MAIN STREETS

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN
GUIDELINES

GRANT APPLICATION PROGRAM GUIDE

The City of Windsor Building Facade Improvement Program and Urban Design Guidelines for Main Streets is intended to encourage reinvestment and assist in revitalization efforts aimed at the physical improvement of building facades along traditional Main Streets. The program is intended to achieve the following goals and objectives identified in Section 2.0 of the CIP.

THE CITY OF WINDSOR ONTARIO, CANADA

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OBJECTIVES:

1. Increase business and retail sales in main street areas
2. Increase rental revenue and property value in main street areas
3. Promote Urban Design Guidelines that ensure the use of high quality materials and improvements to the function of the building
4. Leverage public investment spent on recent infrastructure improvements (roads, sewers, sidewalks, streetscape) by providing public funds for building facade improvement in Main Street areas.
5. Offset building facade improvement costs by providing an Incentive Program.
6. Retain and attract new business to main street areas through the promotion of a Building Facade Improvement Program for Main Streets.
7. Provide a Building Facade Improvement Program and Urban Design Guidelines for Main Streets that encourages the restoration of historic facades to their original style.

GOALS:

1. To improve the overall appearance and function of building facades in traditional Main Street areas.
2. To encourage private investment through the use of public funds to improve the overall appearance of main street areas.
3. To strengthen neighbourhoods by improving the main streets that provides services to these neighbourhoods.
4. To protect traditional Main Streets

AVAILABLE PROGRAMS:

Building Facade Improvement Program page 6 to 7 for full details.

Building/Property Improvement Tax Increment Grant Program page 8 to 9 for full details.

New Residential Development Grant Program (Creation of residential units) page 9 to 10 for full details.

What is a Facade Improvement Program?

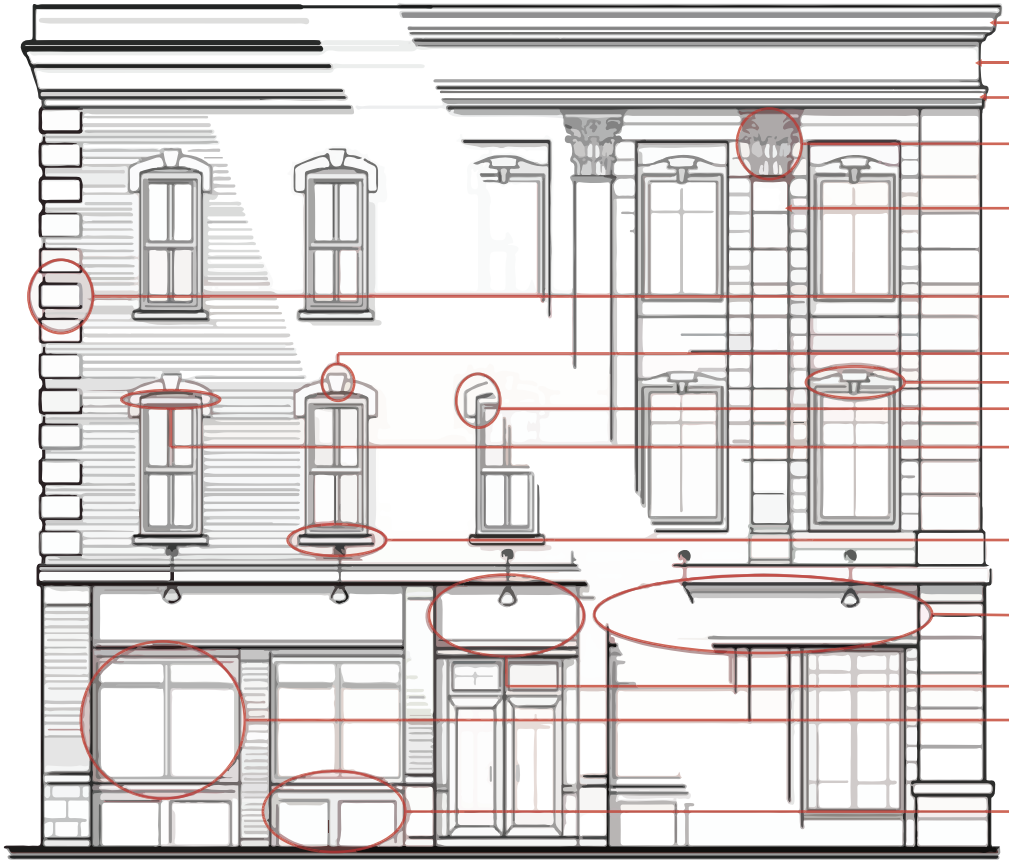
Facade Improvement Programs are financial incentive programs created to encourage property owners and businesses to make investments to improve the exterior appearance of their buildings and storefronts in a targeted area such as a commercial Main Street. Programs typically focus on commercial properties in historic or non-historic areas and provide financial incentives such as matching grants. In Ontario they can only be implemented through a Community Improvement Plan as identified in Section 28 of the Planning Act.

ELEMENTS OF A MAIN STREET BUILDING:

Building Cap
(Entablature/Parapet)
Materials: Stone, wood, compostie
Notes: High level of detail

Building Body
Materials: Various (Stone, brick, stucco, parging, wood)
Notes: Less detail than the base, vertical emphasis, vertical elements align, symmetrical evaluation

Building Base/Store Front
Materials: Various (Stone, brick, stucco, parging, wood)
Notes: Lit from above, vertical demarcation, high amount of glass/ clear glazing, alcove (*****) above door



PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

The Building Facade Improvement Grant Program is designed to be comprehensive and flexible, giving applicant'soptions based on project scope, timing and affordability. The program allows for a phased or incrementalapproach at improving building facades. Applicants can choose from a range of improvements, provided that the projects are all completed within a two year time frame from the original work being started.

The program is designed to be equitable making larger buildings with multiple storefronts eligible for more funding than smaller buildings with fewer storefronts. The City will match 50% of the costs for eligible building facade and storefront restoration improvements to commercial and mixed use buildings within the designated Community Improvement Project Areas up to a maximum of $30,000 per project to a maximum of $60,000 per project for larger buildings with multiple storefronts. The grant is also applicable to the side and rear of building facades provided that the building facade is visible from an adjacent street or public right-of-way or park and as long as the storefront/ facade facing the Main Street is improved at the same time.

Grants range from a Minimum grant of $3000 for work identified in Category A to $30,000 for work identified in Categories B and C.

Example of one (1) eligible storefront facade, plus one visible side facade

Example of four (4) eligible storefront facades, plus one visible side facade

Note* More than one category can be selected based on work being proposed.

Category A – Beautification aesthetic and minor functional improvements aimed at making the building facade and storefront more attractive and welcoming to tenants and customers.
A minimum grant of $3,000 to a maximum of $5000 administered through the Planning and Building Department with grant approvals delegated by City Council to professional Planning staff.

Category B – Restoration aesthetic, functional and restoration improvements made to restore key features of the building facade and protect the prominent building typology of the area for future generations, while making them more appealing to customers. They will also assist owners in improving structural aspects of the facade and making the building more accessible to customers.

Category C – Replacement work that will replace or reinstate key features such as doors and windows that have been lost or deteriorated beyond repair or are of a style that is no longer consistent with the building design. The grant will also encourage functional improvements such as reinstating doors and windows that have been filled in. Such improvements will preserve and protect these Main Street Buildings over time.

WHO CAN APPLY?

Owners of commercial/mixed use properties (and tenants with written authorization from owners) within the City of Windsor in Main Street areas that have been approved by Windsor City Council by Schedule to the City of Windsor Building Facade Improvement Program and Urban Design Guidelines for Main Streets CIP.

IS THERE A FEE TO APPLY?

Yes. Fees subject to change. Payment options will be provided when the CIP application is ready to be deemed complete. Planning CIP Application Fee: $500.00 per project (Council Decision B3/2026). Fee may be reimbursable as an eligible cost in the form of a CIP grant once the project is complete.

HOW DO I APPLY FOR A GRANT?

STEP 1: APPLICATION SUBMISSION

- Pre-application meeting between City staff and applicant
- Applicant submits application including all required supporting documentation

STEP 2: APPLICATION REVIEW & EVALUATION

- Staff reviews application and supporting documentation for eligibility
- Staff may request clarification or additional supporting documentation
- Staff may perform an initial site visit and inspection of the property (if necessary)

STEP 3: APPLICATION APPROVAL

- A recommendation on the application is made by staff and forwarded to City Council, along with a Grant Agreement signed by the applicant
- If your application is approved, the Grant Agreement is then executed by the City. A copy of the executed agreement is then returned to you for your records
- Your project can now commence

STEP 4: PAYMENT OF FUNDS

- Contact City staff when the work/project is completed, so that staff can review the work and ensure contractors have been paid in full
- Payment of the grant is made to the grant recipient upon satisfaction of all terms and conditions of the procedures

BUILDING FACADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM GENERAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS:

1. The total of all grants provided in respect of the particular lands and buildings of an applicant under the programs contained in the CIP shall not exceed eligible costs with respect to these lands and buildings.
2. The program encourages the restoration of façades to their original state using authentic or original materials. Products used in the restoration of a façade should contain materials that match the texture, colour, size, shape and detail of the original material where possible.
3. This program encourages removal of materials such as vinyl or aluminum siding and the restoration of original brick, block or wood façades. Where it is not possible to restore the original materials of a façade, the use of natural materials is encouraged where the form and scale of the original façade is maintained.
4. Other compatible design elements and or proposed as part of an addition to the facade may be considered
5. Fees for architectural drawings associated with the facade improvements are an eligible cost. Labour contributed by the applicant is not an eligible cost.
6. Pre-consultation with the property owner and staff from the Planning Department to discuss the proposed improvements is recommended prior to submitting an application for a Building Facade Improvement Program Grant.
7. Windsor City Council is the sole approval authority for all applications submitted under the financial incentive programs included in this CIP. Council may delegate to either a committee of the council or to an appointed officer of the municipality by position occupied the council's authority to approve financial incentive applications subject to the requirements of the individual financial incentive programs.
8. The applicant will be required to complete and provide the following application materials to the Office of the City Planner prior to commencement of any work to which the financial incentive program will apply and prior to an application for a building permit:
   - A completed application form;
   - Detailed plans/drawings of the improvements to be undertaken;
   - Three estimates of the cost of undertaking the proposed improvements; and,
   - Reports and other details as required by the City with respect to costs of the project and conformity of the project with the CIP.
9. All work must be consistent with City of Windsor Building Facade Improvement Program and Urban Design Guidelines for Main Streets. Furthermore, the evaluation of the applicant's proposal will be based on the extent to which the project enhances building aesthetics and functionality with regard for the interface between building and adjacent street(s) and/or public spaces, and adheres to the Urban Design Guidelines.
10. Design advice and technical assistance may be offered through the Planning Department to assess the property and suggest facade improvements that conform to the City of Windsor Building Facade Improvement Program and Urban Design Guidelines for Main Streets.
11. As a condition of approval of an application for any of the financial incentive programs contained within this CIP, the applicant must enter into an agreement with the City. The Agreement will be registered against the land to which it applies and will specify the terms, duration and default provisions of the grant.
12. The City reserves the right to audit the cost of any and all works that have been approved under the financial incentive programs, at the expense of the applicant;

13. The City is not responsible for any costs incurred by an applicant in relation to any of the programs, including without limitation, costs incurred in anticipation of a grant;
14. If the applicant is in default of any of the general or program specific requirements, or any other requirements of the City, the City may delay, reduce or cancel the approved grant, and require repayment of the approved grant;
15. The City may discontinue any of the programs contained in this CIP at any time, but applicants with approved grants will still receive said grant subject to meeting the general and program specific requirements.
16. All eligible works approved under the financial incentive programs and associated improvements to facades must conform to the following:
    - City of Windsor Building Facade Improvement Program and Urban Design Guidelines for Main Streets CIP
    - Any additional Urban Design Guidelines as identified for the areas identified on Schedule 'A' as amended from time to time;
    - Other City guidelines, by-laws, policies, procedures, and standards;
    - The City Official Plan and Zoning By-law; and,
    - Appropriate reference material as determined by City staff.
17. All works completed must comply with the description of the works as provided in the application form and contained in the program agreement, with any amendments as approved by the City;
18. All improvements made to building facades shall be made pursuant to a Building Permit, and/or other required permits, and constructed in accordance with the Ontario Building Code and all applicable zoning requirements and planning approvals;
19. When required by the City, outstanding work orders, and/or orders or requests to comply, and/or other charges from the City must be satisfactorily addressed prior to grant approval/payment;
20. Property taxes must be in good standing at the time of program application and throughout the entire length of the grant commitment;
21. City staff, officials, and/or agents of the City may inspect any property that is the subject of an application for any the financial incentive program offered by the City;
22. The total of all grants provided in respect of the particular property for which an applicant is making application under the programs contained in this CIP and any other CIPs shall not exceed the eligible cost of the improvements to that property under all applicable CIPs.
23. All improvements must be maintained during the term of the Community Improvement Plan and all improvements must be completed within 24 months (2 years) of the date on the signed agreement.

Past vs. present 1009 Drouillard Rd.

BUILDING/PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT TAX GENERAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS:

1. The following types of projects are considered eligible for the Building/ Property Improvement Tax Increment Grant Program: Existing commercial, residential, industrial and mixed use buildings, and vacant properties where the development, redevelopment or rehabilitation project results in an increase in the assessed value and taxes on the property.
2. The Building/Property Improvement Grant Program will consist of a grant program, whereby registered property owners and/or assignees will be eligible to receive a grant for 100% of the municipal portion of the tax increment generated from the improvements made to the building or property for a defined period of time.
3. The amount of the grant will be determined based upon the incremental increase in the municipal taxes that results from the work being completed and the project being reassessed by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC).
4. The applicant will be required to submit a complete application to the City describing in detail the development or redevelopment that is planned. This may include reports, conceptual site plans, business plans, estimates, contracts and other details as may be required to satisfy the City with respect to and conformity of the project with the CIP. The application must be submitted to the City prior to City Council's approval of financial incentives for the project.
5. The development, redevelopment, adaptive reuse or rehabilitation of the building and/or property must result in an annual grant (or tax increment) of at least $500 for properties that are taxed at the "residential" tax rate, or $1000 for all other tax categories.
6. Building/Property Improvement Grants are only available for the "eligible costs" specified below:
   (a) Any portion of the eligible costs that were not reimbursed as part of another CIP program;
   (b) Demolishing buildings for the purpose of preparing the site for development or redevelopment that is approved by the City (only an eligible cost as part of a redevelopment of the property) provided that the building is not eligible for inclusion or on the Municipal Heritage Register;
   (c) Development or redevelopment of a building or property, including improvements and expansion to an existing building;
   (d) Adaptive reuse, building rehabilitation and retrofit works;
   (e) Development Feasibility and Support Studies;
   (f) Development application fees and building permit fees (includes application for Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment, Minor Variance or Permission, Consent, Site Plan Approval/Amendment/Modification, Plan of Subdivision/ Condominium, Condominium Conversion, Part Lot Control Exemption, Removal of the "H" Holding Symbol, Demolition Permit, and Building Permit);
   (g) Upgrading on-site infrastructure including water services, sanitary sewers and stormwater management facilities; and
   (h) Constructing/upgrading of any off-site improvement that is required to fulfill any condition of a development/ planning approval (including Site Plan Control) for the development, redevelopment, adaptive reuse or rehabilitation of the building and/or property.
7. Determination of compliance with the requirements of this program and the amount of the property's grant (within the permitted terms of this program) is at the discretion of and subject to City Council approval.

8. City Council, at its sole discretion, may evaluate an incentive application and decide on a case-by-case basis to adjust the level of the incentives or provide for an alternative payment schedule to pay the Building/ Property Improvement Grant Program. Projects must still meet the eligibility requirements of the Building/Property Improvement Grant Program and Council modified grants will not exceed the eligible costs of the development, redevelopment, adaptive reuse or rehabilitation.
9. Grants will be made upon successful completion of the approved work and documentation of the eligible costs associated with the work. The City may undertake an audit of work done and eligible costs if it is deemed necessary, at the expense of the applicant.
10. The Building/Property Improvement Grant Program may be passed on to subsequent owners, including individual residential unit owners, for the amount and time left in the original grant payback period with City Council's approval. Subsequent owners will be required to enter into an agreement with the City that outlines the details of the remaining grant amount, eligibility and financial obligations.
11. The grant will be forfeited and repaid to the City if the property is demolished or altered in a manner that does not comply with the CIP before the grant period elapses.

NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT GRANT GENERAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS:

1. The New Residential Development Grant is a grant of $2,500 for every new residential unit, up to a maximum of $50,000 per property.
2. The development or redevelopment must result in a minimum of two (2) new residential units.
3. Any unit or space that was already configured and/or used for a residential use is not eligible.
4. The conversion of other second storey uses to a minimum of two (2) residential units is also eligible.
5. New residential units must be created above storefronts when along the main street or within the BIA.
6. The applicant will be required to submit a complete application to the City describing in detail the development or redevelopment that is planned. This may include floor plans, conceptual site plans, reports, business plans, estimates, contracts and other details as may be required to satisfy the City with respect to conformity of the project with the CIP. The application must be submitted to the City prior to City Council's approval of financial incentives for the project.
7. Prior to the approval of a New Residential Development Grant, City staff may need to inspect the building to review its condition and the proposed conversion plans;
8. New Residential Development Grants are only available for the "eligible costs" specified below: Construct new residential units that are in compliance with the Ontario Building Code, Property Standards By-law and the Fire Code, including, but not limited to the following:
   (a) Construction of the foundation, building shell (walls), and roof of a building housing new residential units;
   (b) Installation of safety and fire protection systems such as carbon monoxide detectors, smoke alarms, fire alarms, exit signs, etc.;
   (c) Installation of fire escapes;
   (d) Installation of new floors, ceilings and/or walls;

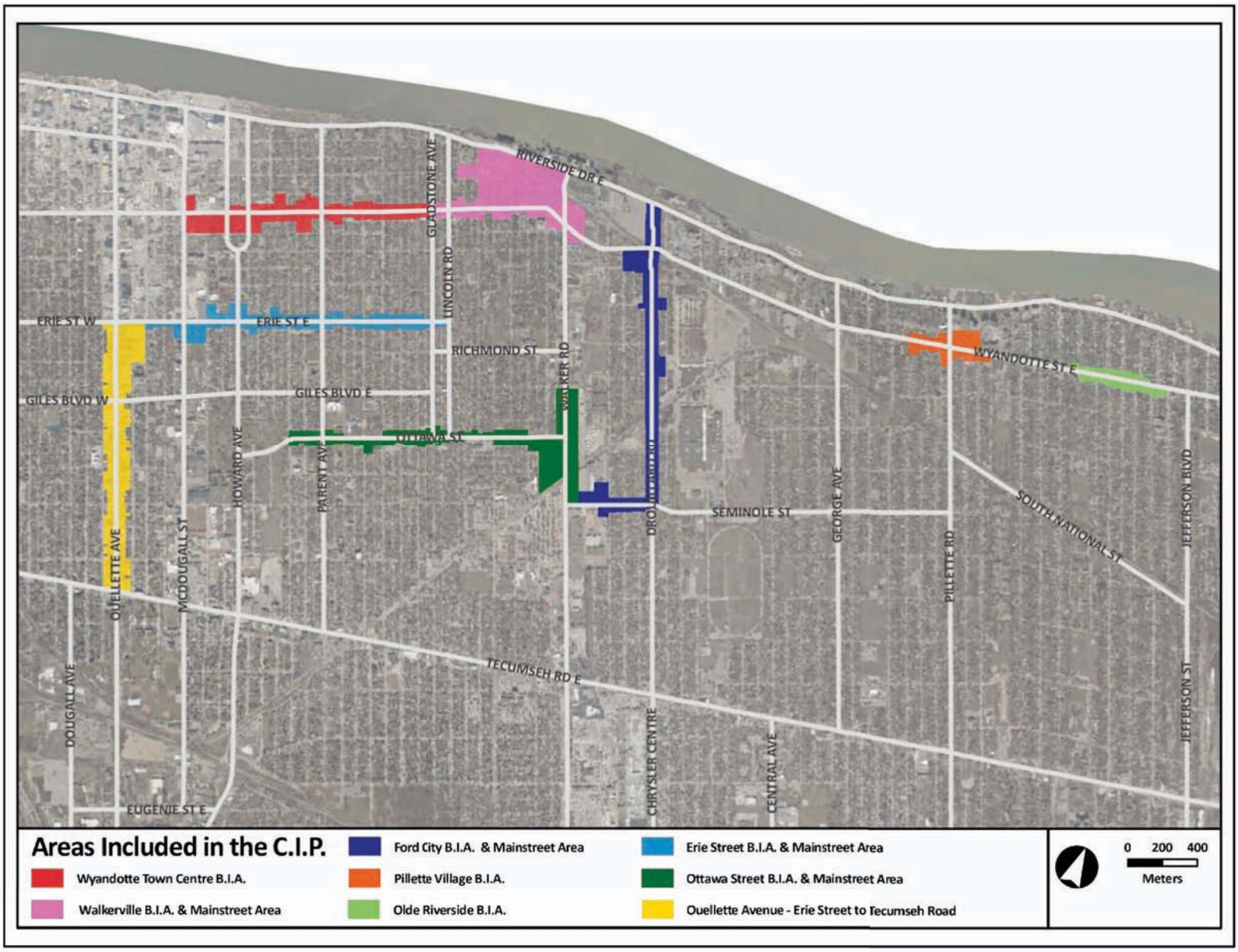
(e) Installation to electrical, ventilation, heating and plumbing supply systems;
(f) Improvements for barrier-free accessibility;
(g) Construction of stairs, guard rails and / or hand rails;
(h) Installation or alteration of required window openings and windows for upper storey residential units (of a new building addition);
(i) Other improvements, at the discretion of the City Planner, related to construction of new residential units;
(j) Development application fees and building permit fees (includes application for Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment, Minor Variance or Permission, Consent, Site Plan Approval/Amendment/ Modification/ Termination, Plan of Subdivision/ Condominium, Condominium Conversion, Part Lot Control Exemption, Removal of the "H" Holding Symbol, Demolition Permit, and Building Permit). Any other permit issued by the City that is not listed above, but in the opinion of the City Planner, advances the objectives of this CIP;
(k) Upgrading on-site infrastructure including water services, sanitary sewers and storm water management facilities; and,
(l) Constructing/upgrading of any off-site improvement that is required to fulfill any condition of a development/ planning approval (including Site Plan Control) for the development, redevelopment, adaptive reuse or rehabilitation of the building and/or property

9. Only one New Residential Development Grant will be available per property.

10. For projects that involve an existing building, only the residential units that are constructed as part of an addition to the existing building will be eligible for a New Residential Development Grant.

11. Determination of compliance with the requirements of this program and the amount of the property's grant (within the permitted terms of this program) is at the discretion of and subject to City Council approval

Past vs. present 531 Pelissier St.

Example of a project where the applicant took advantage of all grants available through the Main Street CIP incl uding improvements to the existing facade, interior space, and new residential units above the vacant storefronts.

APPENDIX 'A' (Combined SCHEDULE's):