Niagara **///** Region

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Memorandum

PDS-C 22-2024

Subject: 2024 Public Realm Investment Program Funding Commitments

Date: August 14, 2024

To: Planning and Economic Development Committee

From: Giampaolo Morello, Landscape Urban Designer

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide an update to the Planning and Economic Development Committee with respect to the 2024 Public Realm Investment Program (PRIP). This memorandum summarizes the funding commitments awarded this year. The program allows area municipalities (AMs) to make submissions for funding requests for public realm enhancement projects along regional roads. A brief description of each project is listed in a table in this memo.

Program Background

The Public Realm Investment Program began in 2016 to support AMs with matching funding to create attractive public spaces along regional roads. These public realm enhancement projects include streetscaping, street furnishings, civic gateways, urban plazas, active transportation facilities, public art and other public realm elements. AMs make project submissions that are evaluated against 32 criteria by a technical team of Regional staff. The maximum Regional funding contribution is $150,000 per project and the minimum is $25,000. The total allocations for 2024 is $245,500.

Now in its ninth year, the program continues to build upon the successes of past years. The program has contributed to 32 projects to date and is consistently over-subscribed. The uptake of the program continues to grow in the number of submissions received, quantity of funding requested and quality of submissions.

Through the program, AMs also receive design expertise from the Region's landscape architecture and urban design team as projects are being designed and constructed. This allows local and Regional staff to collaborate and amplify resources, thereby raising the quality and value of these public realm projects.

2024 Funding Commitments

On February 6, 2024, the PRIP Application Guide and Glossary distributed by Regional staff to AM staff were invited to make funding requests to the program and were advised that the submission deadline was April 29, 2024.

Similar to previous years, the 2024 program was over-subscribed with total funding requests of $418,000. Staff received seven (7) submissions in total from six (6) AMs.

A multi-disciplinary team from Planning, Public Works and Public Health evaluated the submissions to ensure that the projects met the Region's technical and safety standards and practices. Upon completion of the evaluation, the team engaged with staff from each municipality to discuss the technical aspects of their respective projects.

Of the seven (7) projects, five (5) projects (Fort Eire, Lincoln, Niagara Falls, Pelham, Welland) will receive a funding commitment through PRIP. The two (2) remaining projects (Port Colborne) are in an early stage of development and thereby not eligible for funding this year.

This year, the entire program budget has been assigned. The following table provides projects details and their assigned funding contributions:

Projects Receiving a Funding Commitment in 2024	#	Total Project Value	Regional Funding Commitment
Project Name: Sugarbowl Park Improvements **Location:** 100 Gilmore Road, Fort Erie. **Description:** Contribution to the Lions Sugarbowl Park to install trees along RR19 (Gilmore Road) and construct a gateway feature to the park.	1	$250,000	$20,000

Projects Receiving a Funding Commitment in 2024	#	Total Project Value	Regional Funding Commitment
Project Name: Sho'aríshon Park **Location:** 3039 King Street (RR 81), Lincoln. **Description:** Contribution to Sho'aríshon Park to celebrate Niagara's indigenous heritage and culture. This park redevelopment will include hardscaping, furniture and shelter structures. The funding complements the 2020 contribution of $83,000.	2	$562,000	$97,500
Project Name: OPG Canal Bridge and Trail Heads **Location:** Lundy's Lane at OPG, Niagara Falls. **Description:** Contribution to the OPG Canal Trail Head improvements to complement the Region's bridge replacement. Funding will be devoted to planting, hardscape, placemaking elements and seating. The funding complements the 2020 contribution of $30,000.	3	$193,000	$54,000
Project Name: Tree Planting **Location:** Rice Road and HWY 20, Fonthill (Pelham). **Description:** Contribution to tree planting along the stormwater pond at Hwy20 and RR54 (Rice Road) a concrete multi-use path (MUP) that connects the Rice Road MUP with the Hwy 20 MUP.	4	$57,500	$25,000

Projects Receiving a Funding Commitment in 2024	#	Total Project Value	Regional Funding Commitment
Project Name: Farmer's Market Placemaking **Location:** Market Square at Division Street, Welland. **Description:** Contribution to enhancing the quality of lighting and planting at the RR527 (Division Street) entrance to the Farmers Market. Lighting will enhance safety and complement the 2016 funding which transformed the Market entrance.	5	$161,000	$49,000
Totals:		$1,223,500	$245,500

The following table includes two application(s) submitted and evaluated for future PRIP funding.

	Projects Eligible for Future PRIP Funding	Estimated Project Value	Potential Regional Funding Commitment
	Two (2) applications proposed associated with Lock 8 Park Enhancement Project: - Pavilion Reconstruction; - Tree Planting along West side of the Park. **Project Name:** Lock 8 Park Redevelopment **Location:** 163 Mellanby Avenue (RR 3A), Port Colborne **Description:** Staff recognize the merits of investing in the Park, the project has not been budgeted at the local level and thereby falls outside the PRIP mandate to support capital ready projects. The Region is also completing a road reconstruction project on Mellanby Avenue which will include further design improvements affecting the Park. City staff will resubmit the project when detail design of the park is complete and local council funding is secured.	**TBD**	**$150,000**

Respectfully submitted and signed by

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Giampaolo Morello
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