMMUNITY**



Goal #3  
**INVITING NEIGHBOURHOODS & THRIVING BUSINESSES**



Goal #4  
**PEOPLE FIRST**



### GOAL #1 : SAFE AND RELIABLE INFRASTRUCTURE

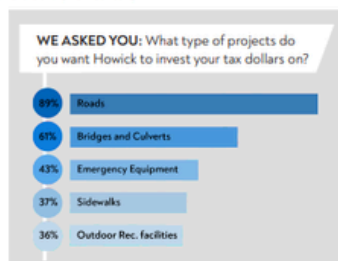
Maintain and continuously improve our infrastructure and buildings to support our community now and in the future.

#### 1.1 Taking a long-term evidence-based approach to determine infrastructure renewal priorities and timelines.

- a. Update the Asset Management Plan and ensure linkages with the budget. (2024, Q4)
- b. Establish a 5-year Capital Forecast and ensure linkages between this forecast and the budget. (2025, Q4)
- c. Complete a Landfill Study with options and costs, including adding weigh scales, staff workspace, electricity, a future septic cleanout facility, and composting. (2025, Q2)
- d. Complete an Asset Condition and Optimization Study establishing a baseline for Township-owned facilities, property, fleet, and equipment. This should include minimum standards, priorities, and timelines for improvements/maintenance. (2026, Q1)
- e. Develop a Roads & Bridges Rebuilding Plan prioritizing infrastructure renewal projects in alignment to the Asset Management Plan and roads and bridges condition study. Introduce a Roads & Bridges Capital Levy in the 2025 Budget. (2025, Q1)
- f. Complete a Fire Services Master Plan to identify future facility and staffing requirements for the Fire Department. (2026, Q2)

#### 1.2 Completing projects on-time and on-budget.

- a. Improve the landfill site based on Council-approved option. (2025, Q4)
- b. Complete the Gough Road project on-time within budget. (2024, Q4)
- c. Complete the Gorrie Line culvert project on-time within budget. (2025, Q1)
- d. Complete improvements to village streets based on priorities identified by road condition reports and the 5-year capital forecast. (2026, Q1)



### GOAL #2 : WELCOMING & VIBRANT COMMUNITY

Provide a friendly and safe rural small town that people love living in.

#### 2.1 Expanding opportunities for healthy living and recreation.

- a. Complete a Recreation Master Plan to identify current and future community needs and preferences. This plan should explore the feasibility of expanding summer and seniors' programming and identify demand and costs to add amenities to Howick parks and facilities. (2026, Q3)
- b. Determine the feasibility of partnering with Huron County to develop and implement a licensed day care program. (2025, Q4)

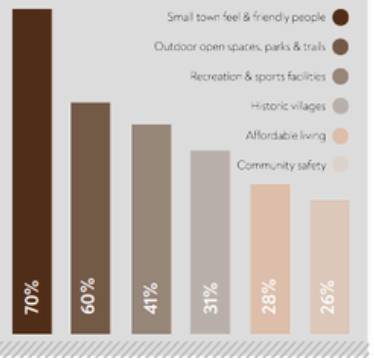
#### 2.2 Making our community safe and orderly.

- a. Engage Huron County to consider traffic calming methods in the village areas. (2025, Q1)
- b. Establish property standards and bylaw compliance priorities and processes to determine costs and required staff capacity. Once completed, communicate these priorities and processes to effectively set community expectations. (2025, Q1)
- c. Add garbage bins at appropriate locations in parks across the Township. (2024, Q4)
- d. Improve/simplify the citizen complaint process/form. (2024, Q4)

#### 2.3 Protecting our natural environment and local heritage.

- a. Work with community/ neighbourhood groups and village managers to enhance the appearance of main streets by adding flowers/shrubs and establishing a commemorative bench, picnic table, and tree program. (2024, Q4)
- b. Work with conservation authority to introduce a tree planting program with sponsorship opportunities for businesses and community groups. (2025, Q1)
- c. Implement a vacant building bylaw and strengthen ability to enforce. (2025, Q1)

#### YOUR TOP 6 REASONS WHY THE TOWNSHIP OF HOWICK IS A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE





### GOAL #3: INVITING NEIGHBOURHOODS & THRIVING BUSINESSES

Promote balanced growth with exciting opportunities to live and work in Howick.



### GOAL #4: PEOPLE FIRST

Foster a positive and respectful working environment delivering exceptional services to our residents.

#### 3.1 Pursuing sustainable growth with exciting opportunities to live and work in Howick.

- a. Engage a consulting partner to help develop a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) to stimulate the revitalization of villages through Council-approved incentive programs to fill downtown vacancies; improve façades, signage, and heritage features; and support downtown retail opportunities. (2025, Q2)
- b. Work with Huron County to create a growth management plan that maps out appropriate areas for residential and business growth; initiate zoning changes to accommodate this growth. (2027, Q1)

#### 3.2 Working with our community's entrepreneurial spirit to support local businesses and jobs.

- a. Complete an inventory of local businesses within the Township and share this information on a digital map on the Township website. (2025, Q1)
- b. Introduce a pilot project through the CIP program to provide incentives for entrepreneurs to establish village retail operations. (2025, Q3)
- c. Introduce an annual Made-In-Howick Maker's Market that combines a physical marketplace opportunity with training/support for online marketing/selling. (2025, Q2)

#### 3.3 Contributing to providing housing options for residents of all ages and income levels.

- a. Partner with Huron County on a pilot project to provide Township-owned land (less than market value) to the County to build more affordable housing. (2026, Q1)
- b. Explore the unique opportunity for the Township to purchase a multi-residential building to support village revitalization efforts and provide additional commercial and residential units. (2025, Q3)
- c. Encourage secondary residential units in appropriate areas by amending policies and removing any zoning barriers. (2025, Q3)
- d. Establish a "More Homes in Howick Task Force" with a mandate to streamline the residential development process. This Task Force would include a senior Township manager, Reeve (or designated Member of Council), Huron County planner, and local developers/builders. Using the Fordwich development as a pilot project, the outcome would be a simplified process that encourages other residential development opportunities. (2025, Q2)

#### 4.1 Enhancing communication with our residents.

- a. Initiate annual Reeve/Council-led town hall meetings in different locations each year. (2024, Q4)
- b. Assess the staff capacity and skills to enhance external communication/engagement. (2024, Q3)
- c. Enhance 2-way communication between the Township and village management boards to ensure accountability for tax dollars and consistent, effective operations. (2025, Q1)
- d. Improve the Township website providing easy access to the most requested information. (2025, Q2)

#### 4.2 Continuously improving our day-to-day operations to be more effective, efficient, and customer friendly.

- a. Identify capacity and skillset gaps as part of the organizational review project. (2024, Q3)
- b. Establish an effective management team with appropriate levels of authority and clear roles and responsibilities; introduce regular senior management team meetings. (2024, Q4)
- c. Complete a space optimization study to support future staffing requirements. (2025, Q3)
- d. Investigate online payment options and move forward with the preferred alternative. (2026, Q1)
- e. Consider the rate of inflation during the budgeting process. (ongoing)

#### 4.3 Rewarding hard work and excellence among our employees and volunteers.

- a. Move employees through the salary grid annually based on performance. (2025, Q1)
- b. Establish an employee committee with the mandate to plan staff appreciation/team-building events. (2024, Q3)
- c. Re-establish a volunteer appreciation event with a youth category. Approach local businesses to sponsor the event. (2026, Q2)
- d. Investigate options and costs to enhance benefits to Howick employees. (2025, Q3)
- e. Explore flexible working arrangements and develop a policy to establish clear expectations. (2026, Q4)

## SETTING PRIORITIES AND ACHIEVING RESULTS.

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Produced in partnership with



The Village of Fordwich offers a variety of recreational amenities, including ball diamonds, playgrounds, and scenic walking trails that provide opportunities for residents and visitors to stay active and enjoy the outdoors.

While commercial activity remains modest, it is supported by a mix of service and manufacturing-based businesses, complemented by a small but valued collection of traditional “main street” establishments that contribute to the village’s character.

Fordwich is also well-positioned for future growth, with newly available development lots ready to support residential expansion. These opportunities present an exciting path forward for the village, allowing it to welcome new residents while maintaining its close-knit, rural charm.



The Village of Gorrie offers a wide range of recreational amenities that make it a hub for community activity and family-friendly living. Residents and visitors can enjoy a municipal public pool, splash pad, ball diamonds, playgrounds, and scenic walking trails providing something for all ages to stay active and connected.

Gorrie is also home to the Howick Fire Department, playing an important role in supporting the safety and well-being of the village and surrounding rural area. While commercial activity is modest, the village is supported by a small selection of local businesses, including a handful of traditional “main street” establishments that contribute to its welcoming, small-town atmosphere.

Looking ahead, Gorrie is well-positioned for growth, with new development lots currently available for purchase. These opportunities pave the way for thoughtful residential expansion while preserving the strong sense of community that defines the village.



# WROXETER

The Village of Wroxeter offers a variety of recreational amenities, including ball diamonds, walking trails, Wroxeter Community Hall and its signature dam area. As the community’s crown jewel, the dam provides scenic beauty and opportunities for water-based recreation.

Commercial activity is limited, with a small number of Main Street businesses supporting the village’s charm. Wroxeter is also home to the headquarters of the Maitland Valley Conservation Authority, highlighting its connection to environmental stewardship.

While development opportunities are limited, a small number of available lots allow for modest future growth while preserving the village’s unique character.



# BELMORE

A portion of the hamlet of Belmore is located within the Township of Howick, offering a small but vibrant community atmosphere. Belmore is best known for its annual Maple Syrup Festival—a beloved, volunteer-driven event that not only brings the community together but also plays a vital role in supporting the operations of the Belmore Community Centre. The Belmore Community centre is a hub of activities and is home to the only Curling rink in the Township.

While commercial activity in the hamlet is limited, Belmore maintains a quiet, rural charm, complemented by a local trailer park that contributes to its residential mix and community fabric.



# LAKELET

Lakelet is a quiet hamlet within the Township of Howick, known for its relaxed, cottage-style atmosphere and natural appeal. With low residential density, it offers a peaceful setting ideal for those seeking a slower pace of life.

Centered around a small lake that serves as the focal point of the community and is considered a significant wetland for the area, Lakelet provides a scenic backdrop for seasonal enjoyment and outdoor living. Two nearby campgrounds further enhance its appeal as a destination for relaxation and recreation.

While commercial activity is minimal and there is no traditional “main street,” Lakelet’s charm lies in its simplicity, natural surroundings, and tranquil rural character.



# RURAL AREA

The rural heart of Howick Township is alive with rich agricultural opportunities and a deep-rooted farming tradition. Dominated by family-run farms and home to a thriving Amish and Mennonite population, this area reflects a strong sense of community and heritage.

Commercial activity is modest but essential, focusing on services that support and strengthen the agricultural sector. The area is well known for its quantity and quality of gravel and there are many functioning pits.

# Community Improvement Plan

## Introduction

Incorporated in 1856, the Township of Howick is a community where a rich rural heritage meets vibrant village life. Its population is spread across a thriving agricultural landscape and the charming villages of Fordwich, Gorrie, Wroxeter, Lakelet, and Belmore. Known for its strong agriculture-based economy, Howick takes pride in supporting its farmers while fostering sustainable growth and development throughout the Township.

This Community Improvement Plan (CIP) provides a strategic framework to encourage the maintenance, rehabilitation, and enhancement of buildings and properties across Howick, helping to strengthen both its rural and village communities.

## Purpose of a Community Improvement Plan

Community Improvement Plans are a widely used tool across Ontario to guide targeted growth, revitalization, and investment in areas of need. A CIP may also leverage private investment to promote redevelopment, renewal, and community enhancement by providing financial incentives for projects. Areas of concern and priority can encompass the entire municipality or focus on specific neighbourhoods or commercial zones.

This CIP outlines revitalization and improvement strategies for the Township of Howick, aimed at stimulating growth in commercial downtowns, local industries, tourism, and businesses across the Township. It also supports the development of residential units, ensuring that growth is balanced and sustainable. The Plan establishes clear goals and objectives, informed by relevant studies and plans, and sets out Financial Incentive Programs to help achieve them.

Taking a long-term approach, this CIP recognizes that meaningful change often happens incrementally. Over time, small, carefully guided improvements will collectively create a more vibrant, dynamic, and resilient Township—enhancing quality of life for residents, strengthening the local economy, and celebrating Howick’s unique character.



## Legislative Authority Planning Act

Ontario's Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, contains direction for the creation and delivery of CIPs. Section 28 of the Ontario Planning Act allows municipalities, where there are provisions in its Official Plan relating to community improvement, to designate by By-law a "Community Improvement Project Area" and prepare a "Community Improvement Plan".

Section 28(1) of the Planning Act defines community improvement as "the planning or replanning, design or redesign, re-subdivision, 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".

Section 28 of the Planning Act establishes and defines the term "community improvement project area" as "a municipality or an area within a municipality, the community improvement of which in the opinion of the council is desirable because of age, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement, unsuitability of buildings or for any other environmental, social or community economic development reason" (S. 28(1)).

Section 28(2) states that the Township of Howick may, by by-law, designate all or part of the Township of Howick as a Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA).

Once a community improvement project area has been designated, a community improvement plan can be prepared for that area. The Township of Howick may use a community improvement plan to:

- acquire, hold, clear, grade or otherwise prepare land;
- construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on land acquired or held by the township;
- sell, lease or dispose of any land and buildings acquired or held by the township; and/or
- make grants or loans to owners and tenants of land and buildings within the community improvement project area to help them pay for the cost of rehabilitating their lands or building.



## Provincial Policy Statement (2024)

Ontario is a vast, fast-growing province that is home to many urban, rural and northern communities distinguished by different populations, economic activity, pace of growth, and physical and natural conditions. More than anything, a prosperous Ontario will see the building of more homes for all Ontarians. This is why the province has set a goal of getting at least 1.5 million homes built by 2031.

Ontario will increase the supply and mix of housing options, addressing the full range of housing affordability needs. Every community will build homes that respond to changing market needs and local demand. Providing a sufficient supply with the necessary mix of housing options will support a diverse and growing population and workforce, now and for many years to come.

A prosperous and successful Ontario will also support a strong and competitive economy that is investment-ready and recognized for its influence, innovation and diversity. Ontario's economy will continue to mature into a centre of industry and commerce of global significance. Central to this success will be the people who live and work in this province. Ontario's land use planning framework, and the decisions that are made, shape how our communities grow and prosper. Prioritizing compact and transit-supportive design, where locally appropriate, and optimizing investments in infrastructure and public service facilities will support convenient access to housing, quality employment, services and recreation for all Ontarians. Cultural heritage and archaeology in Ontario will provide people with a sense of place. And while many Ontarians still face a complex range of challenges, municipalities will work with the Province to support the long term prosperity and well-being of residents through the design of communities responsive to the needs of all Ontarians.





# Ontario

Ontario's vibrant agricultural sector and sensitive areas will continue to form part of the province's economic prosperity and overall identity. Growth and development will be prioritized within urban and rural settlements that will, in turn, support and protect the long-term viability of rural areas, local food production, and the agri-food network. In addition, resources, including natural areas, water, aggregates and agricultural lands will be protected. Potential risks to public health or safety or of property damage from natural hazards and human-made hazards, including the risks associated with the impacts of climate change will be mitigated.

Ontario will continue to recognize the unique role Indigenous communities have in land use planning and development, and the contribution of Indigenous communities' perspectives and traditional knowledge to land use planning decisions. Meaningful early engagement and constructive, cooperative relationship-building between planning authorities and Indigenous communities will facilitate knowledge-sharing and inform decision-making in land use planning. Above all, Ontario will continue to be a great place to live, work and visit where all Ontarians enjoy a high standard of living and an exceptional quality of life.

# Beautification

## **Beautifying Howick: A Community Improvement Initiative**

The Community Improvement Committee has proudly expanded its mandate to include beautification, recognizing that an inviting, vibrant community inspires further improvement and growth. By enhancing the visual appeal of the Township, the Committee aims to create spaces that residents and visitors alike can enjoy and take pride in.

Thanks to funding from the Rural Ontario Development Grant—and with additional support from Township Council—several exciting beautification projects are now underway. These initiatives will add color, charm, and character to our villages, reinforcing Howick’s unique small-town appeal.

### **Phase 1 Highlights:**

- Raised flower beds to be installed around two signs in each village—Fordwich, Wroxeter, and Gorrie.
- Flower baskets adorning the bridges in all three villages, adding bursts of color for residents and visitors to enjoy.
- Multiple street planters throughout the villages, creating welcoming and picturesque streetscapes.

These projects are just the beginning, with the Committee committed to fostering a more beautiful, vibrant, and thriving Township of Howick.



# Facade Program



The Township of Howick Municipal Façade Grant Program assists commercial businesses and or properties of the Township of Howick by providing grants to improve the facades of buildings. The purpose of the Program is to enhance the appearance of commercial businesses and maintain a sense of pride within the community. Township of Howick Council is committed to treating all requests within the Program in a consistent, fair, and equitable manner subject to Council’s priorities and approved budget. As such, the Township will annually commit funds to the Program within the approved annual budget.

This policy establishes the following:

- Eligibility Requirements
- General Provisions
- Administration
  - o Application and Program Process
  - o Approval Process and Consideration
  - o Notification Process
  - o Applicant Reporting



## General Provisions

The Township of Howick Municipal Facade Grant Program provides grants to property owners and tenants of commercial properties who improve and/or enhance the cosmetic appeal of their property from a streetscape viewpoint. The grant amount is 50% of the cost to improve the appearance of the facade up to a maximum of \$2500.

The eligible improvements should consider the character of the building or property and promote cohesiveness in core business areas. The list of eligible improvements in this Program include:

- Facade restoration of brickwork, wood, masonry, and metal cladding;
- Replacement or repair of entablature, eaves, parapets, and other architectural details;
- Window and door repair or replacement;
- Signage in accordance with the Township of Howick's by-law(s) respecting signs and the Ontario Building Code and Regulations;
- Painting or cleaning of the façade exterior;
- Exterior lighting;
- Repair, replacement or addition of awnings, marquees or canopies;
- Replacement of façade elements originally in place during initial construction of the building;
- Entranceway/walkway modifications such as sidewalks, steps, and landscaping associated with the entranceway and walkway (not entire property), including provisions to improve accessibility for those with mobility limitations;
- Redesigned shop fronts;
- Professional fees;
- Other improvements/additions to the building exterior as may be approved by the municipal Chief Building Official or their designate

The Recreation Department reserves the right to determine the eligibility of projects.



## **Administration**

The Recreation department, or their designate, in consultation with Council are responsible for the administration of the Township of Howick Municipal Facade Grant Program. The Council of the Township of Howick, in its sole discretion, may change or discontinue this Program at any time.

The funding for the Program should be determined by Council in the beginning of the annual budget process via pre-approval.

## **Application Process**

Interested property owners or tenants who are eligible for the Township of Howick Municipal Facade Grant Program are encouraged to apply when the portal on the municipal website opens each January. Applications are accepted until the end of March each year and to be considered by Council no later than the first Regular Meeting of May.

Applications must include:

- Information about the property and or permission from land owner
- Declaration of outstanding work orders or tax arrears
- Description of the project/improvements including pictures.
- Quotes or cost estimates from independent contractors/suppliers
- A financial breakdown of the project/work to be completed
- Description of the project benefit from such facade improvements

Applications should be submitted online via the portal on the municipal website, however, paper copies or alternative methods are available upon request to the Recreation department. Applications must be received by the deadline as advertised and be a fully completed application in order to be considered for funding. There may only be one application per property per year.

Prior to the submission of an application, applicants may request a pre-consultation meeting with the Recreation department to review the requirements of the program.

Notice of the application period will be advertised on the following, but not limited to, and at the discretion of the Recreation department:

- Municipal website
- Social media accounts
- Local newspaper(s)

The advertisement will include the deadline for applications.

## **Approval Process and Consideration**

During annual budget discussions, Township of Howick Council allots an amount to the Township of Howick Municipal Facade Grant Program. If the amount budgeted is not entirely used within the year it was budgeted it does not carry over into the following year.

All applications will be assessed on funding availability and proportionate to the amount requested. This assessment will be completed by the Recreation department or their designate; the recreation department will seek confirmation from the Building, Fire, and Finance department that there are no outstanding work orders or tax arrears on the subject property.

The Recreation department will present to Council in a formal report for approval which shall include the budgeted amount for the Program, the number of applications submitted, a description of all eligible applications, and the amount requested by each application.

Council will be provided with three options of allocation for consideration:

- Allocating full amounts requested
- Prioritizing first-time and less often applicants within the budgeted amount
- Proportionate allocation of the request within the budgeted amount

The decision of Council regarding distribution of the Program funds will be confirmed by a resolution of support.

## **Notification Process**

All applicants will be notified in writing by the Recreation department whether their application was successful or not within one (1) week of Council's resolution.

Successful applicants will be notified in writing via mail with the approved grant amount.

Successful applicants and the grant amount as part of the Program shall be publicized on the municipal website.

## **Applicant Reporting**

All successful applicants are required to submit a copy of their paid invoices upon completion of the facade project before December 31st each year. Upon receipt of the paid invoices, the Recreation department will have a cheque issued for the approved amount. If the approved amount is more than 50% of the submitted paid invoices then a cheque for 50% of the paid invoices will be issued.

Failure to submit paid invoices or request an extension by December 31st results in the forfeit of the grant.

Copies of paid invoices can be submitted via email or mail.

If the project will not be completed within the year the grant was approved then a request for an extension must be given in writing to the Recreation department before December 31st. Extensions may be granted on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Recreation department for a maximum of six (6) months. Failure to request an extension results in the forfeit of the grant.

If the applicant no longer wishes to complete the project that the grant was approved for they must advise the Recreation department in writing as soon as possible.

## **Plan Review Policy**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this Plan Review Policy is to establish a consistent and transparent process for monitoring, evaluating, and updating the Community Improvement Plan (CIP) to ensure it remains effective, relevant, and aligned with the priorities of the Township of Howick.

Objectives

The Plan Review process is intended to:

- Assess the effectiveness of the CIP in achieving its stated goals and objectives
- Ensure financial incentive programs remain aligned with community needs
- Respond to changing economic, social, and development conditions
- Maintain accountability and transparency in program delivery
- Support continuous improvement of municipal programs and services

### **Monitoring and Reporting**

The Township will monitor the implementation of the CIP on an ongoing basis. Recreation Department, or their designate, will be responsible for tracking program activity and performance.

An annual report may be prepared for Council that includes:

- Number and type of applications received
- Number of approved and completed projects
- Total value of grants issued
- Summary of private sector investment leveraged
- Program uptake trends and geographic distribution
- Any issues, challenges, or opportunities identified

### **Review Schedule**

The CIP will be formally reviewed on a regular basis, as follows:

- Annual Review: A high-level review of program performance and budget allocation
- Comprehensive Review: A full review of the CIP every five (5) years, or sooner if deemed necessary by Council

## **Evaluation Criteria**

The Plan Review will consider the following:

- Achievement of CIP goals and objectives
- Effectiveness of financial incentive programs
- Demand for and uptake of available programs
- Alignment with municipal priorities and strategic plans
- Changes in legislation, policy, or economic conditions
- Feedback from applicants, stakeholders, and the public

## **Amendments to the Plan**

Based on the findings of the review, the Township may:

- Modify existing programs or funding levels
- Introduce new incentive programs
- Discontinue underutilized or ineffective programs
- Update eligibility criteria or application processes

Any amendments to the CIP will be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Planning Act, including any required public notice or Council approval.

## **Public and Stakeholder Engagement**

Where appropriate, the Township may seek input from:

- Local businesses and property owners
- Community organizations
- Economic development stakeholders
- Members of the public

Feedback may be collected through surveys, public meetings, or direct consultation.

## **Administration**

The Recreation Department, or their designate, in consultation with Council, is responsible for administering the Plan Review process and bringing forward recommendations for consideration.



**Howick**  
TOWNSHIP