



TOWN OF INGERSOLL

DOWNTOWN ENHANCEMENT PLAN

FINAL REPORT



MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

Downtown Ingersoll is the heart of our community, a place where stories are shared, connections are made, and local pride shines brightest. An engaging and dynamic downtown is not only a reflection of our heritage, but a foundation for long-term economic vitality.

The Downtown Enhancement Plan reflects the Town's commitment to supporting a lively, connected, and welcoming environment for all. It is a place where residents, business owners, and visitors experience a true sense of belonging. Through thoughtful planning and collaborative vision, we're working to ensure the downtown thrives as the hub of culture, commerce, and community.

This Plan will guide our next steps in strengthening the heart of Ingersoll. Together, we can preserve what makes our downtown unique while embracing the opportunities that will shape its future.

Mayor Brian Petrie
Town of Ingersoll



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A thriving downtown is the heart of a strong community — a place where people gather, businesses grow, and the identity of the town comes to life. Great downtowns are vibrant, walkable, and welcoming. They reflect a community's values, create a sense of pride and belonging, and support the local economy by drawing in residents and visitors.

For Ingersoll, strengthening the downtown means investing in long-term prosperity, supporting small businesses, enhancing the public realm, and ensuring that future growth is connected, inclusive, and community-driven.

The Downtown Enhancement Plan (DEP) provides a strategic framework to guide this transformation. It focuses on enhancing the downtown core by attracting new businesses, supporting employment, increasing foot traffic, and enhancing public spaces. Launched in December 2024, the DEP was developed in response to several intersecting challenges and opportunities: a shifting retail environment, an aging commercial building stock, and the need for greater collaboration among businesses, property owners, and the municipality.

Extensive community engagement, conducted between December 2024 and March 2025, informed the plan's development. Input from residents, businesses, community groups, and developers helped shape a collective vision for a more dynamic and resilient downtown. The process also included a review of past initiatives and lessons learned from other municipalities, grounding the plan in local context and best practices.

The DEP is guided by six key pillars:

1. Champion Small Business Growth
2. Preserve Charm, Build Identity
3. Build Our Brand
4. Placemaking with Purpose
5. Support Residential Intensification
6. Align and Activate Existing Initiatives

Together, these pillars provide a clear, actionable strategy for enhancing downtown Ingersoll, one that balances economic development with heritage, livability with vibrancy, and structure with flexibility.

INTRODUCTION

The Town of Ingersoll is a growing, vibrant community in Southwestern Ontario. Building on its rich history and strong sense of place, the Town is working to shape a more connected, inclusive, and resilient downtown core. With continued population growth and a renewed focus on attracting investment, enhancing the heart of the community is both a timely priority and a strategic imperative.

Over the years, the Town of Ingersoll has laid a solid foundation for downtown improvement, introducing design guidelines, incentive programs, and community-focused initiatives. However, recent shifts, such as evolving community expectations, have revealed the need for a more comprehensive, future-oriented approach.

The DEP responds directly to this need. Rather than simply pursuing enhancement in the traditional sense, the DEP aims to strengthen what already works, address critical gaps, and position downtown Ingersoll to thrive in a changing environment. It emphasizes placemaking, economic resilience, and collaboration. The goal is to create a public realm that is both welcoming and functional, while reflecting community values and anticipating future needs.

The DEP is deeply rooted in the voices of the community. Engagement with more than 350 stakeholders, including residents, business owners, municipal staff, community organizations, and developers, helped shape a clear and actionable vision. Public feedback emphasized the need for year-round programming, improved amenities, stronger retail and dining offerings, and greater support for business attraction and housing development.

This locally informed plan is also aligned with broader strategic objectives. At the municipal level, it complements the Town's 2022 Corporate Strategic Plan, supporting priorities such as Economic Development, Residential Growth, and Collaborative Partnerships. At the regional level, it aligns with Oxford County's 2023–2026 Strategic Plan, advancing goals around community vitality, environmental sustainability, and inclusive growth.

By building on existing momentum and introducing a new wave of coordinated, scalable actions, the DEP positions downtown Ingersoll for long-term resilience and relevance. It is not simply a plan for infrastructure or beautification, it's a vision for how people live, work, connect, and thrive in the core of the community.



COMMUNITY AND MARKET SNAPSHOT

Ingersoll, located along Highway 401 in Oxford County, is a steadily growing community of 13,693 (Canada Census, 2021), projected to surpass 20,100 by 2046 (Oxford County 2024 - Growth Analysis and Land Needs Assessment). A balanced demographic, strong homeownership (70 per cent), and a mix of housing options support its livability and future growth.

Ingersoll's economy, long supported by major employers like GM CAMI and IMT Corp., is evolving to include growing sectors such as health care, education, and other professional services. With a 64.6 per cent workforce participation rate and a median household income of \$77,000, the town benefits from a stable economic base. (*Statistics Canada, 2021*)

Downtown Ingersoll is the town's civic and cultural hub, home to nearly 200 businesses. Yet a 10 per cent storefront vacancy rate—mainly along Thames Street South—and retail leakage to Woodstock and Tillsonburg highlight the need for reinvestment and enhancement. Residents value the downtown's walkability, small-town charm, and community events, but want more diverse retail, better public spaces, and year-round activity.

More than 350 people contributed to engagement efforts. Residents, businesses, developers, and community committees all emphasized the need for:

- **Vibrant public spaces with placemaking, lighting, patios, and green space**
- **More housing in the core, especially mid-rise and mixed-use**
- **Expanded community events and seasonal programming**
- **Support for arts, heritage, and a stronger downtown brand**

Business owners have highlighted challenges such as limited foot traffic, high rents, and low awareness of available support programs.

Addressing these concerns requires a coordinated approach, one that boosts downtown activity while supporting new investment. Intensifying residential development in the core is a key opportunity. Planning benchmarks suggest that every 100 new homes could generate up to \$2.25 million in annual retail spending based on average household expenditures. In the near term, improvements like better signage, activating underused parks, and upgrading event infrastructure offer quick wins that support vibrancy and visibility.

Fortunately, the Town already has a strong planning foundation in place. Tools such as the Community Improvement Plan (CIP), design guidelines, and seasonal patio program are well-aligned with county and provincial policies that promote compact, walkable communities. The DEP builds on that foundation to help guide future decisions, investments, and partnerships that will shape a vibrant, inclusive downtown.

VISION STATEMENT

Steeped in heritage and united in vision, Ingersoll is shaping a future guided by community, collaboration, and connection.



STRATEGIC PILLARS

The DEP is guided by six key pillars:

1. Champion Small Business Growth

This pillar focuses on fostering a vibrant downtown by supporting small businesses through grants, financial incentives, strong Town-led support, and strategies that drive investment, visibility, and business retention, attraction, and growth.

2. Preserve Charm, Build Identity

This pillar focuses on preserving and celebrating Ingersoll's rich history and small-town charm while guiding its evolution through thoughtful design and community-driven placemaking that strengthens the town's identity.

3. Build Our Brand

This pillar focuses on bringing Ingersoll's downtown to life through storytelling by amplifying its rich history, diverse businesses, and vibrant community via marketing and engagement.

4. Placemaking with Purpose

This pillar focuses on transforming Ingersoll's downtown into a vibrant, purposeful destination through thoughtful placemaking that encourages social connection, supports local businesses, and fosters community pride.

5. Support Residential Intensification

This pillar focuses on residential intensification as key to creating a vibrant downtown by encouraging people to live close to work, recreation, and essential services to promote walkability and enhance quality of life.

6. Align & Activate Existing Initiatives

This pillar emphasizes uniting Ingersoll's active community groups under a shared vision and realigning Town resources to provide strategic direction and clear success metrics, to enhance the downtown.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTION PLAN: OVERVIEW

Pillar 1: Champion Small Business Growth

Objective 1.1: Attract new businesses to downtown Ingersoll over the next five years

a) Pilot a “pop-up” shared business space in a vacant storefront

The Town should partner with a property owner to create a short-term pop-up incubator in a vacant downtown storefront. Working with Community Futures Oxford and the Small Business Centre, it can support selected entrepreneurs with funding, mentorship, and promotion to help them launch permanent businesses downtown.

b) Support a more “business-friendly” environment

Ingersoll has made great progress toward a more business-friendly climate by meeting Provincial review timelines under the *Planning Act* and Building Code, and fostering partnerships with the Chamber, Community Futures Oxford, and The Small Business Centre. The Town’s fast-track development approval process provides a solid foundation, with responsiveness valued by local stakeholders. To build on this momentum, the Town should continue to streamline interactions with businesses and developers by expanding digital tools, introducing a dedicated business development liaison, and adopting more responsive approval processes. Enhancements like concurrent application processing, early technical reviews, and a digital development portal at both the county and municipal levels would improve transparency, predictability, and alignment with the Town’s economic development and downtown enhancement goals.



c) Establish networking events that support ongoing mentorship

The Town should partner with local business organizations to host biannual networking events featuring expert-led workshops on topics like marketing, finance, and growth. These sessions would provide practical tools, peer learning, and mentorship opportunities. The goal is to create deeper, more useful connections across Ingersoll's business community.

d) Create a pitch-to-win downtown startup challenge

To attract entrepreneurs and fill vacant storefronts, the Town could launch a 'Win This Space'-style competition. Finalists would pitch to a panel of local leaders, with winners receiving rent subsidies, marketing support, and mentorship. The challenge could be funded through the BIA reserve and sponsors such as Community Futures Oxford, the Town, and local investors, with start-up support suggested to be \$20,000.

Objective 1.2: Expand CIP outreach to encourage broader uptake and enhancement efforts across the downtown

a) Create a CIP resource toolkit to support local business

The Town should develop a print and digital toolkit outlining all CIP grants, eligibility, and application steps, including a permitting flowchart, contact information, and examples of completed projects. It should be distributed through the Chamber, BIA, and business partners, and used at events or one-on-one meetings. A launch session can walk businesses through how to access funding.

b) Create a CIP awareness campaign using marketing and communications tactics

Run a targeted CIP awareness campaign using digital ads, social media, local news, and newsletters to highlight grant deadlines and success stories. All messaging should link to the business toolkit and direct inquiries to a single contact person. Campaign materials should be easy to understand and widely shared on community channels.

c) Leverage CIP ambassadors to inspire program uptake

Recruit three to five local business owners who have used CIP funding to share their stories via social media, videos, and information sessions. Provide each with a short toolkit including key talking points, photos, and program materials. Feature them in the marketing campaign and use their voices to encourage peer participation.

Objective 1.3: Establish a comprehensive understanding of the local business ecosystem

a) Develop and maintain a business licensing registry

The Town should launch a business licensing registry that captures key details including name, type, size, and location, with annual updates required. Economic development staff can use this data for targeted outreach and to identify service gaps. To encourage participation, the Town can offer incentives such as business spotlights for those who keep their information current.

Objective 1.4: Pilot expanded business hours program for local businesses

a) Incentivize expanded hours pilot program

The Town should offer non-financial incentives for businesses joining the expanded hours pilot, including promotion on Town and BIA channels, priority access to marketing materials, and features at community events like “Late-Night Shopping”.

b) Promote expanded business hours

To promote expanded hours, a marketing campaign should be run across social media, local websites, print materials, and community boards. It should include business spotlights, event tie-ins like “Late-Night Shopping,” and earned media through local news or radio.



Pillar 2: Preserve Charm, Build Identity

Objective 2.1: Coordinate new murals or public art installations

a) Host an annual artists' competition

The Town should hold an annual artist competition to select local and regional talent for creating murals and public art that reflect Ingersoll's heritage and enliven downtown. Winners, chosen by a jury, will be commissioned to install artwork in high-visibility areas like Heritage Square. Partnerships and funding will be sought to support the competition and installations.

b) Create Artists' Alley

The Town should develop an Artists' Alley along Market Lane by using façade grants and mural programs to install new public art that enhances downtown's character. Public realm upgrades like lighting, landscaping, and seating will improve accessibility and appeal. Collaboration with the BIA, local businesses, and property owners will ensure a shared vision.



Objective 2.2: Support new and enhanced community events to activate downtown Ingersoll

a) Coordinate event planning with community stakeholders

The Town will plan two to three inclusive, community-focused events annually that reflect the downtown's identity. Local service clubs like Rotary, Kiwanis and the Lions Club could lead hosting and fundraising, supported by Town staff. This partnership fosters local ownership and sustainable event delivery.

b) Activate spaces: Heritage Square and beyond

Hosting at least one event yearly will anchor Heritage Square as a downtown hub, while additional events will activate underused spaces like laneways and riverfront areas. Events will be spaced throughout the year, including shoulder seasons, to boost foot traffic and showcase local vendors, artists, and performers.

c) Drive engagement with strategic marketing and volunteer recognition

Events will be promoted via multi-channel campaigns combining social media, newsletters, print ads, and local business cross-promotions. These efforts aim to increase attendance, community involvement, and support for the local economy.

d) Introduce seasonal outdoor movie and sports event nights

Pilot seasonal movie and sports nights using a rented inflatable screen to activate local parks and community gathering spaces. A \$3,000 budget with support from the BIA and partners will fund initial events. Volunteers and businesses can assist with setup and promotion. Successful events will boost foot traffic and create a sense of community and social cohesion in the downtown.

Objective 2.3: Complete street beautification initiatives

a) Install new bike rings along Thames Street

Install bike rings at high-traffic, cyclist-friendly spots to support active transportation and complement seasonal street decor. Procurement and maintenance will involve local suppliers and potential BIA or business support.

b) Coordinate lighting upgrades in strategic downtown locations

Lighting improvements will focus on areas like the municipal parking lot, Thames Street, and public art sites, with EARTH Corporation assessing needs and recommending LED upgrades for energy efficiency and safety. Consistent lighting design will enhance visibility and aesthetics.

Building a Better Thames Street

The transformation of downtown Ingersoll isn't just about infrastructure, it's about identity. Through a coordinated streetscape beautification initiative, Thames Street can be reshaped into a more welcoming, walkable, and vibrant space.

Streetscape Vision and Values



Beauty Through Function

Encouraging continued use of existing planters, benches, lighting, and additional trees helps maintain a welcoming streetscape, making the area attractive for people to linger rather than just pass through.



Support for Active Lifestyles

Bike rings and seating near transit promote walking and cycling as natural choices for getting around.



Partnership & Stewardship

Local sourcing, BIA support, and shared maintenance promote community pride and sustainability.



Cohesive Character

All elements follow the Central Area Design Guidelines for a consistent look and feel that reflects Ingersoll's small-town charm.



Objective 2.4: Activate the riverfront as a community space

a) Consider public use areas along the riverfront

Community groups may propose informal activities along the riverfront for special events and community gathering opportunities. This space may evolve over time through collaborative partnerships looking to activate the riverfront.

b) Promote a riverfront mural by local artists

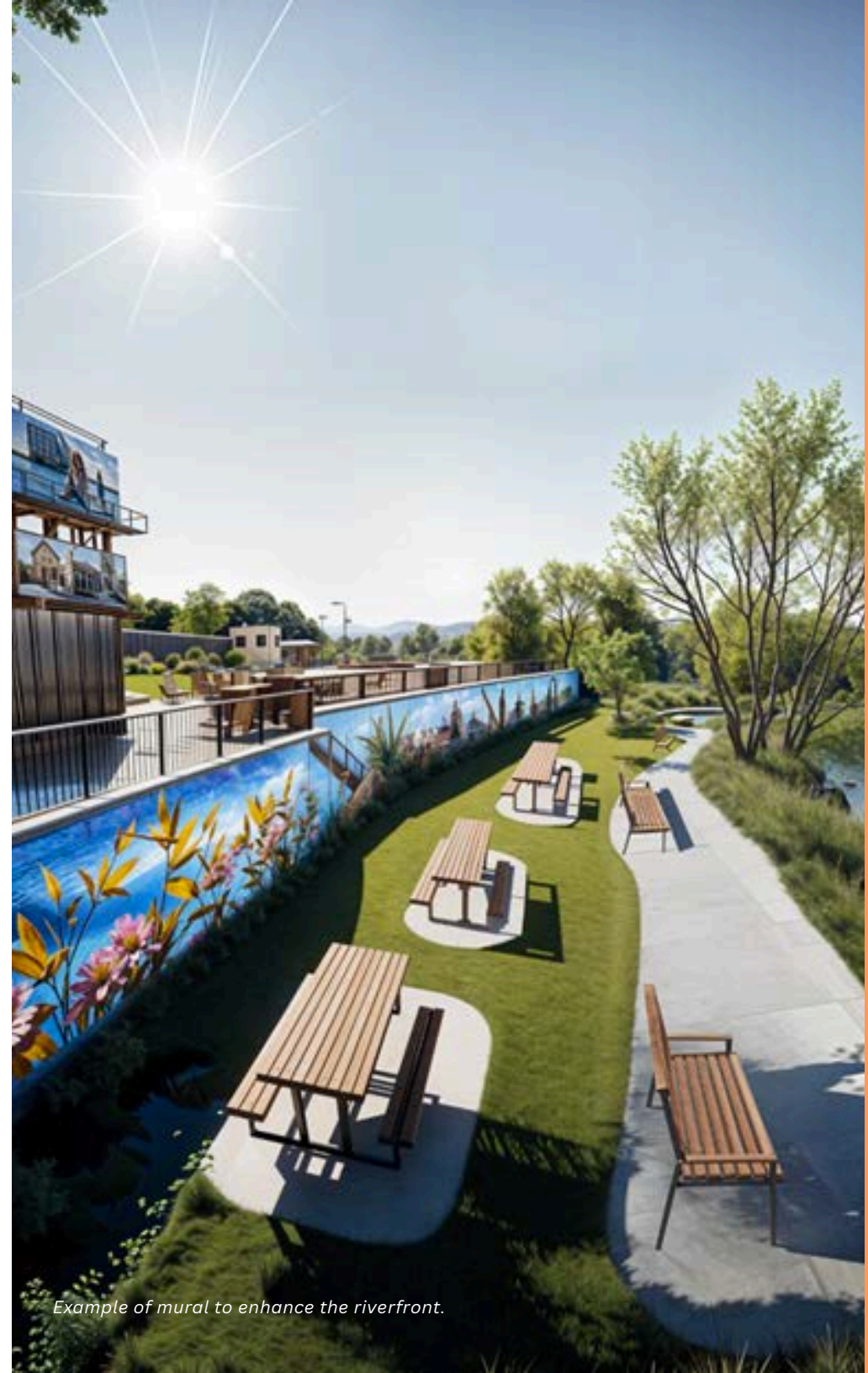
The Town should commission two murals reflecting local history, nature, and Indigenous heritage, placed in visible riverfront locations selected with local arts groups. Artists will be chosen via public call, with funding covering fees and materials, and a community unveiling event to celebrate the project.

c) Consider a community-led small-scale water access point

Recreation groups could propose a pilot for a seasonal kayak launch and fishing dock featuring removable ramps and floating pontoons, supplemented by signage and gear storage.

d) Implementation

The intent of this strategy is to promote community groups and organizations to activate the riverfront. All groups should seek the necessary permits and approvals for their proposed activities.



Example of mural to enhance the riverfront.

Objective 2.5: Celebrate and share Ingersoll's heritage through public programming and storytelling

a) Develop heritage wayfinding signage in partnership with the Heritage and Museum Advisory Committees

The Town should collaborate with Heritage and Museum Committees to create a Heritage Walking Tour featuring QR-coded plaques on historic buildings and custom wayfinding signage to guide visitors. This digital, self-guided experience will be enhanced by seasonal guided tours and partnerships with schools and cultural groups for educational programming.

b) Promote tours with coordinated marketing/advertising campaigns

The Town should support the Heritage Walking Tour through coordinated marketing including print materials, social media, and a dedicated webpage with interactive maps. Promotion will align with community events and involve local tourism, schools, and businesses to maximize reach and sustain interest via storytelling and user-generated content.



Pillar 3: Build Our Brand

Objective 3.1: Highlight the positive programs and initiatives taking place in downtown Ingersoll

a) Create an annual marketing and communications strategy

The Town and the BIA should collaborate on the development of an Annual Marketing and Communications Strategy to promote Downtown Ingersoll's businesses, events, and initiatives through a coordinated, year-round approach. This strategy will align messaging across partners, support local business promotion, and keep the community informed and engaged. Updated annually, it will outline key messages, target audiences, campaign timelines, and required tools and resources. The strategy can leverage the following format:

1. Purpose and Goals
2. Key Messages
3. Target Audiences
4. Key Channels and Tools
5. Campaigns and Initiatives
6. Partnerships
7. Timeline and Calendar
8. Resources and Budget (for ads, printing etc.)
9. Measurement and Evaluation.



b) Pilot marketing campaigns dedicated to showcasing downtown Ingersoll

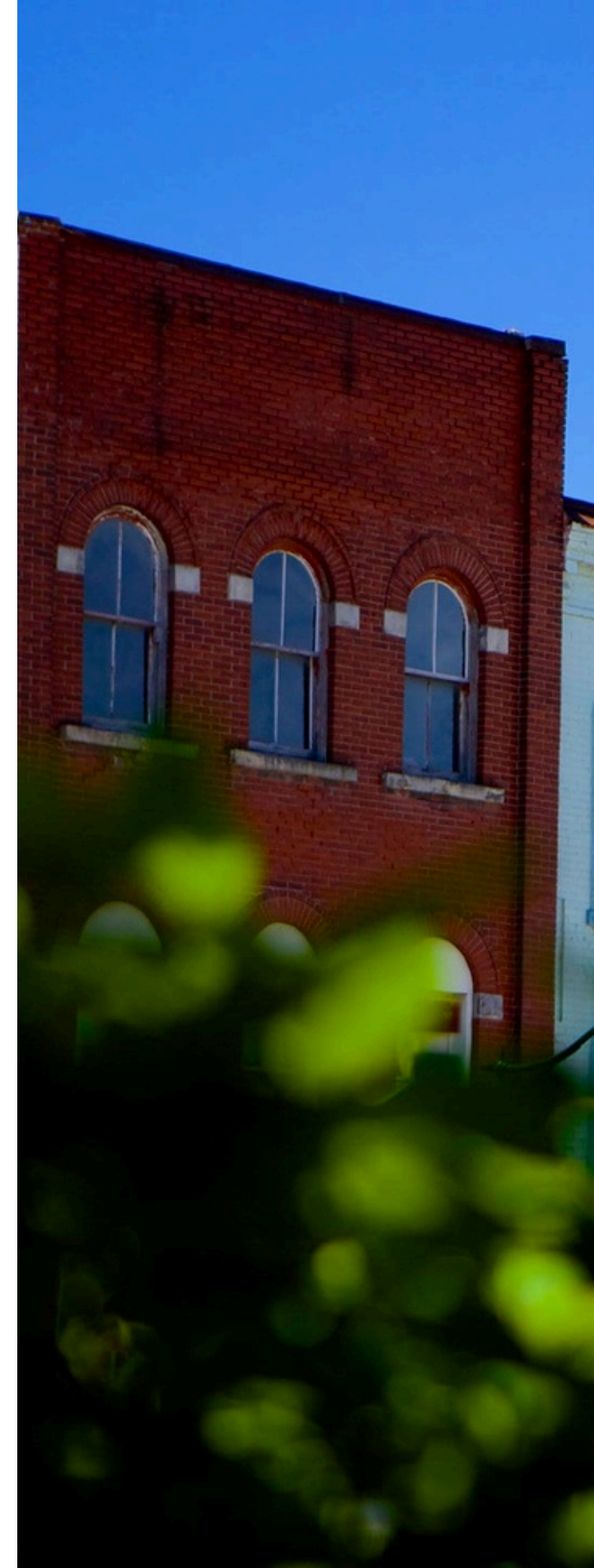
The Town and BIA should pilot targeted marketing campaigns to promote Downtown Ingersoll, test messaging, and build public engagement. Each campaign will focus on specific goals like showcasing businesses, celebrating heritage, or promoting events, with cross-platform promotion and collaboration with local partners. These pilots will inform a broader marketing strategy aligned with the DEP.

Sample Marketing Campaign Ideas:

- Pop-up and shop local: Promote extended hours, sidewalk pop-ups, and themed shopping days.
- Before and after: Use visuals to show downtown improvements like murals and storefront upgrades.
- Fresh faces downtown: Introduce new businesses and entrepreneurs through features and grand opening content.
- Downtown for all seasons: Run seasonal campaigns with events, contests, and promotions to drive year-round foot traffic.

c) Create welcome and relocation packages for new residents, developers, and visitors

The Town should develop tailored welcome packages for new residents, developers, and visitors featuring practical information and promotional materials about Downtown Ingersoll. Packages may include local contacts, maps, event listings, coupons, and investment details, available in both print and digital formats. Distribution can happen through real estate agents, Town Hall, tourism offices, and at community events.



Objective 3.2: Increase communications touchpoints with residents and visitors

a) Develop interactive map to highlight downtown activity

The Town should create an interactive map on its website to showcase real-time downtown activity, including business openings, events, promotions, public art, and infrastructure updates. Clickable icons can provide details like store hours, deals, and heritage sites, while map layers highlight beautification projects and amenities. The map should be updated regularly and promoted through QR codes and local business collaboration.

b) Pilot Town booth at community events

The Town should launch a branded booth at community events to share updates on downtown initiatives, local businesses, and incentive programs. Managed by the Economic Development team, the booth will feature promotional materials, QR codes, and interactive tools like dot-voting or surveys. High-quality displays and giveaways will attract engagement and help gather public feedback. This visible presence will help build awareness and reinforce the Town's commitment to the downtown.

c) Create a downtown e-newsletter

Launch an e-newsletter to share timely updates, promote local businesses, and highlight the ongoing enhancement of Downtown Ingersoll. Distribution would be digital, with sign-ups promoted through the Town's website, social media, local businesses, and community partners. The newsletter would serve as a key communication tool to keep residents, businesses, and visitors informed and engaged. It could also spotlight upcoming events, share success stories, and build momentum for downtown enhancement efforts.

Objective 3.3: Collaborate with media to feature stories about the downtown

a) Share timely news releases with local media

The Town should regularly issue news releases to local media with updates on downtown initiatives, business openings, events, and major Council decisions. Clear, concise releases will keep the community informed and support transparency, with links to the Town website or social channels for more details. This consistent outreach will help build public awareness and engagement.

b) Feature the Mayor in local media to amplify positive messaging about Downtown Ingersoll

It is recommended that the Town of Ingersoll position the Mayor as a regular voice on local stations and in community publications to help amplify key messages, build public trust, and personalize the Town's vision for downtown enhancement. Regular radio interviews and guest articles would allow the Mayor to share updates on major initiatives, highlight local successes, and speak directly to residents in a relatable, accessible format.

c) Propose feature stories to tier 1 outlets about Ingersoll's growth, identity, people, etc.

The Town should pitch people-focused feature stories to Tier 1 media outlets to boost Ingersoll's regional and provincial profile. Topics could highlight downtown milestones, placemaking projects, housing innovation, or local business success, supported by strong visuals and compelling narratives. Targeted to regional news, lifestyle, and industry outlets, these stories will position Ingersoll as a vibrant, forward-thinking community and support broader marketing goals.

Pillar 4: Placemaking with Purpose

Objective 4.1: Façade Improvement Program expansion and CIP review

a) Review and enhance the Community Improvement Plan (CIP) programs

Undertake a comprehensive review of the Town's existing CIP programs to ensure alignment with current downtown revitalization goals and to identify opportunities for improved accessibility, flexibility, and impact. As part of this review, incorporate awnings into the existing Façade Improvement Program to encourage cohesive and attractive storefront design across downtown properties.

b) Adjust grant structure within existing funding allocation

Increase the maximum Façade Improvement Grant from \$2,000 to \$4,000 per property, maintaining the current overall program budget. Grants will continue to be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis each year. This adjustment allows for higher-quality improvements within available funding, focusing on high-impact upgrades such as storefront restoration, cladding, masonry repair, door and window replacements, and new or replacement awnings that enhance the overall streetscape.

Objective 4.2: Consider green initiatives aligned with Ingersoll's core themes

a) Plant native or decorative plants in downtown planters and incorporate trees

Prioritize planting native species, such as Purple Coneflower, Black-eyed Susan, Wild Bergamot, and select street trees, in downtown planters and along sidewalks to enhance streetscapes, support pollinators, provide shade, and reduce maintenance. Sourcing can be done through local nurseries, with phased implementation starting at high-visibility locations. Alternatively, continue with the existing perennial planting program.



Objective 4.3: Tax Incremental Equivalent Grant (TIG) program

a) Identify underutilized or vacant buildings

Identify underutilized and/or vacant buildings including brownfield sites and Town-owned properties. Look for and encourage opportunities for redevelopment, working with property owners and developers. Engage with Upper Thames Conservation Authority, Town and County departments to support planning applications and determine feasibility.

b) Encourage mixed-use developments

Once identified, look for opportunities for residential and commercial developments on underutilized, vacant and brownfield sites. Educate property owners and developers on the CIP and relevant programs including the Tax Incremental Grant (TIG) program. The Town can support redevelopment and intensification through these initiatives.

c) Host roundtable with local developers to get support for redevelopment

The Town should establish a Developer Roundtable of local developers, property owners, and real estate professionals to foster collaboration and align private investment with Downtown Ingersoll's goals. This group will identify barriers, share opportunities, and provide feedback on planning and policies. Their insights will inform zoning updates and incentive programs, with ongoing meetings to track progress and maintain engagement.

d) Promote grants and incentives for redevelopment.

The Town should actively promote its CIP and TIG Program, in partnership with Oxford County, to support redevelopment of underutilized and contaminated downtown sites. The TIG program reimburses developers for eligible remediation costs through increased property tax revenues after redevelopment, ensuring efficient use of public funds. By encouraging brownfield redevelopment, the program aims to attract investment, support mixed-use growth, and revitalize the downtown core.



55 Thames Street South in its current form



Adaptive reuse at 55 Thames Street South

Objective 4.4: Install gateway signage to enhance downtown identity and wayfinding

a) Design and install primary gateway feature

Plan, design, and install a distinctive public art gateway feature at both ends of the bridge crossing to signal arrival into the downtown. The installation should serve as a prominent visual landmark that reflects Ingersoll's identity and creates a welcoming experience for both pedestrians and drivers.

b) Identify and implement secondary signage at key entrances

Identify other strategic entry points into the downtown, such as near the Carnegie building on Charles Street and along Bell Street at Thames, for the placement of smaller-scale gateway signs. Ensure all signage contributes to a cohesive aesthetic and enhances the overall wayfinding and placemaking strategy.

Objective 4.5: Develop and activate a new pocket park to enhance public green space

a) Identify strategic locations

Assess underused or vacant downtown lots with strong pedestrian visibility and access. Prioritize sites that can link to existing public spaces or commercial areas to create a connected, walkable environment.

b) Engage the community in design and development

Host a public consultation to gather input on desired features and uses. Collaborate with local artists, businesses and service clubs to shape a park that reflects Ingersoll's identity and community spirit.

c) Fund, activate and sustain the space

Explore opportunities to secure funding through grants, sponsorships and other public-private partnerships. Ensure the park is activated with low cost, high-impact activities that draw people downtown and create a sense of community. Establish a maintenance and stewardship program to safeguard the park's long-term vitality.

Objective 4.6: Enhance Heritage Square with lighting, sound, and landscaping improvements

a) Site analysis and enhancement priorities

Heritage Square is a central downtown gathering space with high visibility and proximity to key businesses and pedestrian routes. While already supporting small events, modest improvements can enhance comfort, usability, and atmosphere. Planned upgrades include lighting to highlight the gazebo and improve evening safety, outdoor speakers and power connections for events, refreshed low-maintenance landscaping and seasonal planters, and repair or repainting of the gazebo, benches, and surrounding hardscape.

b) Secure funding and partnerships

Funding and support for the proposed enhancements will be coordinated through the Town's capital planning process, with potential opportunities to leverage external grants and partnerships. Collaboration with the BIA, arts and culture groups, and local service organizations will be explored to support beautification and small-scale activation projects that strengthen community engagement with Heritage Square.

c) Kickstart activation with short-term projects to build momentum

Short-term activation projects will help build momentum and encourage use of Heritage Square as a vibrant downtown hub. Initial efforts could include using new lighting and sound infrastructure to host small performances, seasonal décor, pop-up markets, or community art showcases. These initiatives will allow the community to experience the benefits of improvements firsthand while demonstrating the potential for continued programming and activation.

d) Full buildout and ongoing activation

Enhancements will be implemented in phases, beginning with lighting, sound, and landscaping upgrades around the gazebo and expanding to additional seating or event-support features as opportunities arise. Programming will continue to be coordinated with the BIA and community groups to ensure Heritage Square remains active and inviting throughout the year, connecting with broader downtown wayfinding and public realm improvements where feasible.

e) Stewardship, maintenance and evaluation

Maintenance responsibilities will be shared between the Town's Community Services department and the BIA. Durable, energy-efficient materials will be prioritized to reduce upkeep, and seasonal elements will be maintained collaboratively. Evaluation will track the frequency and diversity of events, public satisfaction, and the condition of infrastructure, providing guidance for any future enhancements or adjustments.

Heritage Square Transformation



Note: Concept rendering showcasing proposed streetscape improvements; design details are illustrative and subject to change.

Pillar 5: Support Residential Intensification

Objective 5.1: Create new residential units

a) Facilitate intensification and mixed-use development in the downtown

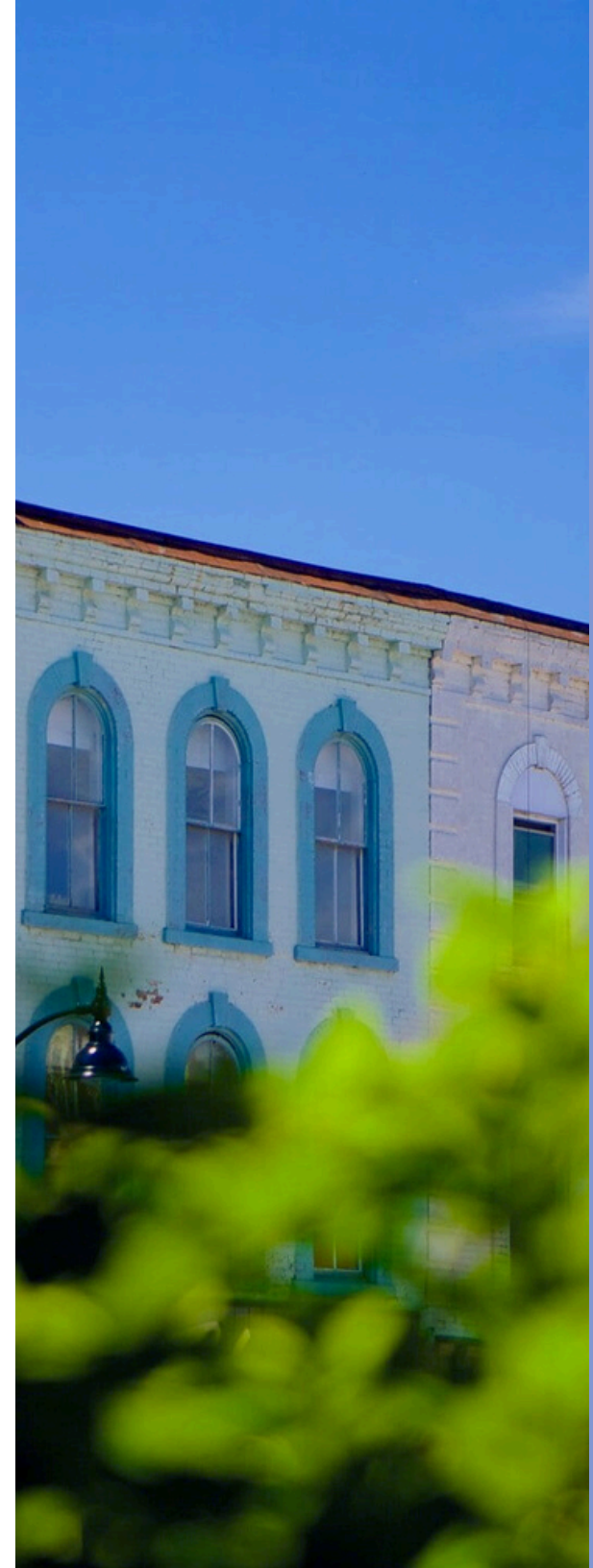
The Town should consider residential intensification in the Central Commercial (CC) and Entrepreneurial (EC) Zones by allowing increased heights, densities, and flexible zoning, including upper-storey conversions. Targets may include 50–60 units from mixed-use developments, 10–20 units from conversions, and 30–40 units in nearby residential areas like townhouses and triplexes. All projects should follow updated urban design guidelines and include consultation with the Town of Ingersoll and Oxford County. This approach aligns well with Official Plan policies and aims to support compatible infill that enhances downtown character.

b) Leverage existing CIP to target upper-storey spaces into residential units

The Town should consider upper-storey conversions to transform vacant or underused upper floors in the Central Commercial (CC) and Entrepreneurial (EC) Zones into residential units. Promotion should include clear guidelines, technical support, and outreach to property owners. This initiative advances housing growth, downtown enhancement, and preservation of Ingersoll's historic character.

c) Pursue infill housing strategy for smaller-scale projects

The Town should promote laneway housing, accessory residential units (ARUs), and low-rise townhomes within 200 metres of the Central Commercial (CC) and Entrepreneurial (EC) Zones, focusing on R2 properties. Upzoning in the downtown core should also support higher-density apartments and mixed-use buildings.



Objective 5.2: Identify and engage with private developers on feasibility of mid-rise redevelopment opportunities in the downtown area

a) Developer outreach and engagement

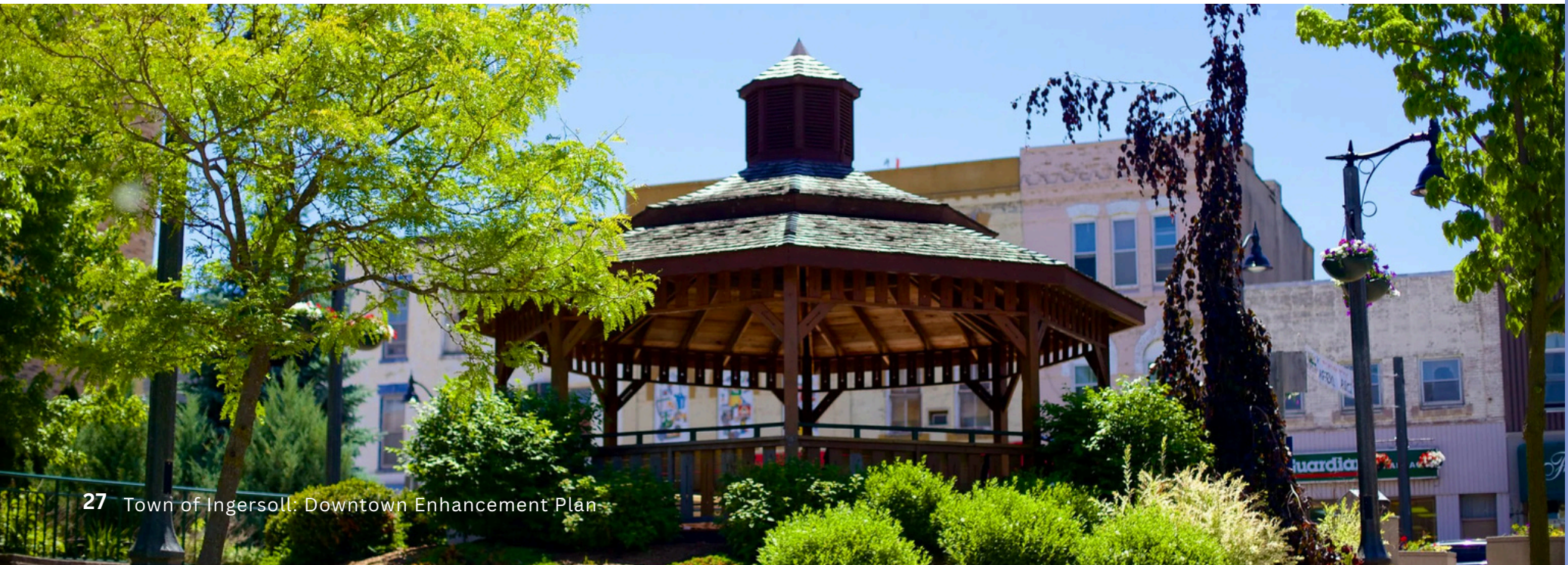
The Town should proactively contact developers experienced in mid-rise or mixed-use projects in similar communities. Outreach will include personalized emails and calls to introduce downtown redevelopment opportunities and the Town's vision.

b) Host developer information session

An information session will be held to present redevelopment benefits, zoning details, and available CIP funding. Planners and economic development staff will be available to answer questions and gather developer feedback.

c) Feasibility evaluation and partnership formation

The Town will provide feasibility reports on land, zoning, infrastructure, and economic benefits for mid-rise projects. Interested developers will assess viability, and formal partnerships will be established through agreements like a memorandum of understanding to coordinate project timelines and funding.



Pillar 6: Align and Activate Existing Resources

Objective 6.1: Complete a review of the BIA governance and levy structure

a) Assess current governance and operations

Begin by thoroughly evaluating the BIA's current governance structure, including its board composition, roles and responsibilities, by-laws, meeting cadence, and financial oversight practices. Review how decisions are made and whether current processes align with best practices for transparency and accountability. This assessment should also look at how the BIA's governance interacts with Town processes, and whether any inefficiencies, duplication, or gaps in accountability exist. The goal is to build a clear picture of how the BIA functions today, what is working well, and where change may be needed to improve performance and ensure alignment with municipal priorities.

b) Engage stakeholders and gather input

Engage BIA members and board members, Town staff, Council, and downtown partners using surveys, interviews, and working groups. Ensure representation from diverse business sizes and sectors to gather comprehensive input on governance effectiveness and needed changes.

c) Develop recommendations and implementation plan

Based on the review and stakeholder input, develop specific recommendations such as updated board structures, revised by-laws, clearer Town-BIA roles, and enhanced reporting. Prepare a phased implementation plan detailing responsibilities, timelines, approvals, and a communications strategy to maintain transparency and support throughout the transition.



Objective 6.2: Implement a Shared Services Agreement (SSA) with the BIA

a) Plan and align on SSA details

Identify the specific services to be shared and set clear objectives such as cost reduction and improved efficiency. Engage departmental leads, partner organizations, finance, and legal teams early to build consensus. Develop a high-level framework covering governance, cost-sharing, and performance metrics to guide the full agreement.

b) SSA development and approval

Draft detailed terms outlining responsibilities, service standards, cost allocations, and governance. Use the City of Woodstock's SSA as a reference point, and review to identify structures and practices worth adopting. Conduct legal review and risk assessment, then obtain internal approvals from all participating organizations.

c) SSA implementation and rollout

Execute a coordinated rollout with defined timelines, roles, and resources across all partners. Provide staff training for consistent service delivery and launch communication plans for stakeholders. Embed performance monitoring and reporting to ensure accountability and continuous improvement.



Objective 6.3: Increase participation of downtown businesses in local events

a) Enhance and promote the existing community calendar to boost business participation and public awareness

Improve and actively promote the centralized event calendar via the Town's website, social media, business networks, and emails. Include clear business participation options like sponsorships, hosting, or in-kind contributions. Provide a seasonal guide to help businesses plan and maximize their involvement.

b) Promote local businesses through pop-up programming

Launch pop-up events aligned with festivals or seasonal activities, offering storefront and non-storefront businesses a chance to showcase products. Use a simple application process and provide promotional support. Potential locations include vacant storefronts, sidewalks, or public spaces, with ongoing feedback to improve the model.

c) Assess popularity of “pop-up” events and consider shutting down portion of Thames Street for future events

Collect feedback and analyze metrics like foot traffic and business revenue from initial pop-ups to gauge success. If positive, consider piloting partial closures of Thames Street during events to create pedestrian zones, assessing traffic, safety, and community support before expanding.

d) Create comprehensive stakeholder support packages for signature events

Develop branded toolkits with posters, social media templates, signage, and guides tailored to sponsors, vendors, and hosts. Distribute these packages well before events and make them available online in editable formats. Clear resources will help businesses confidently participate and enhance event success.



IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Implementation Plan offers a practical roadmap for the enhancement of Downtown Ingersoll, ensuring that the Town is well-positioned to foster a downtown that is vibrant, inclusive, and resilient.

At the heart of the plan is a commitment to long-term transformation through a series of coordinated, high-impact actions. These actions are organized by the six strategic pillars that guide the DEP.

Each initiative outlined in the Implementation Plan is directly aligned with one or more of the strategic pillars. The approach ensures that all tactics contribute to a cohesive vision for Ingersoll's downtown—one that honours the Town's identity while creating opportunities for new growth and energy.

The Implementation Plan is delivered through a phased approach that reflects both current capacity and future ambition:

- **Phase 1 (0–3 Years):** Foundational actions that deliver early wins, generate momentum, and address immediate needs such as updating incentive programs, launching new events, and improving wayfinding and public spaces.
- **Phase 2 (3–5 Years):** Medium-term investments that build on early progress, such as public realm redevelopment, smart infrastructure planning, and strategic residential growth.
- **Phase 3 (5+ Years):** Long-range, transformational projects such as large-scale mixed-use developments, major streetscape reconstruction, and destination-focused branding and tourism initiatives.

This phased framework ensures that implementation remains manageable, coordinated, and aligned with available resources. Each phase is accompanied by clear milestones, responsibilities, and outcomes that allow for accountability and progress tracking over time.

The plan also considers the financial and operational realities of implementation. Where possible, tactics leverage existing programs, partnerships, and grant opportunities. Budget considerations, staffing requirements, and key performance indicators (KPIs) will support regular monitoring and adjustment as needed.

Ultimately, the DEP's Implementation Plan is designed to create lasting change by focusing on what matters most: supporting small business growth, enhancing quality of place, welcoming more residents and visitors, celebrating community identity, and strengthening local partnerships.

PHASED APPROACH FRAMEWORK

Objective	Priority Actions	Estimated Cost	Funding Source(s)	Responsibility	Implementation Phase
Pillar One: Champion Small Business Growth					
1.1 Attract new businesses to Downtown Ingersoll over the next 5 years	a) Pilot a “pop-up” shared business space in a vacant storefront	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private flex lease cost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private business cost sharing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic Development & Tourism dept. Ingersoll BIA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 1
	b) Support a more “business-friendly” environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approved incentives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CIP Reserve BIA Reserve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ingersoll BIA Economic Development & Tourism dept. Finance dept. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 2
	c) Establish networking events that support ongoing mentorship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BIA Reserve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ingersoll BIA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 1
	d) Create a Pitch-to-Win Downtown Startup Challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$18,000 (~4–5 months’ rent) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BIA Reserve Grants Community Futures Oxford 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ingersoll BIA Economic Development & Tourism dept. The Small Business Centre Community Futures Oxford 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 1



Objective	Priority Actions	Estimated Cost	Funding Source(s)	Responsibility	Implementation Phase
Pillar One: Champion Small Business Growth					
1.2 Expand CIP reach to encourage broader uptake and enhancement efforts across the downtown	a) Create a CIP resource toolkit to support local business	• Staff time	• Operating budget	• Economic Development & Tourism dept.	• Phase 1
	b) Create a CIP awareness campaign using marketing and communications tactics	• Staff time	• Operating budget	• Economic Development & Tourism dept.	• Phase 1
	c) Leverage CIP ambassadors to inspire program uptake	• Staff time	• Operating budget	• Economic Development & Tourism dept.	• Phase 1
1.3 Establish a comprehensive understanding of the local business ecosystem	a) Develop and maintain a business licensing registry	• Staff time	• Operating budget	• Economic Development & Tourism dept. • Ingersoll BIA	• Phase 1
1.4 Pilot expanded business hours program for local businesses	a) Incentivize expanded hours pilot program	• Staff time	• Operating budget (SSA)	• Economic Development & Tourism dept. • Ingersoll BIA	• Phase 1
	b) Promote expanded business hours	• Staff time	• Operating budget (SSA)	• Economic Development & Tourism dept. • Ingersoll BIA	• Phase 1

Objective	Priority Actions	Estimated Cost	Funding Source(s)	Responsibility	Implementation Phase
Pillar Two: Preserve Charm, Build Identity					
2.1 Coordinate three new murals or public art installations	a) Host annual artists' competition	• \$22,600	• BIA Reserve	• Economic Development & Tourism dept. • Ingersoll BIA	• Phase 1
	b) Create Artists' Alley	• \$27,400	• Mural budget	• Economic Development & Tourism dept. • Ingersoll BIA	• Phase 2
2.2 Support new and enhanced community events to activate Downtown Ingersoll	a) Coordinate event planning with community stakeholders	• Staff time	• Operating budget	• Economic Development & Tourism dept. • Ingersoll BIA	• Phase 1
	b) Activate spaces: Heritage Square and beyond	• Staff time	• Operating budget • BIA reserve	• Economic Development & Tourism dept. • Ingersoll BIA	• Phase 1
	c) Drive engagement with strategic marketing and volunteer recognition	• Staff time	• Operating budget	• Economic Development & Tourism dept.	• Phase 1
	d) Introduce seasonal outdoor movie and sports event nights	• \$3,000	• Operating budget • BIA Reserve	• Economic Development & Tourism dept. • Ingersoll BIA	• Phase 1
2.3 Complete street beautification initiatives	a) Install new bike rings along Thames Street	• \$5,000 (\$500 x 10)	• BIA Reserve	• Public Works • Ingersoll BIA	• Phase 1

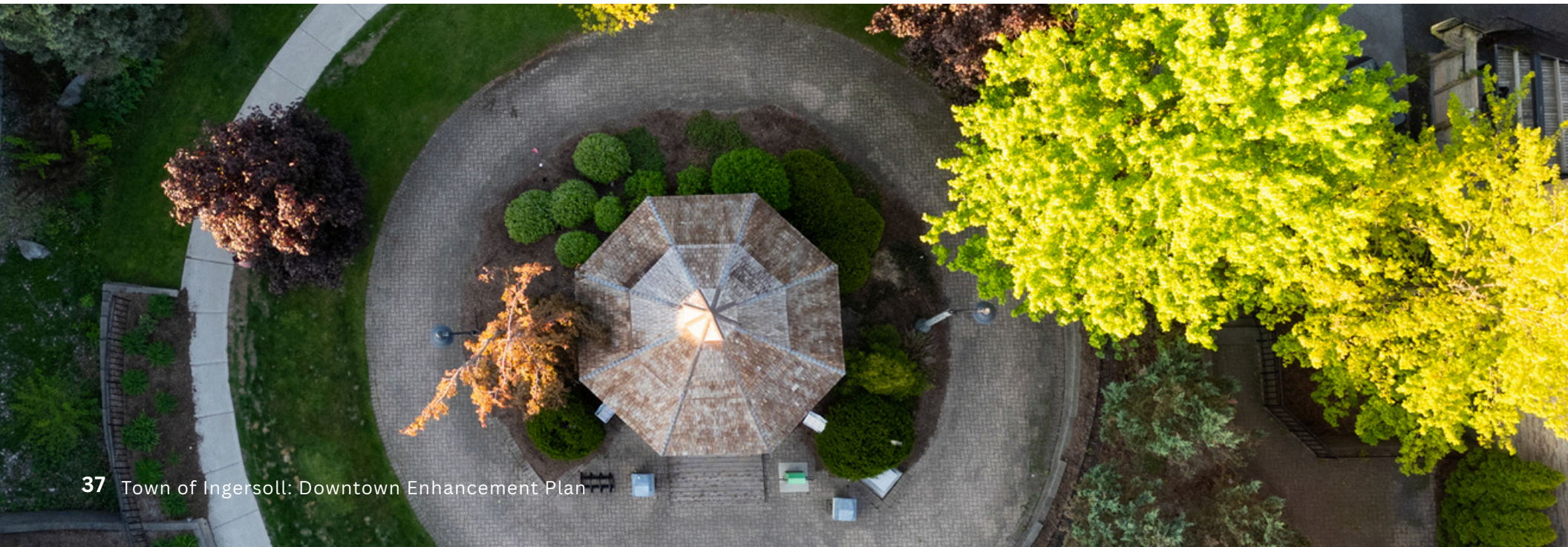
Objective	Priority Actions	Estimated Cost	Funding Source(s)	Responsibility	Implementation Phase
Pillar Two: Preserve Charm, Build Identity					
2.3 Complete street beautification initiatives	b) Coordinate lighting upgrades in strategic downtown locations	• TBD	• BIA Reserve	• Engineering dept. • Ingersoll BIA	• Phase 1
2.4 Activate the riverfront as a community space	a) Consider public use areas along the riverfront	• Community-driven	• TBD	• Community Services dept.	• Phase 2
	b) Promote a riverfront mural by local artists	• \$27,400	• Mural Budget	• Economic Development & Tourism dept.	• Phase 2
	c) Consider a community-led small-scale water access point	• \$1,500	• TBD	• TBD	• Phase 2
	d) Implementation	• Community-driven	• TBD	• TBD	• Phase 2
2.5 Celebrate and share Ingersoll's heritage through public programming and storytelling	a) Develop heritage wayfinding signage in partnership with the Heritage and Museum Advisory Committees	• \$20,000 (\$250-\$2000 per sign)	• Community Services Budget	• Economic Development & Tourism dept. • Community Services dept.	• Phase 1
	b) Promote tours with coordinated marketing/advertising campaigns	• Staff Time	• Operating budget	• Economic Development & Tourism dept.	• Phase 2



Objective	Priority Actions	Estimated Cost	Funding Source(s)	Responsibility	Implementation Phase
Pillar Three: Build Our Brand					
3.1 Highlight the positive programs and initiatives taking place in Downtown Ingersoll	a) Create an annual marketing and communications strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operating budget (SSA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic Development & Tourism dept. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 1
	b) Pilot three to six marketing campaigns dedicated to showcasing Downtown Ingersoll	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$10,000 - \$15,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operating budget (SSA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic Development & Tourism dept. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 1
	c) Create welcome and relocation packages for new residents, developers and visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operating budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic Development & Tourism dept. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 1
3.2 Increase communications touchpoints with residents and visitors	a) Develop interactive map to highlight downtown activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operating budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic Development & Tourism dept. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 1
	b) Pilot Town booth at community events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$5,500 for 10x10 frame & signage (\$3,999 + \$848 + HST) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operating budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic Development & Tourism dept. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 1
	c) Create a downtown e-newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operating budget (SSA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic Development & Tourism dept. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 1



Objective	Priority Actions	Estimated Cost	Funding Source(s)	Responsibility	Implementation Phase
Pillar Three: Build Our Brand					
3.3 Collaborate with media to regularly feature positive stories about the Downtown	a) Share timely news releases with local media	• Staff Time	• Operating budget (SSA)	• Economic Development & Tourism dept.	• Phase 1
	b) Feature the Mayor in local media to amplify positive messaging about Downtown Ingersoll	• Staff Time	• Operating budget (SSA)	• Economic Development & Tourism dept.	• Phase 1
	c) Propose feature stories to tier 1 outlets about Ingersoll's growth, identity and its people	• Staff Time	• Operating budget (SSA)	• Economic Development & Tourism dept.	• Phase 1



Objective	Priority Actions	Estimated Cost	Funding Source(s)	Responsibility	Implementation Phase
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Pillar Four: Placemaking with Purpose

4.1 Façade Improvement Program Expansion and CIP Review	a) Review and enhance the CIP programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIP Budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council • Economic Development & Tourism dept. • Finance dept. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1
	b) Adjust grant structure within existing funding allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$4,000 per property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development & Tourism dept. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1
4.2 Consider green initiatives aligned with Ingersoll's core themes	a) Plant native or decorative plants in downtown planters and incorporate trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time • TBD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating budget • BIA Reserve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Services dept. • Ingersoll BIA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1
4.3 Tax Increment Equivalent Grant (TIG) program	a) Identify underutilized or vacant buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development & Tourism dept. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1
	b) Encourage mixed-use developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development & Tourism dept. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1



Objective	Priority Actions	Estimated Cost	Funding Source(s)	Responsibility	Implementation Phase
Pillar Four: Placemaking with Purpose					
4.3 Tax Incremental Grant (TIG) program	c) Host roundtable with local developers to get support for redevelopment	• Staff time	• Operating budget	• Economic Development & Tourism dept.	• Phase 1
	d) Promote grants and incentives for redevelopment	• Staff time, foregone tax revenues	• Operating budget • BIA Reserve	• Economic Development & Tourism dept.	• Phase 2
4.4 Install gateway signage to enhance downtown identity and wayfinding	a) Design and install primary gateway feature	• \$100,000 (TBD)	• External funding • Public fundraising campaign	• Economic Development & Tourism dept. • Ingersoll BIA	• Phase 2
	b) Identify and implement secondary signage at key entrances	• TBD	• Public fundraising campaign	• Economic Development & Tourism dept. • Ingersoll BIA	• Phase 2
4.5 Develop and activate a new pocket park to enhance public green space	a) Identify strategic locations	• Staff time	• Operating budget	• Community Services dept.	• Phase 2



Objective	Priority Actions	Estimated Cost	Funding Source(s)	Responsibility	Implementation Phase
Pillar Four: Placemaking with Purpose					
4.5 Develop and activate a new pocket park to enhance public green space	b) Engage the community in design and development	• Staff time	• Operating budget	• Community Services dept.	• Phase 2
	c) Fund, activate and sustain the space	• Staff time	• Operating budget	• Community Services dept.	• Phase 2
4.6 Enhance Heritage Square with lighting, sound, and landscaping improvements	a) Site analysis and enhancement priorities	• Staff time	• Operating budget	• Engineering, Infrastructure & Development, and Public Works dept. • Economic Development & Tourism dept.	• Phase 3
	b) Secure funding and partnerships	• Staff time	• Operating budget • External funding sources	• Community Services dept. • Economic Development & Tourism dept.	• Phase 3
	c) Kickstart activation with short-term projects to build momentum	• Staff Time	• Operating budget	• Community Services dept. • Economic Development & Tourism dept.	• Phase 3
	d) Full buildout and ongoing activation	• Staff Time	• Operating budget	• Community Services dept. • Economic Development & Tourism dept.	• Phase 3
	e) Stewardship, maintenance and evaluation	• Staff Time	• Operating budget	• Community Services dept. • Economic Development & Tourism dept.	• Phase 3

Objective	Priority Actions	Estimated Cost	Funding Source(s)	Responsibility	Implementation Phase
Pillar Five: Support Residential Intensification					
5.1 Create new residential units	a) Facilitate intensification and mixed-use development in the downtown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development & Tourism dept. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1
	b) Leverage existing CIP to target upper-storey spaces into residential units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$2,000 per property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIP Reserve (Increase) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council • Finance dept. • Economic Development & Tourism dept. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1
	c) Pursue infill housing strategy for smaller-scale projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development & Tourism dept. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1
5.2 Identify and engage with at least three private developers on the feasibility of mid-rise redevelopment opportunities in the downtown area	a) Developer outreach and engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development & Tourism dept. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1
	b) Host developer information session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development & Tourism dept. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1
	c) Feasibility evaluation and partnership formation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development & Tourism dept. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1



Objective	Priority Actions	Estimated Cost	Funding Source(s)	Responsibility	Implementation Phase
Pillar Six: Align and Activate Existing Resources					
6.1 Complete a review of the BIA governance and levy structure	a) Assess current governance and operations	• Staff time	• Operating budget	• Council • Economic Development & Tourism dept. • Ingersoll BIA	• Phase 1
	b) Engage stakeholders and gather input	• Staff time	• Operating budget	• Economic Development & Tourism dept. • Ingersoll BIA	• Phase 1
	c) Develop recommendations and implementation plan	• Staff time	• Operating budget	• Economic Development & Tourism dept. • Ingersoll BIA	• Phase 1
6.2 Implement a Shared Service Agreement with the BIA	a) Plan and align on SSA details	• Staff time	• Operating budget	• Economic Development & Tourism dept. • Ingersoll BIA	• Phase 1
	b) SSA development and approval	• Staff time	• Operating budget	• Economic Development & Tourism dept. • Ingersoll BIA	• Phase 1
	c) SSA implementation and rollout	• Staff time	• Operating budget	• Economic Development & Tourism dept. • Ingersoll BIA	• Phase 1

Objective	Priority Actions	Estimated Cost	Funding Source(s)	Responsibility	Implementation Phase
Pillar Six: Align and Activate Existing Resources					
6.3 Increase participation of downtown businesses in local events	a) Enhance and promote the existing community calendar to boost business participation and public awareness	• Staff time	• Operating budget	• Economic Development & Tourism dept.	• Phase 1
	b) Promote local businesses through pop-up programming	• Staff time	• Operating budget	• Economic Development & Tourism dept.	• Phase 1
	c) Assess popularity of “pop-up” events and consider shutting down portion of Thames Street for future events	• Staff time	• Operating budget	• Economic Development & Tourism dept.	• Phase 1
	d) Create comprehensive stakeholder support packages for signature events	• Staff time	• Operating budget	• Economic Development & Tourism dept.	• Phase 1



RESPONSIBILITIES

Successful implementation of the DEP depends on collaboration among municipal departments, the Ingersoll BIA, community organizations, volunteers, private stakeholders, and residents, each contributing unique strengths.

The Town of Ingersoll, with support of Oxford County, will lead cross-departmental coordination, engaging Community Services, Planning, Engineering, Economic Development and Tourism, Finance, to provide administrative, technical, policy, and capital planning support.

Economic Development and Tourism staff will manage timelines, incentive programs (CIP), redevelopment inquiries, consultant oversight, funding applications, and promotional campaigns like the Downtown Spotlight Series. It is encouraged that a wayfinding and signage plan, evaluated through a Council report, is adopted.

The Downtown BIA will align business priorities with enhancement through events, CIP promotion, beautification projects, and business engagement. BIA part-time staff will develop work plans reported regularly to the Board and coordinate closely with Town staff.

Community service groups (Kiwanis, Rotary, Lions, Legion, churches, youth organizations) and residents will support activations, art projects, and events, fostering outreach and community pride.

Community Futures Oxford and The Small Business Centre will support initiatives such as the “Win This Space” program and pop-up events, providing guidance, resources, and promotion to encourage business activation and growth in the downtown area.



MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK

The Measurement Framework is designed to track progress, inform decision-making, and support accountability over time. At its core, each recommendation within the Plan serves as a measurable Key Performance Indicator (KPI); providing a tangible action that can be monitored and reported annually. By tracking the total number of actions implemented each year, the Town can create a clear picture of momentum and progress across short, medium, and long-term goals.

Beyond counting completed actions, the framework includes a broader set of KPIs (Appendix 1) linked to key outcomes such as business attraction, event participation, CIP program uptake, vacancy reduction, and increased residential density. Together, they offer a flexible but structured system for evaluating the impact of enhancement efforts. This measurement framework will also support the preparation of an Annual Downtown Progress Report, allowing Council, staff, the BIA, and the community to review achievements, identify gaps, and recalibrate priorities as needed, ensuring that the Plan remains responsive, results-oriented, and aligned with the Town's long-term vision for a vibrant and resilient downtown.



FUNDING SOURCES AND CONSIDERATIONS

Implementing the Downtown Ingersoll Enhancement Plan will require a strategic, coordinated funding approach—blending municipal resources with external opportunities—to support a phased mix of initiatives aligned with the Town’s financial planning, from public realm upgrades to events, infrastructure, and incentives.

1. Internal Municipal Funding Sources

The Town should draw on internal funding streams to support operating and capital recommendations outlined in the Plan:

- **BIA Reserve Fund:** The Downtown BIA plays a key financial and leadership role in early-stage implementation. BIA reserves can be leveraged for marketing, beautification (e.g., planters, banners), and activation projects such as events, murals, or small-scale infrastructure (e.g., benches, bike racks). These funds can support quick wins and help build early momentum.
 - BIA Reserve Fund Total (as of April 2025): +/- \$235,000
- **CIP Reserve and Grant Allocations:** The Town’s CIP incentives will require sustained funding. Council should consider increasing the CIP reserve to match the enhanced scope of incentives and projected demand, potentially using multi-year budgeting to support expanded grant categories, including the proposed Brownfield TIG program.
- **Town of Ingersoll Parkland Reserve Fund:** The Town’s Parkland Reserve Fund, collected through cash-in-lieu contributions from development projects, can be used to enhance existing park infrastructure within the downtown—such as playground facilities, green space upgrades, or the introduction of public amenities in Dewan Park or Heritage Square—provided the improvements are aligned with the *Planning Act*’s parkland provisions.
 - Town of Ingersoll Parkland Reserve Fund Total (as of April 2025) : +/- \$345,000
- **Departmental Operating Budgets:** Several departments—particularly Community Services, Public Works, Economic Development and Tourism,—will need to allocate operating funds to maintain new streetscape amenities such as planters, waste bins, seating, lighting, and public art installations. Community Services, for instance, may take on ongoing maintenance of seasonal planters and decorative elements in coordination with the BIA.

- Capital Budget Line Items: New or enhanced capital projects will also be required to deliver transformative change. For example, the proposed reconstruction of Thames Street, including enhanced sidewalks, street trees, lighting, and traffic-calming features, will require a dedicated Engineering-led capital budget. Similarly, future phases of Dewan Park improvements and upgrades to Heritage Square should be included in the Town's multi-year capital forecast.

(all proposals are subject to funding)

2. External Funding Opportunities

To expand the Town's financial capacity and maximize implementation success, the Plan recommends aggressive pursuit of external funding from provincial, federal, and private sources. These include:

- Rural Ontario Development (ROD) Program: A leading source of matching funds for downtown revitalization projects, wayfinding systems, marketing campaigns, and economic development programming.
- Trillium Foundation – Capital Stream: Ideal for funding public realm enhancements such as park upgrades, play equipment, and community art projects with demonstrated community benefit.
- FedDev Ontario: Potential source for large-scale infrastructure and innovation-related investments in placemaking, tourism, and main street redevelopment.
- Canada Community Revitalization Fund (CCRF) and Canada Cultural Spaces Fund: These federal programs can support arts-related infrastructure, event infrastructure, and public realm improvements, particularly when combined with local cultural initiatives.
- Private Sector Partnerships and Sponsorships: Opportunities exist to involve local developers, utility companies, and service organizations (e.g., Kiwanis, Rotary) in co-sponsoring features such as seating areas, playgrounds, bike stations, or murals through naming rights or legacy donations.

3. Staff Capacity and Readiness to Respond

To effectively secure and deploy these funds, Town staff must be prepared with project-ready designs, cost estimates, and staff capacity to submit competitive applications and manage reporting requirements. Economic Development and Tourism staff will be tasked with identifying funding calls, coordinating grant submissions, liaising with funders, and aligning project scopes with available financing. Additionally, Council support for early design work (e.g., for Dewan Park, Artist Alley, or wayfinding) can ensure shovel-ready projects are in place when grant windows open.

CONCLUSION

The Downtown Enhancement Plan is a clear, community-driven roadmap to make Ingersoll's downtown stronger, more vibrant, and more welcoming. It's built around six key priorities—supporting small businesses, celebrating Ingersoll's local identity, improving public spaces, attracting more residents, building a strong brand, and working better together as a community.

To bring this plan to life, Ingersoll will need steady leadership and smart financial planning. That means using a phased approach, working the plan into the Town's annual budget and long-term capital planning, and actively going after external funding. By combining Town resources with grants and partnerships, Ingersoll can make big improvements while staying financially responsible.

This isn't just about fixing up streets or buildings; it's about creating a downtown where people want to live, visit, and spend time. With everyone working together—residents, businesses, local organizations, and the Town—Ingersoll can turn this plan into real progress and ensure downtown Ingersoll stays at the heart of the community for years to come.



APPENDIX 1: KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Pillar One: Champion Small Business Growth

Objective 1.1

Attract new businesses to Downtown Ingersoll over the next five years

KPIs:

- Number of new businesses opened
- Business vacancy rate
- Utilization rate of pop-up business space
- Participation in incentive programs and events
- Business retention rates

Objective 1.2

Expand CIP reach to encourage broader uptake and enhancement efforts across the downtown

KPIs:

- CIP funding utilization rate
- Number of CIP applications submitted annually
- Reach and engagement of CIP Awareness campaign
- Distribution and usage of CIP Toolkit
- Number of businesses who cite CIP ambassador influence

Objective 1.3

Establish a comprehensive understanding of the local business ecosystem

KPIs:

- Number of businesses registered
- Annual update completion rate
- Accuracy rate of registry data

APPENDIX 1: KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Pillar One: Champion Small Business Growth

Objective 1.4

Pilot expanded business hours program for local businesses

KPIs:

- Participation in expanded hours pilot
- Foot traffic during extended hours
- Sales or revenue change

Pillar Two: Preserve Charm, Build Identity

Objective 2.1

Coordinate three new murals or public art installations

KPIs:

- Number of new murals/public art installations completed
- Number of artist submissions to annual competition

Objective 2.2

Support new and enhanced community events to activate Downtown Ingersoll

KPIs:

- Number of events launched
- Event attendance
- Number of volunteers recruited
- Reach and engagement of promotional campaigns

APPENDIX 1: KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Pillar Two: Preserve Charm, Build Identity

Objective 2.3

Complete street beautification initiatives

KPIs:

- Percentage completion of streetscape installations
- Public perception of streetscape improvements (survey or social media poll)
- Change in Downtown foot traffic

Objective 2.4

Activate the riverfront as a community space

KPIs:

- Number of community groups that express interest
- New recreational features installed
- Riverfront usage metrics (i.e. kayak or dock use)
- Number of local artists or vendors engaged

Objective 2.5

Celebrate and share Ingersoll's heritage through public programming and storytelling

KPIs:

- Number of walking tours hosted per month/quarter
- Tour attendance
- QR Code scans on heritage wayfinding signs
- Social media engagement

APPENDIX 1: KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Pillar Three: Build Our Brand

Objective 3.1

Highlight the positive programs and initiatives taking place in Downtown Ingersoll

KPIs:

- Number of positive stories or initiatives highlighted annually
- Digital engagement with communications
- Social media growth and engagement
- Public sentiment and feedback
- Increase in web traffic

Objective 3.2

Increase communications touchpoints with residents and visitors

KPIs:

- Increase in web traffic
- Number of events attended
- Increase in newsletter subscribers
- Number of ambassadors recruited

Objective 3.3

Collaborate with media to regularly feature positive stories about the Downtown

KPIs:

- Number of articles picked up in news publications
- Media coverage reach
- Media sentiment
- Interviews secured

APPENDIX 1: KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Pillar Four: Placemaking with Purpose

Objective 4.1

Façade Improvement Program Expansion and CIP Review

KPIs:

- Number of applications received
- Number of grants issued

Objective 4.2

Consider green initiatives aligned with Ingersoll's core themes

KPIs:

- Area of green space enhanced
- Number of native plants planted

Objective 4.3

Tax Increment Equivalent Grant (TIG) program

KPIs:

- Brownfield sites prioritized
- Grants issued
- Roundtable participation with local developers

Objective 4.4

Install gateway signage to enhance downtown identity and wayfinding

KPIs:

- Gateway sign installation complete

APPENDIX 1: KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Pillar Four: Placemaking with Purpose

Objective 4.5

Develop and activate a new pocket park to enhance public green space

KPIs:

- Foot traffic to the park once created
- Volunteer/community group involvement in park maintenance and stewardship

Objective 4.6

Enhance Heritage Square with lighting, sound, and landscaping improvements

KPIs:

- Number of updates made
- Increased foot traffic/events at Heritage Square
- Survey scores or feedback on aesthetics, comfort, and accessibility

Pillar Five: Support Residential Intensification

Objective 5.1

Create new residential units

KPIs:

- Number of units created
- Number of applications submitted
- Percentage of vacant upper-story properties converted

APPENDIX 1: KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Pillar Five: Support Residential Intensification

Objective 5.2

Identify and engage with at least three private developers on feasibility of mid-rise redevelopment opportunities in the downtown area

KPIs:

- Number of developers reached out to
- Developer info session attendance
- Developer interest (ROEI submittals)
- Partnerships formalized

Pillar Six: Align and Activate Existing Resources

Objective 6.1

Complete a review of the BIA governance and levy structure

KPIs:

- Completion of assessment
- Stakeholder engagement rate
- Development of recommendations and action plan

Objective 6.2

Implement a Shared Services Agreement (SSA) with the BIA

KPIs:

- Number of shared services identified
- Final agreement approval
- Implementation and rollout milestones achieved

APPENDIX 1: KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Pillar Six: Align and Activate Existing Resources

Objective 6.3

Increase participation of downtown businesses in local events

KPIs:

- Completion and distribution of downtown events calendar
- Increase in business pop-ups and outdoor displays
- Creation and distribution of stakeholder packages
- Business participation growth

APPENDIX 2: FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

Summary of BIA funded projects from BIA Reserve:

Project	Cost Estimate	Timing	Priority
Box Planter (51)	• \$94,350 (\$1,850 x 51 + HST)	• Long	• Low
Mural Competition	• \$22,600	• Medium	• Medium-High
Other Public Art and Mural Funds	• \$27,400	• Medium	• Medium-High
Business Competition	• \$18,000	• Short	• High
Outdoor Movie (per event)	• ~\$3,000 (\$2,200 for equipment and technician + HST + \$450 movie licensing)	• Short	• Medium
Bike Rings	• \$5,000 (\$500x10)	• Short	• High
Patio Program	• \$15,000	• Short	• High

All budget costs and considerations are estimates and will be subject to change.

APPENDIX 2: FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

Summary of Town Incentive Program Projects from CIP Reserve Over Three Years:

Project	Cost Estimate	Timing	Priority
Façade Grant Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none">\$4,000 per property, 10-20 properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Short	<ul style="list-style-type: none">High

All budget costs and considerations are estimates and will be subject to change.

APPENDIX 2: FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

Summary of Town Capital-Operating Budget Projects from Department Budgets:

Project	Cost Estimate	Timing	Priority	Department Budget
Box Planter Install & Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$30,000 for planting, soil, install and maintenance (service agreement) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Services
Backed Bench	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$8,820 for 7 benches (\$1,260 + HST) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Services
Downtown Play Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$275,000 - \$335,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short- Medium 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Services
Heritage Square	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$500,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short-Medium 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Services
Pocket Park Opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$120,000 - \$180,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parkland Reserve
Signage - Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5,000 (5 signs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parking
Signage – Kiosk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to be determined (\$12,000) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBD
Signage – Plaques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$10,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Services
Signage – Heritage Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$20,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Services

All budget costs and considerations are estimates and will be subject to change.

APPENDIX 2: FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

Summary of Town Capital-Operating Budget Projects from Department Budgets:

Project	Cost Estimate	Timing	Priority	Department Budget
Community Riverfront Activation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$12,000.60 for 3 new picnic tables • \$5,795 for 3 concrete slabs (288 sq.ft. area). • \$6,644.40 for 3 new benches • ~\$10,000 for stone dust walkway (~70m x 2.4m = 168m² + ~12m² for bench areas. =~180m²). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Services & external funding sources
Market Booth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$5,500 for 10x10 Heavy duty frame & signage upgrades (\$3,999 + \$848 + HST) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development
Thames Streetscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$500,000 Road reconstruction with streetscape enhancements (TC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engineering & provincial grants

All budget costs and considerations are estimates and will be subject to change.

APPENDIX 3: BUSINESS BREAKDOWN AND TALLY

MEMO

DATE: January 22, 2025

SUBJECT: Analysis of Ingersoll Downtown Business Data

1. Business Vacancy Overview:

- Total Businesses Analyzed: 199
- Vacancy Rate: 10% (20 vacant units)
- Non-Vacancy Rate: 90% (179 occupied units)

The 10% vacancy rate suggests a relatively healthy downtown business environment, though opportunities for filling vacant spaces remain.

2. Business Distribution by Type:

- Retail: 54 businesses (27% of total)
- Office: 52 businesses (26% of total)
- Service: 44 businesses (22% of total)
- Restaurant: 23 businesses (12% of total)
- Entertainment/Recreation: 7 businesses (3.5% of total)
- Studio: 4 businesses (2% of total)
- Industrial: 4 businesses (2% of total)

The high proportion of retail, office, and service businesses reflects the downtown's role as a commercial and professional hub, with restaurants contributing to the area's vibrancy, while industrial and studio spaces are underrepresented.

3. Vacancy by Business Type:

- Retail: 15 vacant spaces
- Office: 2 vacant spaces
- Service: 2 vacant spaces
- Studio: 1 vacant space
- Entertainment, Restaurants, and Industrial: No vacancies

Retail accounts for 75% of all vacant spaces, highlighting a challenge in sustaining retail operations or filling spaces designated for retail use.

APPENDIX 3: BUSINESS BREAKDOWN AND TALLY

4. Business Distribution by Street:

- Thames Street S: 88 businesses (44% of total)
- Thames Street N: 25 businesses (13% of total)
- King Street W: 23 businesses (12% of total)
- King Street E: 17 businesses (9% of total)
- Charles Street E & W: 25 businesses combined (13% of total)
- Other streets smaller (Bell, Boles, Duke, Oxford, etc.) host fewer businesses, cumulatively accounting for 9%.

Key Observation: Thames Street S is the primary business corridor, accounting for almost half of all businesses downtown. This concentration emphasizes its importance to the town's economic activity.

5. Vacancy by Street:

- Thames Street S: 17 vacant units (85% of all vacancies)
- King Street E: 3 vacant units
- All other streets: 0 vacancies

The concentration of vacancies along Thames Street S presents an opportunity for targeted economic development efforts.

Conclusion: The data highlights Ingersoll's strengths as a relatively occupied downtown with key areas of opportunity, especially in retail and on Thames Street S. Strategic interventions can further solidify the downtown's role as a vibrant and dynamic economic center.

APPENDIX 4: INGERSOLL CENTRAL AREA DESIGN GUIDELINES

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The new Downtown Enhancement Plan will serve as an evolution of Ingersoll's 2014 Central Area Design Guidelines (The 2025 Guidelines), providing an updated and action-oriented framework to guide development, investment, and enhancement efforts in the downtown core. While the 2014 guidelines established a strong foundation rooted in heritage preservation and small-town character, the new plan builds on this by integrating contemporary priorities such as mixed-use intensification, flexible urban design standards, and expanded financial incentives. With an emphasis on placemaking, pedestrian experience, and economic vitality, the updated design direction will ensure that future public and private investments over time will reinforce a cohesive vision—one that supports a vibrant, walkable, and economically resilient downtown while preserving the unique character that defines Ingersoll.

Under the 2025 Downtown Enhancement Plan, the updated Central Area Design Guidelines are intended to be applied comprehensively across both the public and private realms. The 2025 Guidelines are both a development review tool, as well as, an integrated framework that informs all aspects of downtown renewal. For private development, the guidelines will support planning applications by providing clear direction on building massing, façade articulation, material quality, and contextual fit, helping applicants and staff ensure compatibility with Ingersoll's small-town character while accommodating intensification and adaptive reuse.

In the public realm, and over time, the guidelines will shape streetscape enhancements, park upgrades, wayfinding signage, and public art installations—ensuring that public investments reinforce a consistent urban design language that is pedestrian-friendly, welcoming, and visually cohesive. By bridging land use planning with placemaking and infrastructure design, the guidelines function as a strategic tool to guide capital works, promote economic development, and deliver a unified downtown identity that is both authentic and future-ready. The 2025 Guidelines should be read in context of the 2014 Guidelines with the 2025 Guidelines to supersede the 2024 Guidelines.

2.0 PRIMARY DESIGN GOALS

In developing the 2025 Central Area Design Guidelines, five core design goals will shape both the public and private realms to ensure that all investments—whether through development applications or municipal capital projects—contribute to a vibrant, walkable, and economically resilient downtown Ingersoll. Over time these guidelines will reflect a renewed focus on heritage preservation, active streetscapes, and inclusive design, ensuring that new development and public improvements reinforce the town's identity while supporting growth. The design goals will provide a consistent framework for evaluating proposals, guiding streetscape enhancements, and prioritizing public realm upgrades aligned with the broader Downtown Enhancement Plan.

APPENDIX 4: INGERSOLL CENTRAL AREA DESIGN GUIDELINES

Five Core Design Goals for Downtown Ingersoll:

- 1. Strengthen Heritage Character with Architectural Evolution:** Reinforce Ingersoll’s historic small-town identity by encouraging traditional materials such as red or buff brick, articulated cornices, and vertically oriented windows that reflect the town’s architectural roots. At the same time, allow for the thoughtful integration of contemporary design elements and modern façades that complement—rather than replicate—the historic context, supporting a streetscape that is both respectful and forward-looking.
- 2. Activate the Streetscape:** Promote ground-floor transparency, recessed entrances, outdoor seating, and pedestrian-scale lighting to create vibrant, human-scaled frontages that support retail vitality and public interaction.
- 3. Enhance the Public Realm with Greening and Gathering Spaces:** Over time consider more trees, planters, street furniture, and flexible gathering areas (e.g., plazas, parklets, or widened sidewalks) that invite people to linger, socialize, and participate in events year-round.
- 4. Promote Mixed-Use and Residential Intensification:** Support building forms and site layouts that accommodate upper-storey residential units and mixed-use development, increasing downtown living opportunities while reinforcing compact urban form.
- 5. Ensure Accessibility, Connectivity, and Wayfinding:** Integrate barrier-free design, clear wayfinding signage, and enhanced pedestrian and cycling connections between parking areas, cultural destinations, and the Thames River to improve access and movement. These goals together ensure that future development and investments support a complete, cohesive, and people-focused downtown environment.

3.0 THE PUBLIC REALM:

The public realm is the connective tissue of a successful downtown—made up of streets, sidewalks, parks, plazas, and other open spaces that shape the experience of place. In Downtown Ingersoll, it plays a vital role in creating first impressions, supporting business activity, and reinforcing the town’s small-town character. More than infrastructure, it is a shared civic space where community life unfolds and thoughtful design fosters pride, inclusivity, and vitality. Building on the 2014 Central Area Design Guidelines and informed by the 2025 Downtown Enhancement Plan, a renewed set of public realm principles is proposed to guide future investment and streetscape improvements. Over time, these principles emphasize walkability, comfort, heritage continuity, and flexible spaces that support year-round activity. They are not just aesthetic—they are strategic tools for drawing foot traffic, encouraging private investment, and strengthening Ingersoll’s unique identity.

APPENDIX 4: INGERSOLL CENTRAL AREA DESIGN GUIDELINES

Five Public Realm Design Guidelines for Downtown Ingersoll

1. Celebrate Heritage While Inviting Contemporary Design: Reinforce Ingersoll's historic identity through the use of context-sensitive materials, traditional façade rhythms, and coordinated streetscape elements, while allowing for contemporary expressions in lighting, signage, and furnishings that signal renewal and growth.

2. Prioritize Pedestrian Comfort and Accessibility Design: Sidewalks to a minimum width of 2.5 metres where feasible, with barrier-free access, smooth paving, pedestrian-scale lighting, and generous seating areas to encourage walking, rest, and social interaction for people of all ages and abilities. Allow for more narrow sidewalk dimensions to support sidewalk patios subject to municipal approval(s).

3. Green the Downtown: Over time encourage more trees, planters, and green buffers throughout the downtown to enhance greenery, provide shade, and soften the built environment.

4. Activate Key Public Spaces and Side Streets Transform underutilized spaces—such as side alleys, pocket parks, and the Thames Street Spine—into people-focused destinations through lighting, murals, flexible seating, and programming that supports local events, vendors, and community gatherings. Over time, concentrate major streetscape investments along Thames Street South where the highest concentration of businesses and activity is located.

5. Unify the Downtown Through Cohesive Streetscape Elements Establish a coordinated suite of streetscape furnishings (benches, lighting, waste bins, bike racks, planters), wayfinding signage, and paving materials that create visual consistency across the downtown while accommodating seasonal uses and community events.

The top six public realm improvements are highlighted below. These projects should be prioritized through future capital budgets and supported by external funding opportunities. A final cohesive design theme should be developed to guide detailed design and construction as capital projects emerge.

Drawn from the Downtown Design Guidelines, these improvements provide a strong foundation for enhancing the character, accessibility, and vibrancy of Downtown Ingersoll. They can be further strengthened through private-sector investment and site-specific enhancements by local businesses and property owners. Together, coordinated public and private improvements will help create a more welcoming, connected, and resilient downtown core.

APPENDIX 4: INGERSOLL CENTRAL AREA DESIGN GUIDELINES

Six Public Realm Improvements:

1. Focus Streetscape Enhancements along Thames Street: Prioritize significant streetscape improvements along Thames Street South to reinforce its role as Ingersoll's primary commercial main street. Proposed enhancements include decorative banding, landscaping opportunities, and coordinated elements such as bike rings and integrated public realm spaces—including Heritage Square. These improvements should be complemented by opportunities for sidewalk patios and the incorporation of high-quality, privately provided street furniture to create a more inviting, vibrant, and pedestrian-oriented environment that supports business activity and social interaction.

2. Reimagine and upgrade Heritage Square: Over time, transform Heritage Square into a signature civic space by introducing new street furniture, enhanced seating areas, an expanded performance stage, and a prominent mural installation. These elements will help attract visitors, support year-round programming, and increase consumer foot traffic in the heart of the downtown. This bold transformation will require a collaborative design process, including extensive public consultation and stakeholder engagement, to shape a final vision that reflects community priorities and secures the necessary funding for phased implementation.

3. Activate Dewan Park as a Central Civic and Cultural Anchor: Over time promote Dewan Park as a dynamic public square that bridges the connection between Thames Street and Town Hall, transforming it into a central gathering space that enhances public life and supports downtown vitality. A well-lit environment and thoughtfully designed play equipment will invite visitors of all ages and abilities, encouraging longer visits and repeat use. By drawing residents and visitors alike, this revitalized civic space will support increased foot traffic, enhance the downtown experience, and stimulate greater consumer spending throughout the core.

4. Go Green: As a unifying and highly visible streetscape feature, introduce a coordinated series of planter boxes designed to accommodate decorative plantings and small trees, enriching the downtown with year-round greenery. This initiative builds upon the 2014 Central Area Design Guidelines and aims to significantly enhance the visual appeal and environmental quality of the streetscape. Prioritize the placement of planters along Thames Street, with strategic extensions onto connecting side streets to create a consistent and cohesive downtown identity. Planters should feature a durable green finish, as recommended in earlier guidelines, and be designed to integrate seamlessly with other public realm elements such as benches, signage, and lighting.

APPENDIX 4: INGERSOLL CENTRAL AREA DESIGN GUIDELINES

5. Create Pocket Parks to Enhance and Diversity the Public Realm: To further enrich the downtown experience, introduce a strategically located pocket park that expands the public realm and offers flexible, people-focused spaces throughout the core. These small but impactful parks can provide rest, recreation, and visual interest while drawing visitors to less-traveled parts of downtown. A new pocket park should be designed with seating, shade, and playful elements to encourage everyday use and event programming. As complementary investments to the primary public realm projects, pocket parks help create a more complete and connected public space network. Their development should be informed by additional community engagement and supported through targeted funding strategies to ensure phased implementation and long-term success.

6. Integrated Wayfinding and Orientation: A coordinated wayfinding and orientation program is essential to enhancing the downtown Ingersoll experience. By clearly guiding visitors to key destinations, parking areas, public spaces, and cultural landmarks, a unified signage system strengthens both functionality and identity. The introduction of a branded, integrated wayfinding program will help orient pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers while reinforcing a sense of place through consistent design language and landmark features. Key opportunities include strategically placed directories, interpretive signage, and gateway markers that highlight the downtown's heritage, parks, and civic spaces. This program should be implemented in phases, supported by dedicated funding, and coordinated with other public realm improvements. Together, new signage and landmark elements will enrich the visitor experience, support local businesses, and knit together the downtown into a more navigable, memorable, and engaging environment.

4.0 THE PRIVATE REALM

The 2025 Central Area Design Guidelines establish a renewed set of private realm principles to guide infill, redevelopment, and façade improvements throughout Downtown Ingersoll. These guidelines are intended to complement public realm investments by ensuring that new development respects the town's heritage character while accommodating intensification, adaptive reuse, and mixed-use growth. They apply to private property owners, developers, and business operators as a development review tool—supporting planning applications with clear direction on massing, façade design, materials, and street interface. The goal is to promote high-quality, human-scaled buildings that reinforce Ingersoll's small-town charm while introducing architectural evolution and economic revitalization. These guidelines will support the ongoing transformation of the downtown into a more vibrant, inclusive, and investment-ready district.

APPENDIX 4: INGERSOLL CENTRAL AREA DESIGN GUIDELINES

Top 6 Private Realm Design Guidelines for Downtown Ingersoll:

- 1. Create Traditional Character with Contextual Design:** Encourage the use of traditional materials—such as red or buff brick paired with vertically proportioned windows, articulated cornices, and other architectural elements that reflect Ingersoll’s historic main street character. At the same time, support the integration of contemporary design treatments that are compatible with the surrounding context, fostering architectural evolution without compromising heritage integrity. Reinforce visual interest and pedestrian comfort through the use of high-quality awnings, gooseneck lighting, and prominently detailed entrances that clearly define building access points and enhance the rhythm of the streetscape.
- 2. Ensure Active and Transparent Ground Floors:** Promote storefronts with large display windows, recessed entries, and clear glazing to animate the street and support retail vitality.
- 3. Design for Mixed-Use and Upper-Storey Activation:** Support buildings with upper-storey residential or office uses that contribute to downtown vitality, while maintaining a clear distinction between ground-level commercial and upper-level private uses.
- 4. Use Durable and High-Quality Materials:** Require façade materials that are both durable and visually appealing, such as masonry, stone, or wood, and discourage the use of synthetic or incompatible cladding.
- 5. Provide Functional and Well-Landscaped Transitions:** Integrate landscaping, planters, and modest setbacks at building edges to soften the interface between private development and the public sidewalk, enhancing the pedestrian experience.
- 6. Design Contextual and Compatible Residential infill:** Ensure that all new residential infill—including missing middle housing (e.g., triplexes, fourplexes, and stacked townhouses) and mixed-use developments—contributes meaningfully to the character and livability of Downtown Ingersoll recognizing that all development must conform to the Official Plan policies and zoning implementation approvals.

APPENDIX 4: INGERSOLL CENTRAL AREA DESIGN GUIDELINES

Infill projects should reflect the scale, rhythm, and architectural language of surrounding buildings while introducing high-quality, contemporary design that enhances the streetscape. Building massing, setbacks, rooflines, and façade articulation should respect adjacent properties and heritage context, while providing active frontages, clear entrances, and landscaping that contribute to a walkable and welcoming environment.

Parking, servicing, and access should be sensitively integrated to minimize visual impact. These developments should support downtown vibrancy by adding a diversity of housing types, promoting density in the core, and reinforcing a cohesive built form that aligns with Ingersoll’s small-town identity and future growth objectives.

For higher-density residential infill, prioritize flat or angular rooflines to reduce perceived height and create a more human-scaled relationship with the street. These forms support compatibility with adjacent buildings and mature neighbourhoods, especially when paired with thoughtful massing and stepbacks. Flat rooflines offer a clean, contemporary profile that accommodates additional density in a subtle, context-sensitive way—supporting gradual transitions in scale while contributing to downtown vibrancy. Well-designed infill expands housing choice, promotes architectural consistency, and boosts the economic potential of the core through increased population and local spending.

For higher-density mixed-use development in the downtown, encourage active, non-residential ground floor uses with a minimum floor height of 4.0 metres to ensure flexibility and street-level animation.