
Orillia's downtown grant program is breaking barriers to upper-storey development

For immediate release (April 16, 2019) – Two City of Orillia Downtown Tomorrow Community Improvement Plan (DTCIP) grant recipients unveiled development plans for their upcoming projects at a grant announcement in downtown Orillia today.

“The Downtown Tomorrow CIP Grant Program helps off-set the costs of expensive upper-storey renovations and allows underutilized second floors to be developed for new retail and residential space,” said Mayor Steve Clarke. “To date, this successful grant program has proven that for every one-dollar invested by the municipality, we see five-dollars in downtown improvements. We anticipate that major projects, such as the ones announced today, will have an even higher return on investment.”

Mariposa Market is the recipient of a Building Improvement Grant of \$25,000, which will allow for renovations to utilize the second storey above the existing Mariposa Market and Mariposa Scent Shop stores located at 109 Mississaga St. E. The space will host new retail and restaurant space.

“It’s a magnificent vacant space, truly a jewel in terms of heritage architecture,” said Bob Wilsey, owner of Mariposa Market. “Orillia’s grant program makes our vision for the downtown all the more economically viable and at an accelerated timetable.”

Three additional grants, totaling \$62,500, were awarded to Chris Montgomery owner of 27 Mississaga St. W.

“There is great potential locked away in Orillia’s downtown core, particularly at the second floor level that has remained undeveloped for years,” said Montgomery. “The DTCIP has provided for us an injection of initial funding that will allow us to kick-start a much larger personal investment.”

Montgomery’s project includes the creation of two fully accessible commercial units as well as six new residential units, five of which will be located on the second storey. The grants will also be used for façade improvements, such as window and door replacements.

Council approved \$200,000 in funding for the DTCIP Grant Program for 2019. There are three intakes throughout the year. The deadline for the first intake was Feb. 28, 2019, followed by a second intake on April 30 and a third on Oct. 31.

Not only is the program stimulating development in the downtown, but according to the completed surveys for each project, applicants have advised that the program has accelerated improvements in the downtown core and allowed them to undertake larger projects than they otherwise could have. Approximately 90 per cent of applicants stated that the DTCIP Grant Program allowed them to complete their project earlier than anticipated, and 44 per cent advised that they were able to undertake larger improvements.

A total of \$112,500 remains in the Residential Grant Program, Feasibility and Design Study Grant Program, and Building Improvement Grant program for 2019.

For more information on the DTCIP Grant Program, or to book a mandatory pre-consultation, applicants are encouraged to contact the City of Orillia Economic Development Office at 705-325-4900, or visit the project webpage at orillia.ca/downtowncip.

The City of Orillia is a city of 31,000 people in the heart of Ontario's Lake Country on the shores of Lake Couchiching and Lake Simcoe. Visit our website at orillia.ca.

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Photo cutline: Downtown Tomorrow Community Improvement Plan (DTCIP) grant recipients Chris Montgomery, owner of 27 Mississaga St. W. (left), and Bob Wilsey, owner of Mariposa Market (right), pictured with Coun. Pat Hehn and Mayor Steve Clarke at the DTCIP grant announcement on April 16, 2019.