



## **DOWNTOWN BRADFORD REVITALIZATION STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION WORK PLAN YEARS 2015 - 2018**

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Council for the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury endorsed the Downtown Bradford Revitalization Strategy (DBRS), in May 2011. The purpose of the strategy is to provide a comprehensive framework for the revitalization of downtown Bradford, such that the area is restored to its rightful role as the heart of the community.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The revitalization strategy is organized into six chapters. The first two sections describe the study process and provide an overview of the downtown's history as well as its strengths and weaknesses. The third chapter presents a vision for the downtown's future and the guiding principles that were developed through a public consultation program. Although broad in nature, the guiding principles serve as a reference point for all actions undertaken in the downtown area.

The fourth chapter presents an extensive implementation program with short and long term objectives. Over 40 "action items" are listed that can be accomplished within the next ten years. These improvement opportunities range from simple matters such as adopting urban design guidelines to complex multi-year projects like the reconstruction of Holland Street.

The fifth chapter offers a toolkit of incentive programs and practices the town can adopt to encourage the re-use of existing important buildings, the redevelopment of under-utilized properties, and the development of vacant, infill sites. The final chapter sets out the consultant's recommended "next steps", which consist of nine priority actions to be undertaken within the first year.

### **PRIORITY SETTING:**

On June 3, 2015, the Downtown Revitalization Committee met to discuss and prioritize a second set of action items detailed within the strategy's implementation program. This was the second time such an effort was undertaken, following the inaugural committee's work plan established in 2012.

The intent of the discussion was to identify those items that should be undertaken or initiated within the next few years. This exercise will be repeated on an annual basis in order to review the status of projects underway, celebrate completed projects, and identify a new set of initiatives that should be added to the program.

Each member of the committee was asked to draw from the DBRS action items as well as other initiatives they were contemplating, and provide a list of what they considered to be the matters of highest priority. This committee's priorities were to be distinct from those identified by the initial committee.

The following table presents the outcome of the exercise.

<b>DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE: YEARS 2015 - 2018</b>		
<b>section</b>	<b>category</b>	<b>task</b>
2.1	Improved pedestrian environment	Assess the condition of sidewalks and undertake emergency repairs in the downtown.
2.4	Improved pedestrian environment	Improve lighting in areas frequented by the public at night.
3.3	Improved public spaces	Expand and improve the park spaces at Holland Court and around the Courthouse and Council Chambers to form key downtown public spaces.
5.3	Improve gateways to the downtown	Enhance gateways with improved signage and consistent, high-quality landscaping.
8.1	Celebrate the downtown's history	Review the Town registry of heritage buildings for designation under Part IV of the Heritage Act.
15.2	Improve the pedestrian realm by diverting truck traffic away from downtown streets	Work with Ministry of Transportation and Ontario Trucking Association to phase out use of municipally-owned roads internal to the built area.
17.2	Improve pedestrian and cycling connections	In accordance with the BWG Trails Masterplan, build a network of trails and/or roadways for pedestrians and cyclists to traverse the Downtown and access the Holland Marsh and surrounding areas.
19.1	Return the Farmers Market to the downtown	Identify and develop a permanent location for BWG's farmer's market.
20.1	Bring public institutions downtown	Continue efforts to attract a major social service provider or public institutions to locate in Downtown Bradford.
21.3	Develop and promote the brand of 'Downtown Bradford'	Encourage the formation of a downtown business group or association to serve as a partner of the Town, represent shared interests and undertake collective promotional and development initiatives.
22.1	Draw visitors to the downtown through special events	Designate and, as necessary, redesign public spaces for celebrations of different scales.

Table Notes:

"Section" - provides a cross-reference between the "task" listed within the chart and the "action item" described in fuller detail within the implementation chapter of the Downtown Bradford Revitalization Strategy.

"Category" - as per the categories listed within the Downtown Bradford Revitalization Strategy.

"Task" - as per the DBRS action items.

**MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS:**

The committee also identified several improvement opportunities that are not specifically referenced in the Revitalization Strategy, as follows:

- Seek accessibility grants to improve access to public and private buildings;
- Obtain a postal code specific to the downtown area;
- Provide striping for parking stalls on Simcoe Road; and.
- Form construction management liaison committee for the Holland Street Reconstruction project.

**CARRY-OVER WORK PLANS:**

The previous committee had set the initial set of implementation priorities and identified a total of four major projects for the first three-year work period:

- Holland Street Reconstruction
- Developing a “Downtown Specific” Program within the Office of Economic Development
- Policy Implementation
- Community Improvement Plan

Of those projects, considerable work remains incomplete on the Holland Street Reconstruction and Policy Implementation initiatives. The current committee agreed that both projects remain priorities and should be furthered within this current term. The previously crafted work plans are attached and their yet-to-be completed sections are highlighted.

**ADDITIONAL WORK PLANS:**

In reviewing the committee’s current set of priorities, various groupings emerge that lend themselves well to broader projects (as occurred with the previous set of priorities). In particular, four of the items speak to the need for improved public space within and near to the downtown area. Thus a “Public Space Improvements” work plan has been prepared (attached at page 8).

The committee’s remaining priorities are repeated in an “Implementation Recommendations” table found at page 10. Each task is assigned an action, responsibility and timeframe. Some of the tasks overlap with the mandates of other council advisory committees. Those items can be referred to their relevant committee in order to provide recommendations to council.

**NEXT STEPS:**

This document requires the endorsement of the Downtown Revitalization Committee and council in order for senior staff to integrate the work plans within departmental priorities, staffing assignments and future budgetary requests. This will be a revolving process, as implementation of the action items is monitored on an annual basis and new initiatives are inserted into work plans to replace completed projects.

## DOWNTOWN BRADFORD REVITALIZATION STRATEGY PROJECT WORK PLAN

### PROJECT:

Holland Street Reconstruction

### DESCRIPTION:

This project involves the design, reconstruction and “furnishing” of Holland Street between Dissette Street and Professor Day Drive. The intent is to deliver a refreshed “main street” with improved aesthetics and state-of-repair, with a conscious shift in priority from vehicular to pedestrian traffic - particularly within the downtown core.

### DEPARTMENTS INVOLVED:

Engineering Services will be the lead department, with assistance from the Planning & Development Services and Leisure Services departments.

### APPROACH:

The project will consist of three main components:

1. Conceptual Design - this initial step will establish a relatively detailed vision for the corridor with respect to such matter as:
  - lane and intersection configuration, which will involve traffic modelling to assess the impacts of various options;
  - the extent and location of on-street parking;
  - pavement markings and special treatments (i.e. interlock);
  - sidewalk widths and materials, and provision for outdoor patios/seating areas; and,
  - the extent and location of boulevard landscaping, potted plants and baskets, public benches, light standards, refuse containers, etc.

It is anticipated that the conceptual design step will involve the generation of various options that will be vetted through an extensive public consultation program, traffic impact analysis and costing exercise. A committee-endorsed and council-approved option will emerge.

2. Detailed Design - the second step will focus on the council-approved option, and deliver detailed engineering and landscape plans for the purposes of detailed costing and tendering. This component will include an assessment of below-ground infrastructure (sewers, watermains, etc.) to ensure they are of adequate size and condition to accommodate the scale of new development contemplated within the corridor. Further, a business continuity plan will be developed in order to assess construction impacts on businesses and determine mitigation measures.
3. Construction - the construction program will follow the award of contract, and is likely to occur in two major phases.

INCOMPLETE

**TIMEFRAME:**

**BUDGET:**

Consultative services will be required in the areas of civic engineering, traffic engineering, landscape architecture, and contract management. Construction will be contracted to a road construction company.

The anticipated cost for step 1 is \$80,000. Costs associated with steps 2 and 3 are dependent on the outcome of step 2 (the grander the vision and magnitude of sewer replacement, the higher the capital cost). For initial planning purposes, a total design and construction cost has been estimated to be \$3.5 million, however this budget only includes allowances for repaving, as well as some sidewalk and sewer replacements. Enhancements identified through the design stage - such as landscaping, pavement treatments, street furniture - will add to this base cost.

**DBRS TASKS IMPLEMENTED:**

Committee Priorities:

- s. 2.2 & 2.5 - "extend plantings and benches"
- s. 2.1 - "assess condition of sidewalks; repair"
- s. 16.1 - "increase parking supply and reduce restrictions" (with respect to on-street parking)
- other - "improve street decorations and plantings"

Other DBRS Tasks:

- s. 2.3 - "upgraded sidewalks between Church and Bingham"
- s. 2.4 - "improve lighting"
- s. 23.1 - "where possible, reduce ROW to three lanes and replace with expanded sidewalks and landscaping"

## DOWNTOWN BRADFORD REVITALIZATION STRATEGY PROJECT WORK PLAN

### PROJECT:

Policy Implementation

### DESCRIPTION:

The DBRS recommends various changes to the town's official plan, zoning by-law, property standards by-law, sign by-law, and various town practices and procedures. The purpose of this project is to identify all required changes, package them in a comprehensive manner, and shepherd them through any applicable legislative process required to obtain approval.

The revision package is a fundamental requirement in realizing the redevelopment vision and aesthetic established within the DBRS.

### DEPARTMENTS INVOLVED:

Planning & Development Services, with assistance from the Clerk's Department

### APPROACH:

Scrutinize the DBRS and identify all potential amendments to municipal policy and procedural documents. Revisions to municipal by-laws would proceed in accordance the town's procedural by-law - approval authority rests with council; their decision is not appealable.

Amendments to the town's official plan (OPA) and zoning by-law (ZBA) are subject to a specific process set out in the *Planning Act*, including a public consultation component. OPAs are subject to county council approval; approval authority for ZBAs rests with town council. Decisions on either matter are appealable to the Ontario Municipal Board.

### TIMEFRAME:

Commencement of the OPA/ZBA process faces uncertain timing due to delayed approval of a new Simcoe County official plan and pending amendments to provincial legislation that will greatly influence growth within the county. Once initiated, it is anticipated the town's process will require 12 months - this timing would be extended if any decisions are appealed.

Revisions to municipal by-laws could proceed largely independent of the OPA/ZBA process. Approximately six months would be sufficient to complete the review and obtain council approval.

### BUDGET:

It is anticipated that all work can be completed in-house by town staff; no additional funding is required.

### DBRS TASKS IMPLEMENTED:

Committee Priorities:

- s. 10.1 - "strengthen standards and enforcement"
- s. 9.1-9.2 - "zoning and parking changes"

INCOMPLETE

- s. 11.2 - “ensure redevelopment replaces rentals”
- s. 16 - “increase parking supply and reduce restrictions”
- s. 3.2 - “street side patios and roof top patios”
- s. 5.1 - “promote high quality buildings and gateways”
- s. 22.1 - “designate and redesign public spaces”

Other DBRS Tasks:

- s. 7.1 - “revise zoning by-law to increase maximum building heights”
- s. 11.1 - “encourage the development of new residential units”
- s. 13.1 - use zoning and tax incentives to attract (or retain) specialty commercial and cultural activities”

## DOWNTOWN BRADFORD REVITALIZATION STRATEGY PROJECT WORK PLAN

### PROJECT:

Public Space Improvements

### DESCRIPTION:

This project is intended to deliver vibrant public spaces within and in close proximity to the downtown area to provide formal and informal areas for public gatherings, relaxation and celebration. The anticipated visioning exercise for the future use of the community centre at 125 Simcoe Road will contribute to this project. Opportunities to accommodate a Farmers Market will also be explored.

### DEPARTMENTS INVOLVED:

Community Services as well as Development & Infrastructure Services

### APPROACH:

The initial step will be to identify candidate locations (existing and new), to utilize as public space at a variety of scales. An overall program for the spaces will be devised and then concept plans for each will be prepared, with public comment invited. Budgets for capital improvements and any necessary land acquisition will be prepared. Subject to the availability of funds on an annual basis, detailed design and then construction will be carried out.

### TIMEFRAME:

Site identification – three months

Develop public space program, individual concept plans & public consultation – nine months

Budget, land acquisition, design, construction – annually (with construction timeframes dependant on scale of individual projects)

Any safety or other issues identified at existing public spaces through the course of this project can be addressed on an interim basis in advance of any expected rehabilitation of the space.

It is anticipated that this project can be initiated mid-2016.

### BUDGET:

Consultative services will be required in the areas of civic engineering, landscape architecture, and contract management. Construction will be contracted to qualified firms.

The site identification phase can be undertaken with existing staff and budgetary resources. The cost of the remaining phases will be dependent on the scale of work envisioned for the program (likely in the range of \$2M + improvements identified for the community centre property). Any required funds will be pursued through the annual budgeting process.



### **DBRS TASKS IMPLEMENTED:**

Committee Priorities:

- 2.4 – Improve lighting in areas frequented by the public at night.
- 3.3 – Expand and improve the park spaces at Holland Court and around the Courthouse and Council Chambers to form key downtown public spaces.
- 19.1 – Identify and develop a permanent location for BWG's farmer's market.
- 22.1 – Designate and, as necessary, redesign public spaces for celebrations of different scales.

**IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS 2015 - 2018**

TASK	ACTION
1. Assess the condition of sidewalks and undertake emergency repairs in the downtown.	Will be completed by fall 2015.
2. Enhance gateways with improved signage and consistent, high-quality landscaping.	Parks & Facilities staff to provide committee with recommended locations and signage program by mid-2016 for consideration in 2017 budget.
3. Review the Town registry of heritage buildings for designation under Part IV of the Heritage Act.	Recommend that Municipal Heritage Committee provide advice to council by end of 2015.
4. Work with Ministry of Transportation and Ontario Trucking Association to phase out use of municipally-owned roads internal to the built area.	Recommend that Traffic Committee provide advice to council by end of 2015.
5. In accordance with the BWG Trails Masterplan, build a network of trails and/or roadways for pedestrians and cyclists to traverse the Downtown and access the Holland Marsh and surrounding areas.	Plan complete. Parks & Facilities staff to provide committee with implementation plan for relevant phases of the plan by end of 2015.
6. Continue efforts to attract a major social service provider or public institutions to locate in Downtown Bradford.	Incorporate into 2015 Economic Development Strategic Plan. OED to continue outreach and engagement efforts.
7. Encourage the formation of a downtown business group or association to serve as a partner of the Town, represent shared interests and undertake collective promotional and development initiatives.	Engage Board of Trade to explore opportunities to expand relationship. Solicit same from other interested groups. OED to report back to committee by end of 2015.
8. Seek accessibility grants to improve access to public and private buildings.	Corporate Services to investigate availability of grants and report back to committee by end of 2015.
9. Obtain a postal code specific to the downtown area.	Corporate Services to contact Canada Post and investigate process for obtaining a new postal code, consult with affected property owners and seek direction from council on moving forward.
10. Provide striping for parking stalls on Simcoe Road.	Recommend that Traffic Committee provide advice to council by end of 2015.
11. Form construction management liaison committee for Holland Street project.	Add to scope of Holland Street Reconstruction project.