



Planning Services Department

Newcastle Village Community Improvement Plan

Council Approved April 21, 2008
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1. Community Improvement Plans in Clarington

The Official Plan for the Municipality of Clarington outlines the goals and objectives for Community Improvement Plans (CIP). The goal of a CIP is to provide for and encourage public and private sector activities for the purpose of the enhancement, rehabilitation and redevelopment of the existing built environment of the Municipality. CIP objectives include maximizing the efficient use of existing public services and facilities, improving the public infrastructure where deficiencies or deteriorating conditions exist, and providing guidance to Council in setting priorities for municipal spending with respect to community improvement projects.

Clarington has a long history of supporting its historical downtown areas and rural communities while taking advantage of federal and provincial funding programs to support civic improvements. This is the third Community Improvement Plan for Clarington.

1.1 Why a Newcastle Village CIP

The main purpose of this Community Improvement Plan is to articulate an action plan for Newcastle Village based on an assessment of past experiences and future prospects along with a realistic road map of how to get there. The Official Plan identified Newcastle Village as a “first” priority for a Community Improvement Plan (22.3.2). The need for a CIP was further reinforced by the review of the commercial policies of the Official Plan in 2004. The commercial policy review was completed in 2006 and recommended that a CIP study be conducted for Newcastle Village. The Municipality had consulted with the Newcastle Village BIA during the commercial policy review process to determine if there was public support for a CIP. On January 29th, 2007 Clarington Council approved a draft terms of reference for the Newcastle Village Community Improvement Plan and the accompanying study area (By-law 2007-015).

1.2 What is CIP

A CIP is a comprehensive community-based planning study with no set preconceptions. This approach implies that all previous activity, development incentives, and policies applicable to the project area are up for review. As such, a prudent first step is to review and explore what the main givens are for the area and what positive or negative outcomes may arise from change.

1.3 What is the Study Area for the CIP

The Planning Act permits Council to designate the project area to be investigated during a CIP study. The larger the project area the more complex and time consuming the research and analysis may become. The Official Plan designated an area bounded by the CP railway, Highway 401, Foster Creek and the east side of Beaver Street as an area of first priority; however, the study boundary for the CIP was expanded to include both the north and south sides of King Avenue East and West from Graham Creek to Wilmot Creek. This expanded geographical area includes the residential neighbourhoods that significantly influence the viability and activity of the village centre (downtown) and also includes what residents and visitors consider as the entrances into the central part of the community. Figure 1 shows the boundary of the CIP study area and the

commercial core (downtown) of the Village.

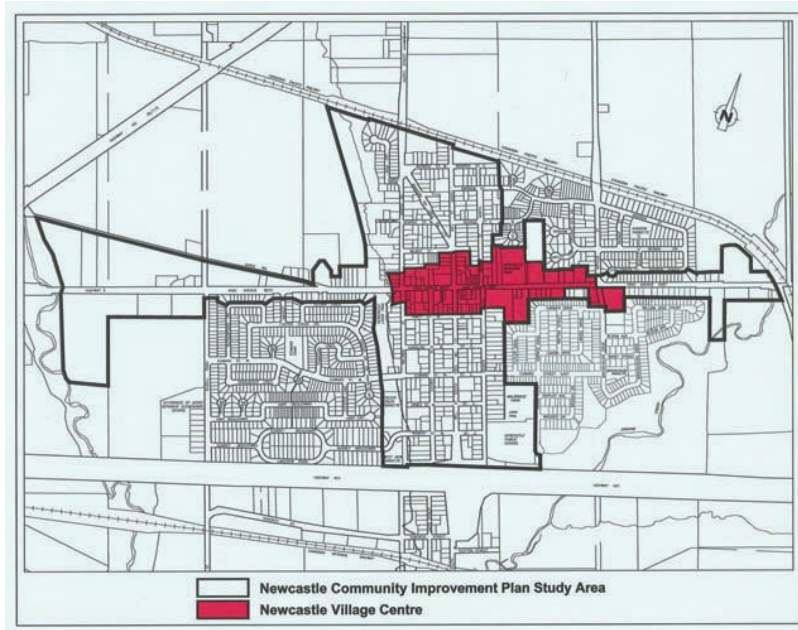


Figure 1 - Boundary of the CIP study area and the commercial core (downtown) of the village

1.4 Who has guided the CIP

A Community Focus Group (CFG) was established to guide the development of the CIP. A call for applications was publicly advertised and a focus group appointed. There were 15 members representing a variety of community interests appointed in accordance with the study terms of reference:

CFG Members

Cathy Abraham

Dave Clark

Myno Van Dyke

Society Carl Good

Tenzin Gyaltsan

Rob Kloosterman

Gord Lee

Valentine Lovekin

Rod McArthur

Gail Rickard

George Rickard

Randall St. Denis

Theresa Vanhaverbeke

Arthur Wynn

Councillor Gord Robinson

Newcastle Village Community Hall Board

Veridian Connections Inc.

Newcastle Village and District Historical

Business operator and resident

Business operator and resident

Newcastle and District Chamber of Commerce

Newcastle Arena Management Board

Newcastle Village BIA

Business operator and resident

Clarington Library Board

Newcastle Village Lions Club

Business operator and resident

Business operator and resident

Newcastle/Bond Head Rate payers Association

Clarington Council (Chair)

The Focus Group was assisted by:

Suzanne McCrimmon

Clarington Board of Trade

Faye Langmaid
Isabel Little
Bruno Bianco
Lori Gordon

Planning Services Department
Planning Services Department
Engineering Services Department
Finance Department

The Community Focus Group met seven times during the course of the study bringing forward the community perspectives with regard to the progress of the CIP. The individuals of the Community Focus Group are active members of the community and brought a number of issues and concerns to the table.

Two of the major tasks for the Community Focus Group were to develop a vision statement and to identify short and long term priorities for the CIP.

1.5 Newcastle Village CIP Vision Statement

A vision statement is a description of what the community believes is the desirable future for their community. It describes the qualities and characteristics of the area appreciated and valued by local people. Therefore it is based on the knowledge of the local community and unique appreciation and understanding of the Community Focus Group members. Vision statements provide guidance for how change and development can be carried out so that it is in harmony with its setting. The CFG adopted the following vision statement, which was supported at the open house by the members of the public attending:

Newcastle Village maintains a vibrant and strong connection to its historic roots bringing promising opportunities to businesses, residents, and visitors.

Priorities

The priorities set out below are based on the knowledge of the Community Improvement study area from their different perspectives of the Focus Group members. The awareness and insight of the CFG was essential for the development of this Community Improvement Plan.

Short Term Priorities

- Incentives for infill or renovation projects
- Incentives for façade improvements
- Heritage street lighting to extend along King Avenue East to Arthur Street and down Mill Street from Wilmot Street to Emily Street
- Prominent entrance features
- Incentives for building signage

Long Term Priorities

- Incentives for new business development
- Directional signage to downtown
- Guidelines for streetscape improvement
- Guidelines for signage styles
- Guidelines for infill or renovation



2. Background Information

2.1 Historical Context

In 1792 John Graves Simcoe, the Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada, issued a proclamation ordering the building of roads and surveying in Clarke Township. By 1816 a total of six families were living in the area known today as Newcastle Village. The settlement was originally called Crandall's Corners and had its first store in 1835 and its first church in 1837. The community was renamed to the Village of Newcastle in 1841 and by 1845 there were 300 residents. On July 1st, 1856 the Village was officially incorporated.

Newcastle Village has been associated with several prominent citizens over the years, one of whom was Daniel Massey, of the Massey – Ferguson fame, who moved his business from Bond Head to the Village core in 1848. The farm machinery manufacturing company played an important role in Village life until 1879 when the business was moved to Toronto. Despite the move, the Masseys did not lose their connection with the Village. In 1923 Chester



Massey presented the community with the gift of the grand Newcastle Village Community Hall building at the corner of King Avenue West and Mill Street. This building has become the civic focal point for the Village. Today it houses a day care centre, the Lion's Club, a bowling alley, the Newcastle Village & District Historical Society, and the Mason's Lodge, and is a gathering place for community and social events.

In 1974 regional government was established for Durham. The Village of Newcastle, the Townships of Darlington and Clarke, and the Town of Bowmanville were amalgamated to form the Town of Newcastle. In 1992 the Town was renamed the Municipality of Clarington. Newcastle Village is the third largest of the four urban areas within Clarington with an estimated population of 8,200 people in 2007.



The Village is ideally situated with quick access to Highway 401 and Highway 35/115. Lake Ontario is just to the south and Toronto is less than an hour drive to the west. The community maintains a small town atmosphere and a compact walkable downtown that is appealing to both its residents and visitors.

2.2 Land Use

The Official Plan land use pattern for the CIP study area is shown on Figure 2. At the centre of the study area is the Village Centre, which contains the lands that are designated for commercial use, commonly referred to as the downtown. The area surrounding the downtown commercial core is designated for residential use. There is environmentally protected land associated with the three creeks that flow through the Village, and two special policy areas, one at the east end on the north side of King Avenue East and one at the north end of the study area on the south side of the CP

railway.

The uses permitted within the commercial core are defined within the Newcastle Village Centre Secondary Plan and include general commercial and street-related commercial areas, community facilities, mixed use areas and medium density residential. The policy objectives of the Secondary Plan include the preservation and enhancement of the unique character of the Village centre as a heritage main street, and the provision for infill development of the Village Centre with an emphasis on increased densities, quality urban design and heritage preservation. The goals and objectives of the Secondary Plan support the vision statement of the Community Improvement Plan. Both the Secondary Plan and the CIP seek to have the Village Centre (downtown commercial core) and the surrounding residential neighbourhoods function as a viable and desirable live/work place. As such, the Village Centre is the focal point of the community.

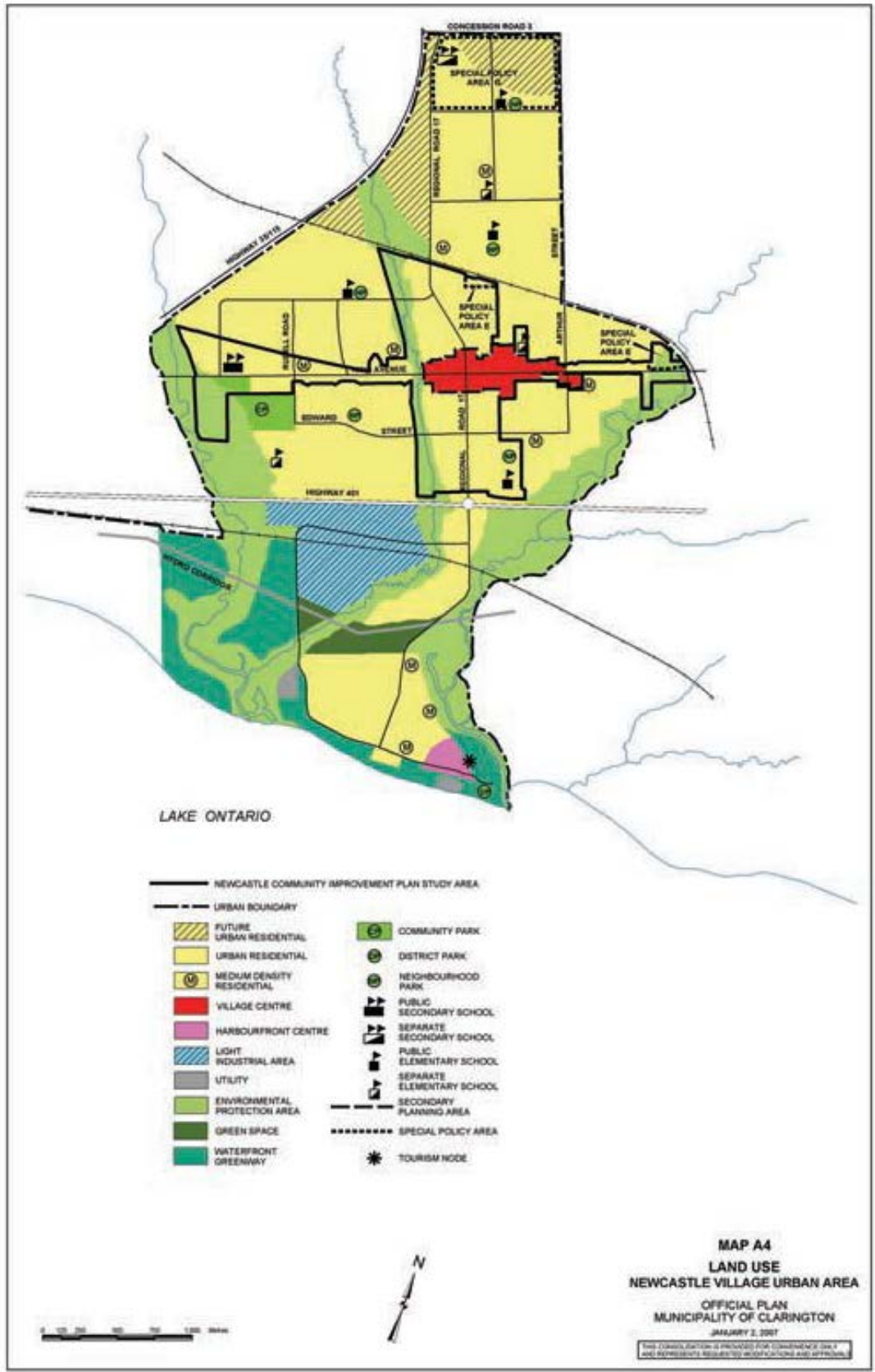


Figure 2 – Land Use Newcastle Village Urban Area

2.3 Corporate Strategic Business Plan

On June 25, 2007, Clarington Council approved a Business Plan for the period 2007 to 2010. The Plan complements three other important planning and policy tools of Council, the Clarington Official Plan, the annual operating budget and the multi-year capital plan. Collectively, these governance tools represent the corner stones of all Municipal decisions. The Community Improvement Plan meets the objectives contained within the Business Plan and Official Plan and assists with its implementation of those objectives, in some cases through the budget and capital plan.

2.4 Architectural Character

Newcastle Village's architecture is reflective of the community's various stages of development. The central core of the residential area contains many fine homes from the Georgian, Victorian, and Edwardian periods intermixed among more modest frame cottages. Over time large lots have been severed to accommodate new development resulting in an eclectic mix of residential styles and building era types.

After the initial settlement boom, the Village's population remained constant or declined slightly. Little building occurred other than the infill until the last half of the twentieth century. The Village's first new plan of subdivision was registered as Westview Heights in 1960 and covers Sunset Boulevard and Lakeview Road. 1962 saw a second plan of subdivision registered for Graham and Oatley Courts and Orchard Heights Drive. Both these developments contain bungalows which were a popular form of architecture during the 1960s.

Residential construction slowed for the next twenty years until the mid-1980s when the Hart Boulevard area subdivision was built. Then during the late 1980s and early 1990s the community began to fill out with subdivisions north of Hart Boulevard to Highway 2 and east of Arthur Street to the CP Railway line. More recent developments have been the significant construction at the east end of the Village in the Dunbury Homes development and the Kaitlin development near the lakeshore, known as the Port of Newcastle.

2.5 Streetscape

The Village's historic downtown radiates out from the intersection of King Avenue and Mill Street; however the commercial main street has always been King Avenue. Three major fires, the first in 1877, and the second two in 1896, destroyed much of the original commercial buildings. The Newcastle Village Community Hall was built on the site of the former Chandler block in 1923. Located at the northwest corner of King and Mill, it stands as the focal point of the downtown. This Neo-Georgian brick and stone building was designed by Sproat and Rolfe Architects, who were also responsible for such significant structures as Hart House and Bishop Strachan School in Toronto. Two storey storefront commercial buildings occupy the remaining three corners of King and Mill.

King Avenue, traveling east and west from Mill Street, contains a variety of historical buildings, some of which were built for commercial purposes and some of which were residential dwellings that have now been converted to commercial use. There are only two three-story buildings in the downtown, 101-109 King Avenue West and the former J.

Anderson Smith and Co. building. Both of these structures have been revitalized and provide residential units above the ground floor.

A new commercial plaza has recently been built at the southeast corner of King Avenue East and Brookhouse Drive. This is the eastern edge of the designated commercial area in the Village. The CIP area would benefit from streetscape improvements and/or traffic calming measures, especially in the area approaching this development.

There are several residential properties within the Village Centre. Some of these are older frame dwellings and some are newer brick buildings. It is anticipated that many of these properties will incorporate commercial uses over time. Conversion from residential uses is promoted through the Newcastle Village Secondary Plan for the downtown and encouraged by the community as it enlivens the street providing a measure of safety and security. The conversion and/or revitalization of buildings, and the construction of infill projects within the downtown should proceed in a manner that promotes and respects the community's built heritage. Newcastle Village residents are proud of their community's history and architectural character.

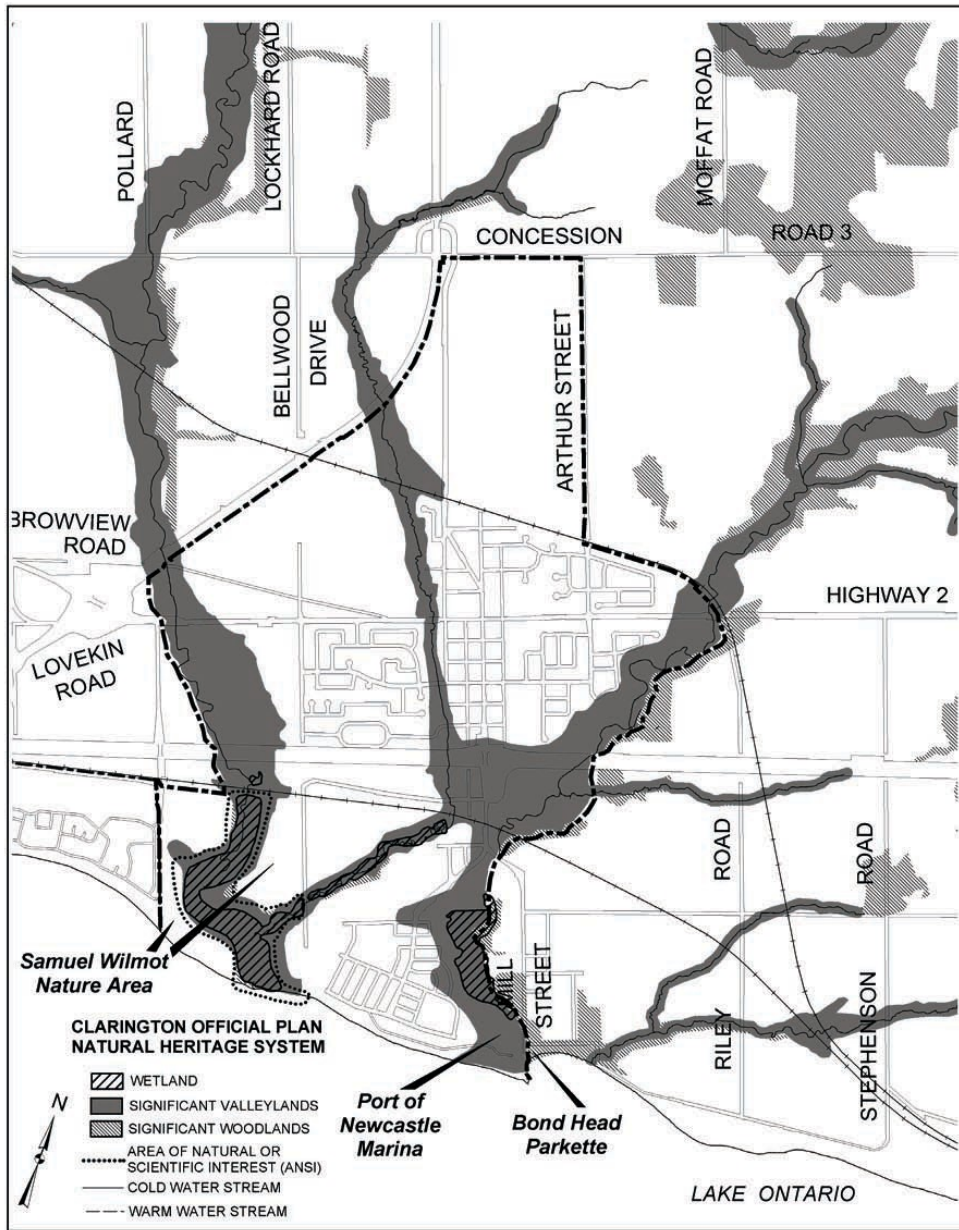


2.6 Trails, Natural Areas and the Waterfront



Newcastle Village is ideally located on the north shore of Lake Ontario. The Bond Head parkette provides public access to the waterfront and a boat launch. The Port of Newcastle has over two hundred boat slips and is a full service marina. The Samuel Wilmot Nature Area is located just west of Newcastle Village between the Wilmot Creek community and the Port of Newcastle. It covers 77 hectares and includes a range of landscape types from creek valley and marsh, forest and old fields, to remnant orchards and hedgerows. The Waterfront Trail traverses the property and walking and hiking trails provide access to the Lake Ontario shoreline, Newcastle marsh, and Wilmot Creek. The Newcastle Lions Trail is located in the core of the Village just west of Baldwin Street. It runs from King Avenue West south to the Westview parkette just north of Highway 401. Fishing enthusiasts enjoy the Wilmot Creek provincial fishing area located south of Highway 401 off Toronto Street.





Map 1: Natural Heritage of Newcastle Village

Map 1 shows the natural heritage system of Newcastle Village as identified in the Clarington Official Plan. The provision of an interconnecting trail system through the Village to the Lake Ontario waterfront would increase recreational opportunities for community residents and visitors.

2.7 Access/Transportation

Newcastle Village can be accessed from two provincial highways, Highway 401 and Highway 35/115. King Avenue is a major thoroughfare running in an east/west direction through the Village. The Region of Durham holds jurisdiction over King Avenue from Arthur Street eastward and North Street westward, and from Highway 401 along Mill Street to the connection to Highway 35/115 at Concession Road 3. The community is

partially serviced by Durham Region Transit and GO Transit. Expansion of the transit route to all parts of the community is encouraged.

3. Community Improvement Plan Process

The Community Improvement Plan as contained in this document has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Planning Act, 1990, R.S.O. and the Municipal Act.

Map I of the Clarington Official Plan delineates the different areas of the municipality that are to be considered as community improvement areas. Section 22.3.2 of the Official Plan identifies the Newcastle Village Community Improvement Project Area sub area N1 as a first priority. Council, at its meeting of January 29th, 2007, endorsed the staff report which set out the boundary for the study, and the terms of reference.

As previously noted, the CIP process included establishing a community focus group to provide community insight. A community open house was held on October 30, 2007. Notification to the residents and property owners in the CIP area and beyond was provided through an information newsletter (Appendix 1). Stakeholder input was obtained through-out the process and specifically at the open house (Appendix 2).

A statutory Public Meeting was held in accordance with Section 17 of the *Planning Act*, 1990, R.S.O. on February 25, 2008 to explain the CIP and receive comments. The Public Meeting was advertised in the local newspapers and a copy of the notice is included as Appendix 3.

3.1 Community Improvement Plan Area Boundary

Part IV of the Planning Act states that the Council of a municipality may, using a by-law, define an area to be examined for community improvement. The purpose of the by-law is only to delineate the area to be studied. Approval of a study area does not stop any type of land use planning activity. Through Council's adoption of By-law 2007-015 the study area for the project was approved to include all of the older section of Newcastle Village and the properties fronting on King Avenue from Wilmot Creek to Graham Creek (Figure 1, Page 3).

Newcastle Village's Business Improvement Area (BIA) was first established in 1981 by By-law 81-2. The BIA boundary included the north side of King Avenue from 210 King Avenue West to Beaver Street, and the south side of King Avenue from 16 Baldwin Street to 153 King Avenue East. In 1989 the boundary was amended through By-law 89-188 to include the properties on the north side of King Avenue East from Beaver Street to Arthur Street, and the properties on the south side of King Avenue East from 165 King Avenue East to 361 King Avenue East. The Newcastle Village Secondary Plan indicates that the lands designated as the Village Centre (commercial) extend beyond the current BIA boundary in some areas and do not include certain lands in other areas (Figure 3). Expansion of the BIA boundary was discussed during the CIP process; however, expansion is a matter for the BIA members to address.

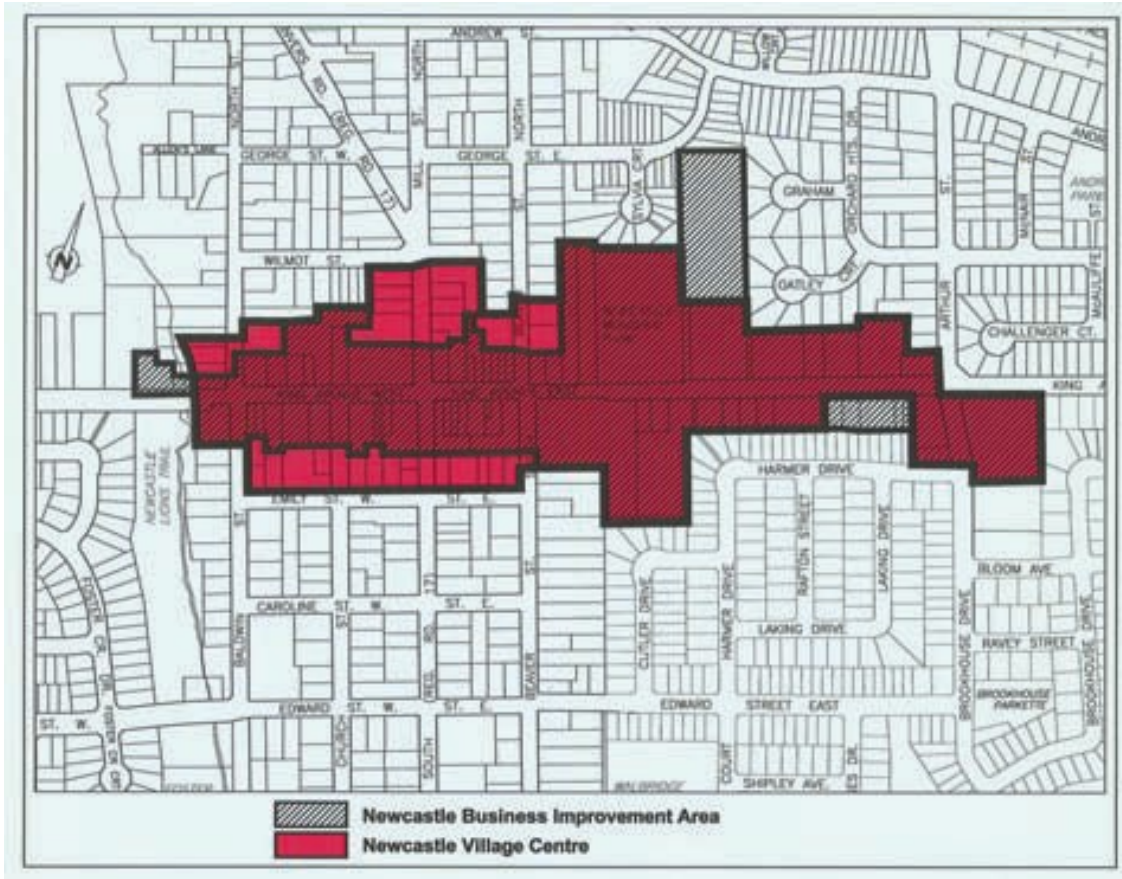


Figure 3 – Newcastle Village Secondary Plan

The third major task of the Community Focus Group was to determine the appropriate boundary for the Community Improvement Plan area. The CFG recommended that the CIP boundary be an amalgamation of the BIA area and the designated Village Centre. A further refinement to the boundary has been to include the 5 properties on the south side of King Avenue continuing to the east. The reason for including these properties is to be able to provide the CIP grants to the Walbridge House at 483 King Avenue East. The Walbridge House is one of the oldest buildings in Newcastle and the former county of Durham. Clarington Council approved the designation of the building on May 14, 2007 as a cultural heritage resource under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* (Figure 4).

Since 2008 the Newcastle Village Secondary Plan has been amended to revise the boundaries of the Commercial Area. In addition, the Walbridge House at 483 Highway 2 has been fully refurbished as a single family home. The boundaries of the Community Improvement Plan Area should reflect these changes as shown in Figure 4. **Amended by 2017 Review*

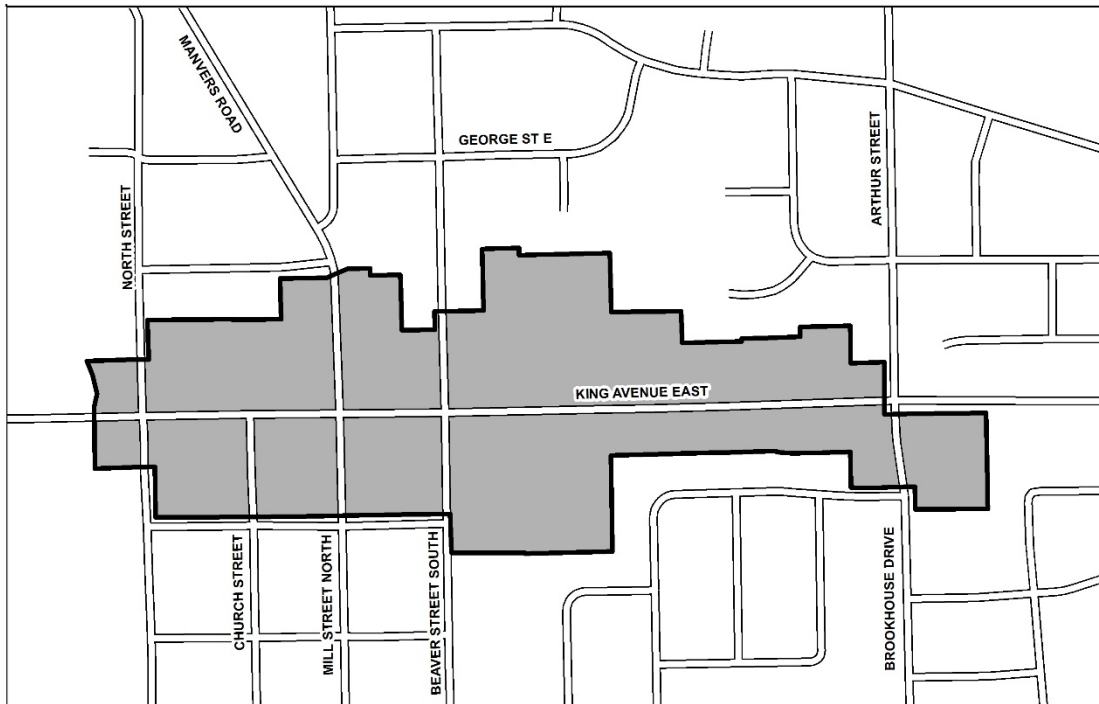


Figure 4 – Community Improvement Project Area **Amended 2017 Review.*

The Community Focus Group have recommended that the Newcastle Village Secondary Plan be amended during the review of the Clarington Official Plan to include the lands that are within the BIA but outside the current Village Centre designation. The BIA, when reviewing their boundaries, are encouraged to coordinate with the Village Centre boundary and any amendment made to it.

4. Issues Identification

4.1 Recent Improvements

A number of major and minor improvements have taken place through private initiatives within the Community Improvement Plan area over the past decade. The largest single development project was the construction of the Dunbury plaza as the eastern anchor at Brookhouse Drive and King Avenue East in 2004. Other major developments have been the new IGA supermarket constructed on the south side of King Avenue East in 1999 and the adjacent former J. Anderson Smith and Co. building has been revitalized and now provides downtown living accommodations as well as commercial uses on the ground floor. The most recent rehabilitation project is the building located at 101 to 109 King Avenue West. A well-known property within the downtown, it now has commercial storefronts designed with a heritage theme and apartments above.

In 2000 the Municipality was successful in obtaining provincial funds under the Main Street Ontario Funding Program for various millennium projects by matching the grants from the province. Sufficient funds were made available for the installation of nine benches and planters within the downtown core. This past year saw a number of road improvements to Monroe Street West, Baldwin Street, and sections of North Street, Edward Street and Church Street. Sidewalk repairs and improvements were also

conducted as identified through-out the Village.

Since the adoption of this Community Improvement Plan in April, 2008 there have been a number of other developments that have enhanced the downtown of Newcastle, such as the library construction. Other new developments include the Shopper's Drug Mart, No Frills and more recently the approval of the LCBO. There has also been progress on adding residential units within the downtown through the approval of a condominium on Beaver Street.

In addition, various property owners are continuing to explore opportunities for redevelopment within the downtown. This includes an addition to Parkview Lodge and the redevelopment of the former Buster's and Dee's Harvest Table properties. **Amended by 2017 Review*

4.2 Economic Indicators

The Community Improvement Plan area does not exhibit characteristics of economic decline. The downtown merchants are however concerned about the possible impacts the development of Big Box stores in other areas of the municipality (Bowmanville) may have on their businesses. Many of the merchants are trying to anticipate the changes they should make to maintain and strengthen their portion and market share. The goal is to provide a unique shopping experience, in both atmosphere and goods, that cannot be matched by Big Box developments, or in some cases attract a different market segment.

4.3 Building Conditions

The building stock within the Community Improvement Plan area is generally in good repair and condition but the majority of buildings are older structures that do not meet today's standards for barrier-free accessibility, fire protection systems, and energy efficiency. Repairs and upgrading of these buildings can be costly. It has been noted by the Community Focus Group and the public that it is these older buildings that contribute to the charm of the Village core providing an attraction for tourists and residents. The continued maintenance of these structures is considered a worthwhile public investment. The development of grant programs for renovations and façade improvements will provide incentives to business and property owners to refurbish the existing building stock. Design assistance for renovation projects and signage will assist with maintaining and improving the visual appearance of the streetscape.

4.4 Land Use Restrictions

The Community Improvement Area is a mixed use area with commercial zoning extending along the majority of King Avenue East and West. There are pockets of residential zoning on King Avenue East between Beaver and Arthur Streets, along Emily Street, and on North, Wilmot and Mill Streets. There are a number of residential buildings within the CIP area that could be converted to mixed-use or commercial only structures. As such, any conversion of uses in the Community Improvement Area will have to address parking requirements. On site rear yard parking is preferred. A cash-in-lieu of parking policy can be considered by the Municipality in order to facilitate the development of properties where the required number of parking spaces cannot be provided on site.

The merchants and residents of the Village take pride in the community's architectural fabric and feel strongly about maintaining the existing built form. They encourage the introduction of new residential units within the downtown and would like to see those units develop in a manner that is sensitive to the built heritage environment. With the introduction of the Provincial Policy Statement 2005 and policy changes recommended by the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe the need to identify how intensification and infill can be accommodated within the existing urban framework needs to be articulated. The consideration of context, sensitive zoning regulations and development of a set of design guidelines for infill and intensification would assist with this policy shift and the community desire to respect the community character.

4.5 Focal Point and Civic Presence

The King Avenue and Mill Street four corners is the focal point of the community. Specifically, the Newcastle Village Community Hall is an important civic presence, a landmark feature that should be maintained and enhanced. Currently, the Clarington Public Library is housed in a commercial building just north of the Community Hall; however, the library will be moving to a new building in Memorial Park at 150 King Avenue East. It is anticipated that the library's return to King Street just a few blocks from the Community Hall will assist in strengthening the civic presence in the downtown. The library intends to encourage physical accessibility by installing walkways connected to the street, bicycle parking and accessibility features such as automatic doors. The library facility will benefit the community by providing enhanced access to library resources and providing space for expanded services that are lacking at the current location.



A new fire station has been constructed at 3333 Highway 2. The former fire station at 247 King Avenue East is currently being used by Operations and the parking lot is leased to GO Transit as a turn-around and lay-over site. Once these uses cease this property will be sold and redeveloped as a commercial or mixed –use development.

**Amended by 2017 Review*

4.6 Problems and Deficiencies

During the course of the CIP process the Community Focus Group and the public raised a number of issues they would like to see addressed. Some issues can be addressed by the Municipality and others require the cooperation of the merchants and the BIA. Any issues related to works within or adjacent to the Regional or Provincial road allowances will require the co-operation of these levels of government.

4.6.1 Heritage Street Lighting

Downtown Newcastle Village has a mixture of motor vehicle and pedestrian level street lighting. Overhead cobra lights extend the length of King Avenue through-out the CIP area and lower level lighting in a heritage style extends from North Street to Beaver Street. This mixture of lighting is not considered complimentary to the heritage theme advocated by the Community Focus Group or the public. Guidelines for streetscape improvements would assist by incorporating a unified energy efficient heritage style street lighting that limit light trespass and glare through-out the CIP area.

The CIP area is bisected by Mill Street, otherwise known as Regional Road 17. The Region of Durham will be upgrading Mill Street South from Highway 401 to King Avenue in the near future, possibly 2008. The proposed works include left turn lanes at Edward Street, reconstruction of the road pavement, curb and gutter, watermain and storm sewer, overhead cobra lights, and repair or replacement of existing sidewalks. Any road reconstruction should provide for the protection of the street trees and their root zone, as it is the tree canopy that defines this street.

Mill Street South is the main thoroughfare from Highway 401 into the CIP area. The street is lined with many fine heritage buildings, however, the street is lit by modern lighting that is not considered complimentary to the Village's heritage character. The illumination is also considered to be poor, Mill Street will be reconstructed in 2008 and the street lighting will be improved with regard to its energy efficient lighting and at the appropriate spacing. While it was the desire of the Community Focus Group to have pedestrian/heritage lighting extend down Mill Street, Council was unable to find funding to augment the Region's contract. In addition, it is the policy of the municipality to only provide pedestrian lighting in commercial areas.



4.6.2 Traffic Calming

King Avenue runs east and west and Mill Street runs north and south through Newcastle Village. Both streets are major thoroughfares for residents, as well as for large farm equipment, as the Village abuts active rural farming areas. As the community grows more residents will be utilizing King Avenue and Mill Street and traffic calming measures may need to be employed. Any future streetscape improvements aimed at traffic calming along these roads should consider farm equipment, transit, and emergency vehicles and not impede such traffic. Traffic calming should be intended to control vehicle speeds without compromising the roads' role and function. The addition of cycling lanes and

pedestrian crossing lights in appropriate places through-out the Village would promote more of a human scale to the streets and slow traffic. Maintaining effective arterial road operations on King Avenue and Mill Street will help minimize the potential for through traffic infiltration on the surrounding local road network.

4.6.3 Off-Street Parking

Parking spaces are available on both sides of King Avenue through-out the CIP area. There is a municipal parking lot on Mill Street North and parking available at the Newcastle Village Community Hall. Certain events held in the Community Hall can generate the need for more parking than is available in the immediate area. The provision of additional off street parking has been identified as an issue by the CFG. As additional commercial uses are integrated into the downtown, the provision of parking is a requirement of development. The Municipality encourages the provision of additional parking spaces beyond those required as a condition of development approval so that the additional spaces can be utilized during peak periods of parking demand. As such, it is anticipated that as redevelopment and infilling occurs there will be adequate parking provided. Convenient parking is always a high priority for merchants; however, the addition of off-street municipal lots are often not considered “convenient” by the users and create gaps within the urban fabric that are counter-productive to creating a walkable downtown. The current plan to address parking is through the provision of a private inter-connected lane and parking areas behind the buildings along King Avenue. Figure 5 indicates how this can be accommodated on the south side of King Avenue between Church Street and Baldwin Street.

Since 2008 rear lanes have been completed for the block south of King Avenue between Baldwin and Church Street and north of King Avenue between North and Mill Street. The Municipality has also been exploring options to advance the completion of the rear lane between Mill Street North and Beaver Street North and Church Street to Mill Street South. **Amended by 2017 Review*



Figure 5 – Rear Lanes in 2008 and as implemented to date in 2016 **Amended by 2017 Review*

There are commercial and residential properties within the downtown core that are not able to provide any on-site parking. The commercial zoning in the area requires that parking spaces be provided for both commercial and residential uses. Commercial properties that would like to expand their commercial floor area or residential properties that would like to convert to commercial use would not be able to do so without a site specific rezoning to address the parking standards. Consideration should be given to changing the commercial zoning downtown so that parking spaces would only be required for the residential components of any building.

4.6.4 Signage

Signage issues can be divided into five areas, community entry features, directional (wayfaring) signage to downtown, individual storefront signs, community events signage, and banners.

There are four main entrances into Newcastle Village, King Avenue from the east and west, Regional Road 17 from Highway 35/115, and Regional Road 17 from Highway 401. King Avenue is a Regional Road from North Street west and from Arthur Street east. Regional Road 17, also known as Mill Street, runs through the community in a north/south direction and connects to the Provincial highways. Any signage or entrance features proposed for the regional road allowance would be subject to the approval of the Region of Durham. The Ministry of Transportation governs any signage or entry features within or adjacent to their road allowances. The Community Focus Group are recommending the installation of landmark entry features at the entrances to the Village as these would notify the traveling public that they are approaching a specific community. The Focus Group have specifically requested a landmark feature at the 401 entrances, however, Council will have to consider how it wishes to identify each urban area over and above the signage that has been provided by the Region, and MTO requirements for landmark features would have to be followed. The cost of the entrance features are significant and a funding formula will have to be determined.

There appears to be confusion at the Highway 401 interchange as to which direction should be taken to reach the downtown. Directional signage to the downtown core has been identified as a requirement to direct motor vehicles to the appropriate services. As Mill Street South is the main road off Highway 401, the Municipality will work with the Region of Durham and the Ministry of Transportation to address this signage issue.

Grants for new signage for the individual merchants within the CIP area has been recommended as one of the programs to be implemented through this CIP. Guidelines for signage styles are also necessary to provide guidance to property owners. Several merchants have expressed an interest in T-bars sign that overhang the sidewalk. The Municipality's current sign by-law does not permit this type of sign in Newcastle Village. The sign by-law is under review and a provision for T-bar signs can be included in the preparation of a new sign by-law, which is scheduled for review in 2008.

Community entry and events signage can serve several purposes such as providing entry markers and advertising upcoming community events. Signage costs could be covered if a fee is charged.

There were two types of banners identified through the CIP process, banners on street light poles and banners that span across the street. Street light pole banners can serve two purposes. They can be used to promote upcoming local events and downtown businesses. Other BIA's have implemented a sponsorship program for their banners to cover the banner costs and installation costs. Banners that span road allowances must be installed on poles that are able to withstand the wind load. Both types of banners will be addressed through the review of the sign-by-law.

4.6.5 Development Charges

The Newcastle Village Secondary Plan encourages the development of mixed-used properties in the downtown core as such buildings contribute to community safety and the vitality of the street. However, developers have noted that the development charges to be paid for each residential unit make the construction of a mixed-use development difficult. The Municipality's current Development Charges By-law 2005-108 allows exemption from payment of development charges for the gross floor area of conversions of buildings where the building is converted in whole or in part to a different use if the building is within a revitalization area. This provision applies to downtown Orono, Bowmanville, and the 1981 BIA boundary for Newcastle Village. The Development Charges By-law is scheduled for full review prior to its expiry in 2010. An interim update is to be conducted in 2008.



The development community has recommended that the Municipality should consider establishing a development charge credit program as part of the review of the development charges by-law; such a program will have to be considered and financed through the Municipal budget. Prior to establishing any such program the Municipality could give consideration to applications for exemptions from development charges for mixed-use developments within the CIP area on a case by case basis. It has been noted that mixed use buildings may not be built without this type of incentive.

As a means of attracting new businesses consideration will be given to the feasibility of providing development charges exemptions for green buildings in accordance with the objectives of the Corporate Strategic Business Plan.

4.6.6 Encouragement for Economic Development

Economic development is supported by the Municipality through their agreement with the Clarington Board of Trade. The Municipality and CBOT will continue their partnership and support efforts to promote Newcastle Village. Should any applications for light industrial development be received they will be expedited.

4.6.7 Commercial Building Accessibility

In order to enhance and reinforce Newcastle Village as a people friendly community, the Municipality encourages owners of existing commercial properties to make their buildings accessible.

Wherever possible, the Municipality will implement accessibility features in its own developments and will require all new development to be accessible in accordance with the provisions of the Ontario Building Code. The Upgrade to Building Code grant program will provide funding to assist with building modifications.

The Clarington Accessibility Committee has developed a check list of actions that property owners can take to make their businesses more accessible to the public. Appendix 7 identifies changes that can be made to the exterior and interior of commercial buildings ranging from installing hand rails to providing a high level of interior lighting to assist with visibility. Implementing these changes would attract more customers to shop in the downtown core.

4.6.8 Website Development

The internet is a valuable tool for educating, promoting and attracting businesses and visitors to a community. The Municipality encourages the development of a website that is specific to Newcastle Village. The Newcastle BIA is encouraged to develop such a community resource in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce. The Bowmanville and Orono BIA websites are examples of what is possible.

4.6.9 Energy Efficiency

The majority of the buildings in the CIP area are older structures which are not considered to be energy efficient. Many property owners are now seeking ways to reduce energy consumption or generate their own energy through devices such as solar panels. The Municipality encourages these efforts and can provide information to property owners on energy conservation programs and resources.

4.6.10 Safety and Security

One of the attractive qualities of Newcastle Village is the safety and security that residents feel. The cooperation of Durham Region Police Services in monitoring the area is appreciated. However, a concern has been expressed that future changes may promote activities that require more monitoring. Street surveillance is provided by a downtown that has a residential component as residents can observe what is happening on the street. The policies supporting infill, mixed-use buildings, and intensification seek to bring additional residents into the downtown thereby providing additional surveillance. Additional recreational opportunities for youths need to be addressed. It is anticipated that the recreational programming that will be made available at the Newcastle indoor pool will assist with the provision of additional leisure time pursuits for all ages.

5. Recommendations

5.1 Incentives

5.1.1 Development Charges

The Municipality's existing Development Charges By-law 2005-108 was approved by Council on June 27, 2005 and will expire in June of 2010. On December 10, 2007 Council endorsed an interim update to the 2005 Development Charges Background

Study and By-law. A full complete study will have to be undertaken prior to the expiry in 2010. The existing Development Charges By-law does not provide any incentives for the construction of new mixed-use buildings in the CIP area and does not provide exemptions for the conversion of existing buildings that are outside of the 1981 BIA boundary. A background study will be completed as part of the review of the Development Charges By-law and these proposals will be considered along with others. Recommendations regarding exemptions and reductions for the areas noted below will be considered by Council during the review. Council may also consider applications for amendment to the Development Charges By-law on an individual basis in advance of the comprehensive review of By-law 2005-108.

Mixed-use Developments

- Purpose: To provide an incentive for the construction of new mixed-use buildings.
- Reason: Providing this incentive will aid with the capital cost of building a structure that incorporates residential use on the second storey. Additional residential uses in the CIP area adds to community safety and security and provides a housing alternative for those residents wishing to downsize and stay in the community.
- Recommendation: That the incentive for the construction of new mixed-use buildings be considered during the full complete Development Charges Background Study to be undertaken prior to the expiry date in 2010.

Expansion of Revitalization Area

- Purpose: To expand revitalization area
- Reason: The revitalization area identified in the Development Charges By-law 2005- 108 was based on the 1981 BIA boundary. This boundary was expanded in 1989 and may be further expanded in the future. The revitalization area should be expanded to match the CIP area as providing this incentive will aid with the conversion of existing building stock into mixed-use developments that helps maintain the commercial viability and vitality of the downtown core.
- Recommendation: Amend Schedule #5

Implementation

Development charge reductions or exemptions will be implemented through the Municipality of Clarington Development Charges By-law.

General Terms

Any Development Charge waiver will be provided on a one time basis to the registered owner of the property. The development charge reductions or exceptions will not be

retroactively applied to developments where building permits were issued prior to approval of the CIP or where the appropriate planning approval has not been obtained. Interpretation of the Development Charges By-law is the responsibility of the Chief Building Official.

Other Programs

Participation in the development charges reductions or exemptions does not preclude the owner from being eligible for the grant programs offered under the Community Improvement Plan, and is not calculated as part of the overall total dollar value.

5.1.2 Design Assistance

The Municipality of Clarington will assist property owners within the Community Improvement Project Area with the development of design ideas and concepts that are in keeping with the overall intent of the Community Improvement Plan by providing design review services from an urban designer and other professionals that have been involved in the Community Improvement Project Area. This expertise can assist owners with:

- Alternative design ideas and solutions;
- Generating visualizations of design concepts;
- Advising on urban design and architectural control requirements of the Municipality;
- Advising on the technical matters such as shadow impact analysis, choice of colours, materials, finishes and textures that enhances the overall building/street character;

Such design concepts have to be fleshed out by the owner with their own architect, engineer or contractor. This service will be provided on a pre-consultation basis and will still be subject to any necessary applications or permits.

5.1.3 Design Guidelines

Urban Design Guidelines for Newcastle's downtown were approved in November 2013. The urban design guidelines provide information and a framework for new and redevelopment proposals. A streetscape development plan was prepared in 2015. It has a unified theme for the pedestrian amenities such as benches, garbage cans and lighting. In 2017 the streetscape development began implementation. **Amended by 2017 Review*

5.1.4 Facilitation

In addition to developing the guidelines identified in the CIP, the Municipality will assist developers by expediting the development review process for projects within the CIP area and within areas that are zoned for light industrial development. **Amended by 2017 Review*

5.1.5 Public Amenity Areas

The Municipality of Clarington will consider on a case-by-case basis the provision of public amenities for the greater public good. In some cases the Municipality may assist with the funding of public amenities such as the provision of public art, the installation of

street furniture, the provision of bicycle parking, and other such initiatives that have an overall benefit to the public. This public amenity area consideration is only applicable to the Newcastle Village Community Improvement Plan area. Entry gateways are considered public amenity areas.

5.1.6 Information and Promotion

The preparation of a brochure to identify walking and cycling trails and natural areas to inform residents and visitors of these amenities is recommended. The community could be promoted through the development of a website and other marketing tools that is specific to Newcastle Village. The Newcastle BIA and the Chamber of Commerce are encouraged to pursue these recommendations in cooperation with the Municipality.

5.2 Grant Program

(To be read in conjunction with Appendix 4)

The total sum of grants available to a single property address can be piggy-backed. At no time shall the total amount of grants provided to a specific property owner exceed \$45,000.00. For the purposes of the grant programs, the Newcastle Village Community Hall would be considered eligible. **Amended by 2017 Review*

5.2.1 Site Plan Control Fee Grant Program

This grant is intended to assist property owners with financing the cost of development process by providing grants to offset the amount of the Site Plan Control Fee to a maximum of \$3,000.

5.2.2 Infill Project Grant Program

This grant is intended to assist property owners with financing the cost of the development process by providing a grant to offset the amount of constructing an infill building to a maximum of \$10,000. The Infill Project Grant program only applies to buildings constructed with a design that is in keeping with the historical context of Newcastle Village. Infill projects will qualify for funding if they are being built on lots are vacant as of the date of approval of this Community Improvement Plan or on lots that become vacant as a result of a fire or disaster. This grant program is not intended to encourage the demolition of existing buildings.

5.2.3 Façade Improvement Grant Program

This grant is intended to assist property owners with the financing of building façade improvements to existing buildings. It will provide funding for 50% of the cost eligible façade improvements or \$10,000, whichever is smaller. Building façade improvements are to adhere to the approved urban design guidelines. Eligibility for a façade improvement grant will be renewed for each address after 10 years. **Amended by 2017 Review*

5.2.4 Upgrade to Building Code Grant Program

This grant is intended to assist property owners with the financing of building

improvements required to bring existing older buildings into compliance with the current Ontario Building Code. The grant will provide up to \$10,000 or 50% of the cost of these improvements, whichever is smaller. Eligibility for an upgrade to building code grant will be renewed for each address after 10 years. **Amended by 2017 Review.*

5.2.5 Signage Grant Program

This grant is intended to assist business owners with financing the design and installation of new signage by providing a grant equivalent to 50% of the amount of new signage or \$2,000, whichever is smaller. All signs are to comply with the provisions of the Municipality's sign by-law. Eligibility for a signage grant will be renewed for each business after 10 years. **Amended 2017 Review.*

5.2.6 Accessibility Grant Program

The Municipality of Clarington may provide a grant for up to \$10,000 or 50% of the cost of accessibility improvements within the Newcastle Village CIP project area, providing that the accessibility enhances access to businesses. **Amended by 2017 Review*

5.3 General Rules

The provision of grants as described in Section 5.2 shall be administered on a first come first served basis to the limit of available funding. Specific details regarding the grants and administrative procedures are contained in Appendix 4. All grants require pre-approval and the applicable permits. Administrative procedures may be changed, altered, amended or modified by the Municipality of Clarington without the necessity of an amendment to this Community Improvement Plan. The addition of a grant program, an increase in the maximum grant value, or a change to the Community Improvement Project Area shall require an amendment to this Community Improvement Plan. If Council feels that the goals and objectives of the Community Improvement Plan are not being met or have been accomplished, they may discontinue any program or change the program terms by amendment to this Plan.

5.4 Capital Improvements

The Municipality budgets for the ongoing renewal of infrastructure and services through the capital budget. The opportunity exists to submit capital projects through the capital budget to address municipal infrastructure and the issues identified in the Community Improvement Plan. Council reviews the capital budget on an annual basis.

5.4.1 Entry Gateway Features, Events Signage and Banners

The need to strongly identify the entry points to Newcastle Village has been endorsed by the Community Focus Group including identification of the east, west, north and south entry points. They also support the idea of community events signage, street banners and pole banners. Dominant entrance features are estimated to cost in excess of \$80,000. The design of these different types of signage and their individual cost estimates are to be determined and funding sought.

5.4.2 Heritage Style Street Lighting

There is strong support in the community for the installation of energy efficient heritage style street lighting that limits light trespass and glare, and serves pedestrian and motor vehicle needs along King Avenue. It would help enhance and unify this main route through Newcastle Village. Over the long term the Municipality can replace the existing lighting with heritage style light standards that serve both motor vehicle and pedestrian needs. Such a project is currently not in the capital forecast.

Mill Street is a Regional Road and will be reconstructed in 2008 including improvements to the deficient street lighting. The Community Focus Group has recommended that pedestrian/heritage street lighting be included in this construction project. While it would be desirable to complete this work with the road reconstruction, the lack of a comprehensive streetscape design and funding for the enhanced lighting make it difficult.

The Clarington Official Plan identifies the commercial area of Newcastle Village as running along King Avenue from North Street to Brookhouse Drive, and along Mill Street from Emily Street to Wilmot Street. Upgrading the street lighting to include pedestrian lighting fixtures along these sections of the streets would augment the commercial core of the downtown. The portion of Mill Street south of Emily Street is designated residential; it is not the practice of the Municipality to provide pedestrian lighting within residential areas.

It is recommended that streetscape enhancements, which incorporate street hydro, be implemented upon approval of a detailed streetscape plan for the commercial portion of Newcastle, and the allocation of the appropriate funds be budgeted in the capital forecast.

Heritage style street lighting has been installed in downtown Bowmanville as part of a sidewalk reconstruction project. The Bowmanville BIA made a financial contribution to the project to assist with the cost of the heritage street lighting upgrade and enhancement of the pedestrian environment. The Municipality will expect the Newcastle BIA to provide a similar financial contribution to the pedestrian/heritage street lighting upgrade within the commercially designated portions of King Avenue and Mill Street.

5.5 Funding Sources

All of the grant programs described in Section 5.2 and further detailed in Appendix 4 are funded solely by the Municipality of Clarington. Should funding for Community Improvement Plans become available from other levels of government they will be applied where applicable and in keeping with the recommendations of this Community Improvement Plan. Should any improvements be eligible for funding from other levels of government, funding will be applied for. Capital improvements on municipal property are the responsibility of the Municipality. The Municipality of Clarington will set aside, subject to project priorities and annual budget approval, monies to partially fund the capital improvements outlined in Section 5.4. Innovative ways of funding these capital improvements will be explored as the Community Improvement Plan is implemented.

5.6 Implementation

The Community Improvement Plan will be implemented through the provisions of Chapter 22 of the Clarington Official Plan and Section 28 of the Planning Act, 1990, R.S.O.

The overall implementation of the grant programs shall be the responsibility of the Planning Services Department. All of the grants will be administered on a first come first served basis to the limit of available funding in accordance with the administrative rules governing this and other grant programs.

The Community Focus Group that has provided direction to the Planning Services Department and the Clarington Board of Trade for this study has been an integral part of the process. They have provided information and communicated with their respective organizations/groups about the Community Improvement Plan and process. Having an implementation group similar to the focus group to ensure that the issues identified in the CIP are being pursued would be beneficial. A terms of reference should be created and objectives identified for this liaison group. The community liaison group's mandate is intended to complement, not duplicate, the work that the Newcastle Village BIA and other community organizations are already doing.

5.7 Interpretation

Changes to the Newcastle Village Community Improvement Project Area, or the addition or increase in the value of grants shall require an amendment to this Community Improvement Plan by Council. This Plan has been prepared in accordance with and shall be deemed to conform to the Clarington Official Plan.

This Plan shall be referred to as the Newcastle Village Community Improvement Plan for Clarington. At such time as other Community Improvement Plans are prepared for this or other areas, this title may be modified for clarification purpose without requiring an amendment to this Plan.

5.8 Sunset Clause

This Community Improvement Plan will be reviewed after a 10 year period to assess if the Plan meets its goals and objectives. Suggested changes may be considered by way of minor changes or formal amendment. **Amended by 2017 Review*