

The Corporation of the Town of Ajax
GENERAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE



Monday, May 8, 2023
Open Meeting at 1:00 p.m.
Hybrid Meeting
Council Chambers, Town Hall
65 Harwood Avenue South

AGENDA

Alternative formats available upon request by contacting:
accessibility@ajax.ca or 905-619-2529 ext. 3347

Hybrid Meeting: This meeting occurs in person and will be live streamed for viewing at www.ajax.ca/live. Electronic participation is permitted pursuant to Council's Procedure By-law and may be arranged by e-mailing clerks@ajax.ca.

S. Lee, Chair

Open Meeting

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7. Closed Session

None

8. Adjournment

DRAFT MINUTES - Subject to Approval



**Minutes of the
General Government Committee Meeting
Held in the Council Chambers, Ajax Town Hall and Electronically
At 1:00 p.m. on April 11, 2023**

*Alternative formats available upon request by contacting:
accessibility@ajax.ca or 905-619-2529 ext. 3347*

Present:	Chair – Councillor	R. Tyler Morin
	Regional Councillors	M. Crawford
		J. Dies
		S. Lee
	Councillors	L. Bower
		N. Henry
	Mayor	S. Collier

1. Call to Order & Acknowledgement of Traditional Treaty Lands

Chair Tyler Morin called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m. and acknowledged traditional treaty lands.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interests.

3. Adoption of Minutes

3.1 Regular Meeting

Moved by: L. Bower

That the Minutes of the regular meeting of the General Government Committee held on March 20, 2023 be adopted.

CARRIED

3.2 Closed Session

Moved by: S. Lee

That the Minutes of the Closed Session of the General Government Committee held on March 20, 2023 be adopted.

CARRIED

4. Consent Agenda

Members separated items 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6 and 4.7 for discussion.

4.1 OES-2023-06: Contract Award – Ajax Library Makerspace Renovation

Moved by: M. Crawford

1. That Council award the contract for Ajax Library Makerspace Renovation, to Area Construction Inc. in the amount of \$794,687.19 (inclusive of all taxes).
2. That Council award the contract for Contract Administration ~ Ajax Library Makerspace Renovation, to Ward99 Architects in the amount of \$24,143.50 (inclusive of all taxes).
3. That Council approve the additional funding of \$222,724.91 to be allocated to capital account 1038511 from the Capital Contingency Reserve.
4. That the Library be directed to repay this additional funding through annual payments from in-year surpluses, grants, and/or sponsorship monies as funding is available.

CARRIED

4.2 OES-2023-07: Contract Award – T23012 Road Resurfacing & Geotechnical Services

Moved by: M. Crawford

1. That Council award the contract for Road Resurfacing, to Viola Management Inc. in the amount of \$2,539,182.94 (inclusive of all taxes).
2. That Council award the contract for Geotechnical Services – Road Resurfacing, to Peto MacCallum Ltd. in the amount of \$49,431.85 (inclusive of all taxes).

CARRIED

4.3 OES-2023-10: Preliminary Report on a Potential Over-Expenditure – MCC Pool Renovations

Committee Members sought clarification regarding whether the project is going to be an over-expenditure or not. Dave Meredith, Director of Operations & Environmental Services, responded to the questions from Committee Members.

Moved by: M. Crawford

1. That this report, on the potential over-expenditure on Capital Project Number 1037611 – MCC Pool Filt & Pump Sys Repl, previously awarded to Canada Construction Limited, be received for information.
2. That this report, on the potential over-expenditure on Capital Project Number 1019511 – MCC - Repl Pool Slide & Refub Stairs, previously awarded to Canada Construction Limited, be received for information.

CARRIED

4.4 OES-2023-08: Contract Award – St. Andrew’s Site Improvements

Committee Members asked questions regarding rationale for project delays, target completion date, vendor performance and evaluation, and information-sharing among area municipalities. Andrew Jackson, Supervisor, Infrastructure Design and Construction, responded to questions from Committee Members.

Moved by: L. Bower

1. That Council award the contract for St. Andrew’s Site Improvements, to Wyndale Paving Co. Ltd. in the amount of \$1,054,804.10 (inclusive of all taxes).
2. That Council approve the following funding to be allotted to Capital Account No. 1035311:

Building Maintenance Reserve	\$ 261,447.59	CARRIED
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4.5 PDS-2023-14: Update to the Residential Parking Permit Feasibility Study

Committee Members asked questions regarding timing of the studies, estimated costs associated with a Residential Parking Permit Study for the Town of Ajax, Request for Information (RFI) next steps including Council approval, and timelines and costs associated with the RFI process. Geoff Romanowski, Director of Planning & Development Services, responded to questions from Committee Members.

Main Motion

Moved by: S. Lee

1. That the report titled “Update to the Residential Parking Permit Feasibility Study” be received for information; and
2. That staff prepare and post a Request for Information (RFI) for a “Town Parking and Parking Permit Feasibility Study” to create the necessary documentation for further direction.

Amendment

Moved by: S. Collier

That the motion be amended by deleting clause 2.

MOTION LOST

Main Motion

Moved by: S. Lee

1. That the report titled "Update to the Residential Parking Permit Feasibility Study" be received for information; and
2. That staff prepare and post a Request for Information (RFI) for a "Town Parking and Parking Permit Feasibility Study" to create the necessary documentation for further direction.

CARRIED

4.6 **RCCD-2023-03: Bus Transportation Services**

Committee Members asked questions regarding opportunities to expand bus transportation services, opportunities to increase service hours, costs, and Town operated community bus service options. Chris Vida, Director of Recreation & Culture and Allison Kushner, Community Recreation Supervisor, responded to questions from Committee Members.

Moved by: S. Lee

1. That Council award the contract for Bus Transportation Services, to Stock Transportation Ltd. in the estimated amount of \$87,910.61 (inclusive of all taxes), for a period of approximately one year.
2. That Council authorize Staff to renew the contract for an additional five, one year periods, pending an analysis and satisfactory performance review at the anniversary date of the contract, in the estimated amount of \$487,922.25 (inclusive of all taxes).

CARRIED

4.7 **LIS-2023-05: Corporate Information Technology Strategic Plan – Year Three Update**

Committee Members asked questions regarding AppJAX and Cityworks communication notifications including opportunities to improve the Cityworks outage notification. Chris Walker, Manager of Technology and Innovation, responded to questions from Committee Members.

Moved by: L. Bower

That the report entitled "Corporate Information Technology Strategic Plan – Year Three Update" be received for information.

CARRIED

4.8 **LIS-2023-06: Integrity Commissioner Services – Recommendation to Appoint Principles Integrity**

Moved by: M. Crawford

That a by-law to appoint Principles Integrity as Integrity Commissioner for the Town of Ajax and to repeal By-law 12-2019 (ATT-1) be brought forward to the Council Meeting of April 17, 2023 for approval.

CARRIED

5. Discussion

5.1 PDS-2023-13: Traffic Calming Program Reporting Process

Committee Members asked questions regarding warrant criteria and scoring, opportunities to provide Council with a list of non-qualifying traffic locations, deadlines for traffic data collection, rationale for prolonged timelines associated with traffic calming requests, opportunities to improve processes to ensure measures are implemented in a shorter time-frame, methods to measure traffic calming effectiveness, Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE) vs traffic calming, budget allocation, default speed limits in Ontario, and speed limit reductions. Dhaval Pandya, Manager of Transportation Planning and G. Romanowski, responded to questions from Committee Members.

Moved by: L. Bower

1. That the report entitled "Traffic Calming Program Reporting Process" be received for information; and
2. That staff be directed to report annually (in April) to Council on the Traffic Calming Program.

CARRIED

6. Presentations

6.1 OES-2023-04: Audley Recreation Centre Fairgrounds Feasibility Study

D. Meredith reviewed the contents of the written report and recommendations contained therein. D. Meredith introduced Jeanne Ng, Principal Architect, MacLennan Jaunkalns Miller Architects Ltd. (MJMA). J. Ng reviewed existing site conditions at Audley Recreation Centre including current amenities, the proposed Fairgrounds site, and the existing Fairgrounds at Ajax Downs. J. Ng reviewed functional design plans for the fairgrounds and the park, and discussed site infrastructure including grading, stormwater, power, lighting, water and sanitary, site accessibility including traffic management and pedestrian circulation, planning for flexibility namely construction costs, future phasing and next steps, project budget, future site developments, and next steps.

Committee Members asked why Council Members were omitted from the consultation process. Committee Members asked further questions regarding next steps, project timelines, detailed design costs, budget impacts, opportunities for Council Members to participate in the detailed design process, detailed design timelines, noise barriers namely the existing berms, infrastructure services and costs, the Audley Road Overpass project, future plans to expand the Audley Road corridor, parking accommodations, access for event vehicles, accessibility accommodations, accessible parking spaces, shuttle bus circulation, purpose and function of reinforced sod, size of berms, noise study requirements, methods to mitigate noise, and stormwater management features. D. Meredith, G. Romanowski, and Dianne Valentim, Director of Finance/Treasurer, responded to questions from Committee Members.

Main Motion

Moved by: M. Crawford

1. That Council receive the Audley Recreation Centre Fairgrounds Feasibility Study dated March 14, 2023, as prepared by MacLennan Jaunkalns Miller Architects Ltd. for information.
2. That staff be authorized to consider the detailed design for the proposed Audley Recreation Centre Fairground as part of the Town's 2024 Capital Budget and Long Range Capital Forecast process.

Amendment

Moved by: S. Collier

That clause 2 be amended to read as follows:

That staff be directed to complete the detailed design for the proposed Audley Recreation Centre Fairground as an unbudgeted capital project in 2023, to be funded from the capital contingency reserve.

CARRIED

Main Motion as Amended

Moved by: S. Lee

1. That Council receive the Audley Recreation Centre Fairgrounds Feasibility Study dated March 14, 2023, as prepared by MacLennan Jaunkalns Miller Architects Ltd. for information.
2. That staff be directed to complete the detailed design for the proposed Audley Recreation Centre Fairground as an unbudgeted capital project in 2023, to be funded from the capital contingency reserve.

CARRIED

Committee recessed at 3:18 p.m.

Committee resumed at 3:23 p.m.

6.2 PDS-2023-12: 2023 Transportation Demand Management Plan Update

Armi de Francia, Active Transportation Coordinator, delivered a presentation reviewing the contents of the written report and recommendations contained therein. A. De Francia discussed car-centric design costs, sustainable transportation services, transportation equity considerations, Town of Ajax population by age, personal vehicles reported by household, scope and vision of transportation demand management, achievements since 2015, future goals, methodology, resident and stakeholder priorities, transportation demand management updates, bicycle parking guidelines, community strengths, and proposed actions including foundations, partnerships, integration with Town policies and practices and transportation equity.

Committee Members asked questions regarding opportunities to re-paint existing cycling facilities, rationale for not implementing bike lanes on Rossland Road, affordable

transportation options, micromobility devices including Town policies, bike signals, and status of bike locker installation. A. De Francia and D. Meredith responded to questions from Committee Members.

Moved by: S. Lee

1. That the report entitled “2023 Transportation Demand Management Plan Update” for the Town of Ajax be received for information, and
2. That Council endorse the Transportation Demand Management Plan for the Town of Ajax prepared by WSP Canada, dated March 2023.

CARRIED

6.3 LIS-2023-07: Privacy Risk Management Policy

Jason McWilliam, Manager of Legislative Services/Deputy Clerk, delivered a presentation reviewing the contents of the written report and recommendations contained therein. J. McWilliam provided rationale for the Privacy Risk Management Policy and reviewed key policy elements including privacy principles, risk appetite statement, privacy impact assessments, incident and breach reporting, and Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and Key Risk Indicators (KRI) reporting.

Committee Members asked questions regarding impacts to the Council Code of Conduct, punitive measures, third party access and restrictions, and privacy impact assessment considerations. J. McWilliam responded to questions from Committee Members.

Moved by: S. Collier

1. That the Privacy Risk Management Policy, found as Attachment #1, be approved; and
2. That the Town Clerk, or designate, be delegated authority to amend the policy as required to incorporate industry best practices and support continuous improvement to the Town’s privacy risk management program.

CARRIED

7. Closed Session

None

8. Adjournment (4:27 p.m.)

Moved by: S. Collier

That the April 11, 2023 meeting of the General Government Committee be adjourned.

CARRIED

Town of Ajax Report



Report To: General Government Committee
Prepared By: Devon Jarvis
Report #: CAO-2023-07
Subject: Social Media Policy Update
Ward(s): All
Date of Meeting: May 8, 2023
Reference: General Government Committee Meeting December 20, 2019

Recommendation:

That the proposed update to Social Media Policy 055 (ATT-1) of the addition of section 3.3. *Management and Administration – Council Member Accounts* be approved.

Background:

The Town of Ajax is committed to providing excellent customer service to all members of the public and to address service requests and complaints equitably, comprehensively and in a timely manner, while promoting a respectful, tolerant and harassment-free workplace for the public, officers and employees of the Corporation and Members of Council. Staff, Members of Council and the public have a right to an environment that is free from unacceptable behaviour, including online interactions.

Presently the Town does not have a Council-approved policy to govern expectations of public behaviour online on social media and how Council Members are to respond in these situations. Following a discussion at the December 20, 2019 General Government Committee (GCC) Meeting, on the approval of the Town's Public Conduct Policy, Council asked staff to report back with options on how to address behaviour specifically on social media. The purpose of this report is to recommend an update to the current Town Social Media Policy to include what type of behaviour is unacceptable on social media and how Council Members are to manage unacceptable behaviour.

Discussion:

To create an environment free from harassment and unacceptable behaviour, there may be justifiable reasons to restrict an individual's interactions on social media with specific Members of Council. However, in doing so Council must consider that, as a public service funded by municipal taxpayers, any restrictions placed on a member of the public should be limited, specific, and responsive to the unacceptable behaviour that occurred. It is important to strike a balance between the public and Council's right to harassment-free online public spaces and work environments, and an individual's right to access municipal services and information.

Members of Council may have multiple social media accounts to separate their communications in the capacity of an elected official from their own personal social media activities when not conducting Council work. The proposed addition of a new section, 3.3 Management and Administration - Council Member Accounts, establishes general guidelines for the management of Council Member constituent-facing social media accounts and expectations regarding public access to Members' accounts. This section also outlines expected public behaviour and a response framework to be followed when unacceptable behaviour occurs, including the ability to moderate access to constituent-facing social media accounts for specific users, and in severe cases the ability to block specific users. Advice, and a review of the wording, was provided from the Town's Integrity Commissioner (IC) regarding the step to block a user for the purposes of this policy.

The following new section is proposed to be added to Social Media Policy 055:

3.3. Management and Administration - Council Member Accounts

- 3.3.1. Regional and local councillors are responsible for the setup and day-to-day management and monitoring of constituent-facing social media accounts. Please refer to policy *Council Communications Tools & Support* for additional details.
- 3.3.2. Communications & Engagement staff members in collaboration with Public and Strategic Affairs staff are responsible for the day-to-day management and administration of the Mayor's constituent-facing social media accounts, subject to the permission and discretion of the Mayor.
- 3.3.3. It is recommended for Council Members to have separate personal and constituent-facing social media accounts/pages/profiles. Additionally, it is recommended to *not* use a personal account to post about Town matters, to distribute Town information or to comment on Town issues. If a personal account is used to convey public information, all members of the public should be capable of viewing that content. Please refer to section 3.5 of this policy for posting guidelines on personal accounts.
- 3.3.4. Council Member constituent-facing accounts must be visible/available to the public and this account should be used when commenting on Town matters/issues.
- 3.3.5. Council Members are permitted to represent areas of responsibility and comment/quote on social media messages released through the Town, however, the Town will not be held liable for any repercussions that the content may generate, and communications must adhere to the *Town of Ajax Code of Conduct for Members of Council*.
- 3.3.6. Council Members may tag the Town corporate accounts when "live" posting from third-party events and conferences where they are representing the Town for resharing purposes. Reshares from the corporate accounts is not guaranteed, and in cases where many members of Council are sharing from the same event, Council Member posts may be repurposed for a singular post from the corporate accounts.
- 3.3.7. All communications on social media conducted by Council Members must adhere to the *Town of Ajax Code of Conduct for Members of Council*.
- 3.3.8. **Online Trolls and Disrespectful Behaviour – Council Member Accounts**

- 3.3.8.1. Refer to 2.1 for definition of online troll.
- 3.3.8.2. Bullying, threatening, abusive or discriminatory language to Ajax Council members, Town of Ajax staff members or to other members of the public on Council members' constituent-facing social media pages is not permitted and comments, replies, or direct messages that are inflammatory in nature, discriminatory, disrespectful or use inappropriate language will not be responded to and may be deleted and/or hidden without notice.
- 3.3.8.3. **Moderating:** Council Members are entitled to moderate access to their constituent social media pages in response to abusive behaviour. However, members are strongly encouraged to explore the use of less restrictive moderation tools (such as muting, hiding, etc.) to curtail such behaviour while preserving the public's access to the information shared on constituent accounts.
- 3.3.8.4. **Blocking:** Council Members may be justified in blocking users where necessary to protect the member or other users from harassment or abuse, or to preserve the utility of the Council Member's social media page by preventing it from being overrun by spam or from disseminating abusive, hateful and inciteful communication. Members of Council are strongly advised to exercise restraint, and to seek Integrity Commissioner (IC) guidance on a case-by-case basis as may be necessary, prior to blocking users. Should a member of Council offer a public explanation for their decision to block a certain user, they must take care to communicate that information in a way that is not discourteous or disparaging to the user in question.
- 3.3.8.5. The decision to curtail a user's engagement with a Council Member's constituent-facing social media page must be motivated by a desire to protect the interests of residents and the Town, in addition to concern for the member's own well-being.
- 3.3.8.6. Section 3.3. of this policy shall not be amended without approval from Council.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations contained in this report.

Communication Issues:

If approved, the policy will be communicated to Members of Council and will be included in future training for new Members in future Council terms.

Relationship to the Strategic Plan:

This report aligns with the Pillar *Connecting Our Community*, priority four: Foster a safe and welcoming community.

Conclusion:

Implementing this update will help ensure that all Town online spaces remain safe, respectful, and harassment-free environments for all users to enjoy.

Attachments:

ATT-1: Social Media Policy 055

ATT-2: Town of Ajax Code of Conduct for Members of Council

ATT-3: Council Communications Tools & Supports Policy

Prepared by:

Devon Jarvis – Supervisor of Communications & Engagement

Submitted by:

Christie McLardie – Manager of Public & Strategic Affairs

Approved by:

Shane Baker – Chief Administrative Officer

Town of Ajax Departmental Policies and Procedures
Subject: Social Media



Policy #: 055	Issued Date: 11/11/30	Revised Date: 23/05/08	Author / Responsible Department: Stephanie Saroff, Communications & Engagement	Revision #: 3	Page: 1 of 9
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1. Policy Objective

- 1.1. To govern the use of social media platforms by the Town of Ajax.
- 1.2. To provide guidelines for the establishment and administration of official corporate and **Council Member** social media accounts, including outlining the process for managing inappropriate online behaviour.
- 1.3. To establish procedures for authorized corporate social media content providers to ensure all communications through the Town’s social media accounts are accurate, consistent and professional.
- 1.4. To set guidelines for staff and **Council Members** as it relates to personal social media accounts.

2. Scope

2.1. The following definitions and abbreviations apply within the meaning of this policy:

Term	Definition
CAO	Means the Chief Administrative Officer of the Corporation of the Town of Ajax.
Council	Means the elected Council of the Town of Ajax.
Department	Means any functional department within the organizational structure of the Corporation of the Town of Ajax.
Inappropriate Online Behaviour	Means behaviour that will not be tolerated, including but not limited to behaviour that can be damaging physically or mentally, is illegal, or would not be welcomed in a standard place of business.
Member	Means an individual presently elected to the Council of the Town of Ajax.
Online Trolls	Trolls deliberately try to disrupt, attack, offend or generally cause trouble. This includes, but is not limited to, insults, offensive language, persistent debates, off topic comments, spam and bullying.
Personal Information	Means Personal information as defined in the <i>Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act</i> (MFIPPA).
Social Listening	Social listening is the process of monitoring social media channels for mentions of your brand, competitors, product and more.

Town of Ajax Departmental Policies and Procedures
 Subject: **Social Media**



Policy #: 055	Issued Date: 11/11/30	Revised Date: 23/05/08	Author / Responsible Department: Stephanie Saroff, Communications & Engagement	Revision #: 3	Page: 2 of 9
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Term	Definition
Social Media	Means any third-party hosted technologies that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content to share opinions, information and documents, and includes but is not limited to blogs, discussion boards and forums, microblogs, photo-sharing sites, social networks and video sharing services.
Social Media Management Platform	A social media management platform is a secure, scalable tool that allows businesses to manage multiple social media accounts and devices including but not limited to, monitoring, posting, tracking customer service and lead generation.
Town	Means the Corporation of the Town of Ajax.
Town Services	Means any and all services provided by the Corporation of the Town of Ajax, its employees, or representatives of the Town.
Town Staff	Means any officer or employee of the Corporation of the Town of Ajax.

- 2.1. This policy applies to all official Town social media platforms.
- 2.2. This policy applies to all Town employees and **Council Members** (full-time, part-time, seasonal, temporary and students).
- 2.3. Section 3.3. applies to Members of **Council** and shall be followed in conjunction with the *Town of Ajax Code of Conduct for Members of Council*.
- 2.4. Members of Town Advisory Committees, consultants, volunteers are encouraged to follow guidelines established for personal social media accounts.
- 2.5. Communications through social media and the use of associated technology must comply with all other relevant Town policies, procedures and guidelines.

3. Procedure

3.1. Governing Guidelines

- 3.1.1. The Town's website www.ajax.ca and the In My Opinion (IMO) Hub remain the primary online sources for information. Corporate social media accounts should be primarily used to complement information on the Town's website. **Council Members** should endeavour to use their social media accounts as a secondary information source once matters have been officially released by the Town's social media channels.

Town of Ajax Departmental Policies and Procedures
Subject: Social Media



Policy #: 055	Issued Date: 11/11/30	Revised Date: 23/05/08	Author / Responsible Department: Stephanie Saroff, Communications & Engagement	Revision #: 3	Page: 3 of 9
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- 3.1.2. The goals of the Town’s social media accounts are to:
 - Increase awareness of municipal services, programs, initiatives, events and projects.
 - Broaden the reach of corporate messages.
 - Increase engagement and collaboration with the public and stakeholders.
 - Disseminate time-sensitive or emergency information and/or correct erroneous information. This may occur prior to posting information to the Town’s website and subject to the approval of the Supervisor of Communications & Engagement or designate.

- 3.1.3. The following is a list of the Town’s current corporate social media accounts:
 - Twitter - @townofajax
 - Twitter - @youthofAJAX (sub account)
 - Twitter - @AjaxAdvantage (sub account)
 - Twitter - @ajax_fire (sub account)
 - Facebook - @myajax
 - YouTube - @townofajax
 - Instagram - @townofajax
 - Instagram - @AjaxAdvantage (sub account)
 - LinkedIn – The Corporation of the Town of Ajax
 - LinkedIn – Ajax Economic Development (sub account)
 - TikTok @townofajax (dormant)

- 3.1.4. Corporate social media accounts will clearly indicate that they are maintained by the Town and contain appropriate contact information and hours of operation.

- 3.1.5. Each corporate social media account will adopt a unique strategy based off of industry best practices for that particular platform. As new platform features and trends emerge, Communications & Engagement will be responsible for identifying opportunities for implementation and content strategy updates. Our social media channels strive to foster a sense of community and organic conversation between constituents and the Town. Each social platform has one main corporate page maintained by Communications & Engagement that acts as the official voice of the Town. This centralized social media management maximizes efforts, creates a superior customer experience and ensures regular and consistent communications. The use of sub accounts requires approval by Communications & Engagement. Sub accounts may be requested to target communications towards a specific demographic or campaign. Staff that are approved to manage a sub account must undergo training by Communications & Engagement.

Town of Ajax Departmental Policies and Procedures
Subject: Social Media



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- 3.1.6. Communications & Engagement uses social listening and reporting to identify emerging trends, discover potential leads/opportunities for messaging intervention and to build future social media campaigns.
- 3.1.7. Communications & Engagement will conduct a review of the Town’s social media accounts and new platforms available on an annual basis to ensure the Town is maximizing social media efforts. The addition or deletion of a social media platform or account is subject to the Supervisor of Communications & Engagement, in consultation with the impacted department(s) and will be reported to the Senior Management Team on an annual basis. All login credentials must be tied to a corporately provided email address and not an individual employee’s email address, to ensure on-going access in case of employee vacation, sickness or departure from the Town.

3.2. Management and Administration - Corporate Accounts

3.2.1. Communications & Engagement is responsible for the day-to-day management and administration of all corporate social media accounts, including:

- Ensuring that procedures and guidelines under the Social Media Policy are met and carried out consistently, and conducting pertinent reviews.
- Generating, updating, responding to and removing content/images.
- Monitoring social media accounts regularly, including evenings and weekends when required.
- Working with authorized social media content providers.
- Overseeing the Social Media Management workflow process and training of content providers.
- Developing social media strategies, messaging and graphics in support of corporate priorities.
- Responding to requests for new social media sites and/or administrative changes to existing sites.
- Maintaining a list of site domain names and social media accounts, including login and password information.
- Ensuring corporate social media sites comply with applicable policies.

3.2.2. Approved staff are responsible for the day-to-day management of approved sub accounts including:

- Ensuring that procedures and guidelines under the Social Media Policy are met and carried out consistently, and conducting pertinent reviews.
- Generating, updating, responding to and removing content/images.
- Monitoring social media accounts regularly, including evenings and weekends, when required.



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- Coordinating messaging and graphics in support of corporate priorities.
- Retaining login and password information.
- Ensuring corporate social media sites comply with applicable policies.

3.2.3. Online Trolls and Disrespectful Behaviour – Corporate Accounts

- 3.2.3.1. Refer to section 2.1 for definition of online troll.
- 3.2.3.2. There will be zero tolerance for bullying, threatening, abusive or discriminatory language towards the Town, staff members, **Members of Council** or to other members of the public.
- 3.2.3.3. Comments, replies, or direct messages that are inflammatory in nature, discriminatory, disrespectful or use inappropriate language will not be responded to and may be deleted and/or hidden without notice. Repeat offenders may be subject to further disciplinary action such as restricting ability to comment on Town social media platforms (subject to tools provided by different social media platforms), a formal warning letter from the Town’s Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), and up to being removed/blocked from all Town social media platforms.
- 3.2.3.4. To reduce duplicate and redundant staff work, repeat questions, comments and/or concerns from the same constituent will only be answered once. This includes if the same question, comment or concern was submitted through other channels, including other social media platforms, email, phone calls or in person.
- 3.2.3.5. Turning off commenting on public posts (or equivalent, subject to tools provided by different social media platforms) posted by Town social media accounts is subject to the discretion of the Supervisor of Communications & Engagement.

3.3. Management and Administration - Council Member Accounts

- 3.3.1. Regional and local councillors are responsible for the setup and day-to-day management and monitoring of constituent-facing social media accounts. Please refer to policy *Council Communications Tools & Support* for additional details.
- 3.3.2. Communications & Engagement staff members in collaboration with Public and Strategic Affairs staff are responsible for the day-to-day management and administration of the Mayor’s constituent-facing social media accounts, subject to the permission and discretion of the Mayor.



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3.3.3. It is recommended for Council Members to have separate personal and constituent-facing social media accounts/pages/profiles. Additionally, it is recommended to *not* use a personal account to post about Town matters, to distribute Town information or to comment on Town issues. If a personal account is used to convey public information, all members of the public should be capable of viewing that content. Please refer to section 3.5 of this policy for posting guidelines on personal accounts.

3.3.4. Council Member constituent-facing accounts must be visible/available to the public and this account should be used when commenting on Town matters/issues.

3.3.5. Council Members are permitted to represent areas of responsibility and comment/quote on social media messages released through the Town, however, the Town will not be held liable for any repercussions that the content may generate, and communications must adhere to the *Town of Ajax Code of Conduct for Members of Council*.

3.3.6. Council Members may tag the Town corporate accounts when "live" posting from third-party events and conferences where they are representing the Town for resharing purposes. Reshares from the corporate accounts is not guaranteed, and in cases where many members of Council are sharing from the same event, Council Member posts may be repurposed for a singular post from the corporate accounts.

3.3.7. All communications on social media conducted by Council Members must adhere to the *Town of Ajax Code of Conduct for Members of Council*.

3.3.8. Online Trolls and Disrespectful Behaviour – Council Member Accounts

3.3.8.1. Refer to 2.1 for definition of online troll.

3.3.8.2. Bullying, threatening, abusive or discriminatory language to Ajax Council members, Town of Ajax staff members or to other members of the public on Council members' constituent-facing social media pages is not permitted and comments, replies, or direct messages that are inflammatory in nature, discriminatory, disrespectful or use inappropriate language will not be responded to and may be deleted and/or hidden without notice.

3.3.8.3. **Moderating:** Council Members are entitled to moderate access to their constituent social media pages in response to abusive behaviour. However, members are strongly encouraged to explore the use of less restrictive moderation tools (such as muting, hiding, etc.) to curtail such behaviour while preserving the public's access to the information shared on constituent accounts.

Town of Ajax Departmental Policies and Procedures
Subject: **Social Media**



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3.3.8.4. **Blocking:** Council Members may be justified in blocking users where necessary to protect the member or other users from harassment or abuse, or to preserve the utility of the Council Member’s social media page by preventing it from being overrun by spam or from disseminating abusive, hateful and inciteful communication. Members of Council are strongly advised to exercise restraint, and to seek Integrity Commissioner (IC) guidance on a case-by-case basis as may be necessary, prior to blocking users. Should a member of Council offer a public explanation for their decision to block a certain user, they must take care to communicate that information in a way that is not discourteous or disparaging to the user in question.

3.3.8.5. The decision to curtail a user’s engagement with a Council Member’s constituent-facing social media page must be motivated by a desire to protect the interests of residents and the Town, in addition to concern for the member’s own well-being.

3.3.8.6. Section 3.3. of this policy shall not be amended without approval from Council.

3.4. Posting Guidelines – Corporate Accounts

- 3.4.1. Only Communications & Engagement staff and a select number of approved staff for emergency situations are authorized to post directly to the Town’s corporate social media accounts.
- 3.4.2. Each department may appoint social media content providers to coordinate posts on behalf of the department. Approval must be granted by the appropriate Director. Communications & Engagement will coordinate social media activities for those departments with no content providers.
- 3.4.3. Social media guidelines and training may be provided to all authorized content providers upon request.
- 3.4.4. Content providers are to provide content to the Communications Coordinator for scheduling on the Corporate social media accounts by no later than Thursday, for the following week. Same day messages will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the Communications Coordinator.
- 3.4.5. The Town’s social media management platform, Sprout, has been customized to allow authorized sub account holders to directly schedule messages on a weekly basis to Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. Messages should not be scheduled for multiple weeks for quality assurance purposes. Posts to corporate social media accounts must be conducted by Communications & Engagement.



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3.4.6. Live event social media support is available *only* upon request and should be coordinated directly with the Supervisor of Communications & Engagement. Live event support outside of regular work hours are subject to approval by the Supervisor of Communications & Engagement. Live event requests should be inputted directly following confirmation of event dates and must be made a minimum of two weeks in advance.

3.4.7. Town social media, social media management or social media listening/reporting platforms, and **Council Member** constituent-facing accounts should be accessed through Town approved technology.

3.4.8. It will be the content provider’s responsibility to ensure information is accurate and guidelines are followed:

- Content should be professional and intended to inform and engage.
- Content providers will respect confidentiality and sensitivity of information, including financial and business information, privileged information, legal advice, personal information or any information not generally available to the public.
- All hashtags, emojis, tags and graphics are appropriate for distribution.
- All links have been tested and external links have been vetted to ensure subject matter is appropriate.

3.4.9. Only Communications & Engagement staff and authorized sub account holders are permitted to tag **Council Members** and/or Town staff (subject matter experts) in posts (content or images). Tag features are used to enhance reach.

3.4.10. Login and password information for the Town’s social media, social media management and social media listening/reporting platforms are confidential and shall not be shared with non-authorized staff, consultants, or third-party vendors unless approved by Communications & Engagement.

3.5. Posting Guidelines – Personal Accounts

3.5.1. Employees and **Council Members** are not permitted to release, comment or share Town information via personal social media accounts prior to official release by the Town. The only exception is the Fire Chief/Ajax Fire and Emergency Services Twitter account, whom have the authority to report on active emergencies and Town-wide emergency response.

3.5.2. Employees are permitted to use their personal social media accounts and designated sharing tools to redistribute official social media messages released through Town accounts. However, it is strongly encouraged that **Council Members** do not use personal accounts to redistribute social media messages released

Town of Ajax Departmental Policies and Procedures
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through Town accounts (or through **Council Members'** constituent accounts), please refer to section 3.3.3. of this policy.

- 3.5.3. Directors and/or approved staff are permitted to represent areas of responsibility and comment/quote on social media messages released through the Town via personal accounts, however, the Town will not be held liable for any repercussions the content may generate.
- 3.5.4. Directors and/or approved staff are permitted to use personal social media accounts to “live” post from third-party events and conferences where they are representing the Town. All posts must tag the Town. For example, the @townofajax tag should be included on all tweets so the Town may retweet to followers. Communications & Engagement reserves the right to ask that a post be removed.
- 3.5.5. Generally, employees are strongly encouraged to use social media for personal matters only and refrain from identifying themselves as a Town employee by posting that you work for the Town or visual cues, including logos, employee clothing, photographs, graphics or other media on social media accounts. Please refer to the *Town’s Employee Code of Conduct Policy (014)* for more information. Employees who directly identify themselves with the Town must clearly note they are representing their personal views and not the views of the Town. The following disclaimer should be used in bios/descriptions: Comments are my own and do not represent the view my employer.
- 3.5.6. Employees and **Council Members** who participate in conversations on Town social media accounts, where doing so is not part of their Town-related duties, are personally responsible for their comments, usernames and information posted. In the event of a legal action or other proceeding arising out of acts or omissions done or made by an Employee or **Council Member** while using social media, Employees and **Council Members** may be protected by the Town’s *Indemnification By-law*, provided they are acting in their capacity as a **Council Member** or Employee. Because the use of personal social media accounts for Town business can blur the lines between personal and professional capacities, Council Members in particular, should be aware that available protections under the Town’s *Indemnification By-law* may be compromised by the use of personal social media accounts for Town business.



Town of Ajax

Code of Conduct For Members of Council

**Town of Ajax
Code of Conduct for Members of Council**

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1.0 Application and Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to establish a general standard to ensure that all Members share a common basis for acceptable conduct, and to which all Members are expected to adhere to and comply with. Abiding by this standard helps to promote good governance and maintain public confidence in the administration of the Town by its Members as duly elected public officials, and to ensure that they operate from a foundation of integrity, transparency, justice, truth, honesty and courtesy.
- 1.2 This Code of Conduct augments other laws which Members are governed by, including but not limited to:
- *Municipal Act, 2001*
 - *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*
 - *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*
 - *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*
 - *Human Rights Code*
 - *Occupational Health and Safety Act*
 - *Provincial Offences Act*
 - *Criminal Code*
- 1.3 This Code of Conduct applies to all Members of the Council of the Town of Ajax, including the Mayor.

2.0 Principles

- 2.1 The following principles will guide Members and assist with the interpretation of this Code of Conduct:
 - 2.1.1 Members shall serve and be seen to serve the public in a conscientious and diligent manner;
 - 2.1.2 Members shall observe and act with the highest standard of ethical conduct and integrity;
 - 2.1.3 Members shall avoid the improper use of the influence of their office as well as conflicts of interest;
 - 2.1.4 Members shall perform their functions with honesty, integrity, accountability and transparency;
 - 2.1.5 Members shall perform their duties and conduct their private affairs in a manner that promotes public confidence and will stand up to public scrutiny;
 - 2.1.6 Members shall be aware that they are at all times representatives of the Town and of Council, recognize the importance of their duties and responsibilities, take into account the public character of their function, and maintain and promote the public trust in the Town; and
 - 2.1.7 Members shall uphold the spirit and the letter of the laws of Ontario and Canada and the laws and policies adopted by Council.
- 2.2 The above statements are key principles that are intended to facilitate an understanding, application and interpretation of the Code of Conduct – the principles are *not* operative provisions of the Code of Conduct and are not intended to be enforced independently as such.

3.0 Definitions

3.1 The following terms shall have the following meanings in this Code of Conduct:

Term	Definition
CAO	means the Chief Administrative Officer of the Town.
Child	means a child born within or outside marriage and includes an adopted child and a person to whom a parent has demonstrated a settled intention to treat as a child of their family.
Clerk	means the Clerk of the Town.
Confidential Information	means information or records in the possession, custody or under the control of the Town that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the Town is precluded from disclosing under the <i>Municipal Act, 2001</i>, or other applicable legislation, its Procedure By-law or any of its other by-laws, policies, rules or procedures; (b) the Town is prohibited from disclosing or has lawfully refused to disclose under the <i>Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act</i>; and (c) has been debated or discussed at a meeting of Council closed to the public and has not been subsequently discussed in open Council, nor authorized to be released by Council or by staff under any delegated authority.
Committee of Council	means any committee of Council or similar entity, and typically refers to the General Government Committee or Community Affairs and Planning Committee.
Conflict of Interest	means a situation in which a Member has competing interests between the Member's personal or private pecuniary interests and their public interests as an elected representative, such that it might influence their decision in a particular matter.
Council	means the elected Council of the Town.
Deputy Mayor	means the Member of Council who presently holds the position of Deputy Mayor of the Town in accordance with Council's Procedure By-law.
Family Member	means a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Spouse, as defined herein; (b) Child, as defined herein; (c) Parent, as defined herein; (d) sibling, grandchild, grandparent, aunt, uncle, niece or nephew of a Member;

Term	Definition
	(e) parent-in-law or sibling-in-law of a Member; (f) step-parent, step-sibling, or step-child of a Member; (g) any person who lives with the Member on a permanent basis.
Frivolous	means of little or no weight, worth, importance or any need of serious notice.
Gift	means any kind of benefit, contribution or hospitality that has any financial or monetary value and includes the forms of benefits and hospitality that are set out in Section 10.0.
Integrity Commissioner	means the person appointed by Council pursuant to section 223.3 of the <i>Municipal Act, 2001</i> to independently carry out the functions set out therein and such other functions as may be assigned by Council from time to time.
Local Board	means a local board as defined in subsection 1(1) and section 223.1 of the <i>Municipal Act, 2001</i> .
Mayor	means the head of Council for the Town.
Media	includes any radio, television, newspaper, magazine, website, blog, social media, or any other vehicles for the public dissemination of information, whether digital, electronic or print.
Meeting	means a regular, special or other meeting of Council or a committee of Council where a quorum of Members is present, and the Members discuss or otherwise deal with any matter in a way that materially advances the business or decision-making of Council.
Member	means an individual presently elected to the Council of the Town.
Non-Pecuniary Interest	means a private or personal interest that a Member may have that is non-financial in nature but that arises from a relationship with a person or entity that would be considered by a reasonable person, apprised of all the circumstances, as being likely to influence the Member's decision in any matter in which the non-pecuniary interest arises.
Parent	means a person who has demonstrated a settled intention to treat a child as a Member of their family whether or not that person is the natural parent of the child.
Pecuniary	means relating to or consisting of money or having financial or economic value.
Pecuniary Interest	means a direct or indirect interest of an economic, financial or monetary nature, including the interest of the parent or spouse or any child of the Member, if known to the Member.
Social Media	means any third-party hosted technologies that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content to share opinions, information and

Term	Definition
	documents, and includes but is not limited to blogs, discussion boards and forums, microblogs, photo-sharing sites, social networks and video sharing services.
Spouse	means a person to whom a person is married or with whom the person is living in a conjugal relationship outside marriage.
Staff	means the CAO and all officers, directors, managers, supervisors and all staff of the Town, whether full-time, part-time, contract, seasonal or volunteer, as well as agents, consultants and volunteers acting in furtherance of the Town's business and interest.
Town	means The Corporation of the Town of Ajax.
Vexatious	means troublesome or annoying in the case of being instituted without sufficient grounds, and serving only to cause irritation and aggravation to the person being complained of.

4.0 General Obligations

- 4.1 In exercising their powers and discharging their duties as a Member, each Member shall:
- 4.1.1 adhere to the specific declarations as well as the spirit of the promises they made to abide by various duties when they swore their declaration of office under section 232 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*;
 - 4.1.2 make every effort to advance the public interest honestly and in good faith, with a view to the best interests of the Town;
 - 4.1.3 exercise the degree of care, diligence and skill that a reasonably prudent person would exercise in comparable circumstances;
 - 4.1.4 conduct themselves with integrity, courtesy and respectability at all meetings of the Council or any Committee of Council;
 - 4.1.5 seek to serve their constituents in a conscientious and diligent manner;
 - 4.1.6 respect the individual rights, values, beliefs and personality traits of any other person, recognizing that all persons are entitled to be treated equally with dignity and respect for their personal status regarding gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, race, creed, religion, ability and spirituality;
 - 4.1.7 refrain from making any statement known to be false or with the intent to mislead or disparage other Members, Staff, Local Board members, or the public;
 - 4.1.8 refrain from making any disparaging comment or unfounded or speculative accusation about the motives of other Council Members, Staff, Local Board members, or the public;
 - 4.1.9 recognize that they are representatives of the Town and that they owe a duty of loyalty to the residents of the Town at all times;
 - 4.1.10 observe and adhere to the by-laws, policies, procedures and rules enacted and/or established from time to time by Council; and
 - 4.1.11 accurately communicate the decisions of Council and respect Council's decision-making process, even if they disagree with Council's ultimate determinations and rulings.

5.0 Respectful Conduct toward Officers and Employees of the Municipality

- 5.1 It is the role of Council as a whole to:
 - 5.1.1 govern and provide political direction;
 - 5.1.2 determine the needs and outcomes to be achieved for the community, and establish the vision and goals to achieve them;
 - 5.1.3 approve budgets, policies and other governance mechanisms of the Town through its by-laws, resolutions, and other decisions; and
 - 5.1.4 establish new corporate policy and continually evaluate existing policy.
- 5.2 It is the role of Staff to:
 - 5.2.1 be responsible for the administrative and managerial operations of the organization in the performance and delivery of its day-to-day business;
 - 5.2.2 implement Council's decisions and policies, including the provision of services and enforcement of regulatory laws and systems;
 - 5.2.3 provide research, information, analysis and professional advice, and make objective policy recommendations to Council in accordance with their professional ethics, expertise and obligations;
 - 5.2.4 serve the Town as a whole, and the combined interests of all Members as evidenced through the decisions of the Town; and
 - 5.2.5 carry out their duties based on political neutrality and without undue influence from any individual Member.
- 5.3 Members shall acknowledge, respect, and have regard for the administration, managerial and organizational structure of the Town when requesting information or advice from Staff, and shall respect the role of Staff in the administration of the affairs of the Town as described herein.
- 5.4 Members shall not:
 - 5.4.1 publicly criticize a member of Staff or another Member of Council - should a Member have any issue with respect to any member of Staff, such issue shall be referred to the CAO who will direct the matter to the appropriate superior;
 - 5.4.2 falsely or maliciously injure the reputation of any member of Staff or Council, whether professional, ethical, or otherwise;
 - 5.4.3 invite or pressure any member of Staff to engage in partisan political activities or be subjected to discrimination or reprisal for refusing to engage in such activities;

- 5.4.4 make requests, statements or take actions which may be construed as an attempt to influence the independent administration of the Town's business;
- 5.4.5 make requests of Staff that are outside of the employee's realm of responsibility, approved work plan, or available resources, or attempt to individually oversee or supervise the work of Staff; and
- 5.4.6 attempt to intimidate, threaten, or influence any staff member from carrying out that person's duties, including any duty to disclose improper activity.

6.0 Discrimination and Harassment

- 6.1 Members shall acknowledge that the Town is committed to providing and maintaining a working environment that is based on respect for the dignity and rights of everyone acting in conjunction with the Town and meeting its obligations under the Human Rights Code and the Occupational Health and Safety Act. It is the Town's goal to provide a healthy, safe, and respectful work environment that is free from any form of harassment or discrimination.
- 6.2 Members shall not abuse, bully or intimidate any member of the public, other Members, Local Board members, or Staff. This applies to all in-person activities and to all electronic communications, including the use of Social Media.
- 6.3 Members shall not use indecent, abusive, demeaning or insulting words, phrases or expressions toward any member of the public, another Member, Local Board members, or Staff.
- 6.4 Members shall not make comments or conduct themselves in any manner that is or ought reasonably to be known to be discriminatory to any individual based on the individual's race, colour, ancestry, citizenship, ethnic origin, place of origin, creed or religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, disability, age, socioeconomic status or record of offences.
- 6.5 Members shall comply with the Town's 'Respectful Workplace; Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Prevention Program' (Policy 074).

7.0 Business Relations & Improper Use of Influence

- 7.1 Members shall not use the influence of their office or appointment for any purpose other than the exercise of their official duties in the public interest.
- 7.2 Members shall not use the status of their position to influence the decision of another person which may affect the current or future pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests of themselves or of any other person, including without limitation a parent, spouse, child, or grandchild, or for the purpose of creating a disadvantage to another person.
- 7.3 Members shall not act as a paid agent before Council, its committees, or any agency, board or commission of the Town, except in compliance with the terms of the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*.
- 7.4 Members shall not refer a third party to a person, partnership, or corporation in exchange for payment or other personal benefit.
- 7.5 Nothing in this Code prohibits Members from attending or promoting the opening of new businesses within the community as a function of their official duties, provided that doing so shall not constitute an endorsement of such business or commercial enterprise.

8.0 Communications, Media Relations, & Social Media

- 8.1 Members shall fairly and accurately communicate the decisions of Council, even if they disagree with its decision(s). Members may publicly express disagreement with a decision of Council but shall do so in a respectful manner that does not belittle, ridicule or disrespect the decision of any Members who voted in favour of the decision.
- 8.2 When addressing the media, Members shall adhere to the provisions of the Town's Media Relations Protocol (COR-WI-351).
- 8.3 Members shall acknowledge and respect that decisions and resolutions of Council are ordinarily communicated to the community by Council as a whole with the assistance of the Town's administration, or by the Mayor by virtue of being the head of Council, unless one or more Members have been expressly authorized by Council or by the Mayor to communicate such decisions and/or resolutions on behalf of Council.
- 8.4 When communicating with the media, other levels of government or their representatives, public sector agencies, private individuals or businesses, or on Social Media, Members shall not indicate, implicitly or explicitly, that they speak on behalf of Council unless they have been expressly authorized to do so by Council, or authorized by the Mayor when serving as the Mayor's representative. Where it could reasonably be construed by others that a Member is speaking on behalf of Council and such authorization has not been granted, Members shall indicate that the opinions, views, or positions expressed or advocated for are the Member's alone, and not those of Council.
- 8.5 When communicating on Social Media, Members shall act with respect, dignity, courtesy and empathy towards others, and adhere to the same requirements described in this Code as they would for any other form of communication.
- 8.6 When communicating on Social Media, Members shall not publicly post or share content that is known or ought reasonably to be known to:
 - 8.6.1 be false or with the intent to mislead or disparage other Members, Staff, Local Board Members, or the public;
 - 8.6.2 be discriminatory to any individual based on the individual's race, colour, ancestry, citizenship, ethnic origin, place of origin, creed or religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, disability, age, socioeconomic status or record of offences;
 - 8.6.3 disclose Confidential Information;
 - 8.6.4 compromise the safety or security of members of the public, Local Board members, other Members, or Staff;
 - 8.6.5 endorse or solicit business for a commercial enterprise;
 - 8.6.6 promote illegal activities;

- 8.6.7 be of a disparaging nature or make unfounded or speculative accusations about the motives of other Members, Local Board members, Staff, or a member of the public;
 - 8.6.8 abuse, bully, or intimidate other Members, Local Board members, Staff, or a member of the public; and
 - 8.6.9 belong to a third-party without first seeking the third-party's permission, unless such content is already publicly available or has no reasonable presumption of confidentiality.
- 8.7 Nothing in this Code prevents a Member from operating personal Social Media accounts that do not serve the purpose of representing the Member to the public in their official capacity as a Member. However, Member behavior must still conform to the Council Code of Conduct even while using unofficial or personal Social Media Accounts.

9.0 Use of Municipal Property

- 9.1 Council is the custodian of the assets of the Town. The community places its trust in Council and those it appoints to make decisions for the public good in relation to these assets.
- 9.2 Members shall not:
- 9.2.1 use or permit the use of the Town's land, facilities, equipment, supplies, services, Staff or other resources for activities other than the business of the Town or their official duties as a Member, unless they are entitled to such use equally with any other user of such Town assets;
 - 9.2.2 seek or obtain by reason of their office any personal privilege or advantage with respect to municipal services not otherwise available to the general public and not connected directly or indirectly to the performance of the Member's duties;
 - 9.2.3 use the services of Staff or make requests for information from Staff unless such information is required for the purposes of carrying out their official duties as Members;
 - 9.2.4 seek financial gain for themselves, or for any other person, from the use or sale of the Town's intellectual property, computer programs, web or Social Media accounts, technological innovations, or other patents, trademarks or copyright held by the Town; and
 - 9.2.5 use information gained from the execution of their duties that is not available to the general public for any purpose other than their official duties.
- 9.3 Members shall comply with the 'Use of Corporate Resources for Election Purposes' policy (Policy 076) when participating in any municipal, provincial, or federal election.

10.0 Gifts, Benefits & Hospitality

- 10.1 Gifts to Members risk the appearance of improper influence. Gifts may appear to induce influence or create an incentive for Members to make decisions on the basis of relationships rather than in the best interests of the Town.
- 10.2 Except as otherwise permitted herein, Members shall not accept a fee, advance, gift, gift certificate, cash or personal benefit connected directly or indirectly with the performance of their duties.
- 10.3 A gift, benefit or hospitality that is connected directly or indirectly to the performance of the Member's duties provided with the Member's knowledge to a Family Member of the Member is deemed to be a gift to that Member.
- 10.4 Notwithstanding Sections 10.1 and 10.2, Members shall be entitled to accept any gifts or benefits in their official capacity in the following circumstances:
 - 10.4.1 compensation authorized by law;
 - 10.4.2 gifts or benefits that normally accompany the responsibilities of office and are received as an incident of protocol or social obligation, or are symbolic or ceremonial in nature;
 - 10.4.3 token gifts or benefits given in recognition of services provided without compensation by Members volunteering their time for a charitable or non-profit organization or event;
 - 10.4.4 a suitable memento at a function honouring the Member;
 - 10.4.5 in the case of a Member seeking elected office, a campaign contribution otherwise reported by law;
 - 10.4.6 services provided without compensation by persons volunteering their time;
 - 10.4.7 food, lodging, transportation and entertainment lawfully provided by provincial, regional or local governments or boards or political subdivisions of them, the federal government, or a foreign government within a foreign country;
 - 10.4.8 food, lodging, transportation and entertainment lawfully provided by a conference, seminar or event organizer where the Member is either speaking or attending in an official capacity as a representative of the Town;
 - 10.4.9 an invitation from, and at the expense of, a private third party to attend a conference, seminar, charity fundraiser, reception, ceremony, cultural event, or other similar event where the proceeds raised are to support a not-for-profit or charity organization, provided that the Member is not lobbied at the event;
 - 10.4.10 participating in or consuming food and beverages at banquets, receptions, sporting events or similar functions, if:

- 10.4.10.1 attendance serves a legitimate municipal business purpose related to the normal business of the Town;
 - 10.4.10.2 the person extending the invitation or a representative of the organizing entity is in attendance; and
 - 10.4.10.3 the value is reasonable and the invitations are infrequent;
 - 10.4.11 gifts received as a door prize, raffle or similar draw at an event, conference or seminar attended by the Member;
 - 10.4.12 gifts of nominal value (e.g. a baseball cap, t-shirt, flash drive, book);
 - 10.4.13 a communication to the office of the Member, including a subscription to a newspaper or periodical; and
 - 10.4.14 any gift or personal benefit, if the Integrity Commissioner is of the opinion, before the gift or personal benefit has been accepted, that it is unlikely that receipt of the gift or benefit gives rise to a reasonable presumption that the gift or benefit was given in order to influence the Member in the performance of their duties.
- 10.5 Members who have received or accepted a gift or benefit in accordance with the exceptions described in Sections 10.4.3, 10.4.7, 10.4.8, 10.4.9, 10.4.11, and 10.4.14, where the value exceeds \$300.00 from a single source during a calendar year shall file a disclosure of the gift or benefit in accordance with the Disclosure Statement set out in Appendix "A".
- 10.6 The Disclosure Statement shall indicate:
- 10.6.1 the nature and description of the gift or benefit received;
 - 10.6.2 the person, body or entity from which it was received;
 - 10.6.3 the circumstances under which it was received;
 - 10.6.4 the date of receipt;
 - 10.6.5 the estimated value of the gift or benefit; and
 - 10.6.6 what the Member chose to do with the gift or benefit.
- 10.7 Members shall provide the Disclosure Statement to the Clerk on a quarterly basis for the preceding quarter. The Disclosure Statement shall be a matter of public record and posted to the Town's website.
- 10.8 Nothing in this section precludes a Member from soliciting funds or donations in support of a charitable or philanthropic cause, organization, or charity provided that all funds or donations are provided directly by the donor(s) to the recipient organization or charity.

11.0 Confidential Information

- 11.1 Members receive confidential information from a number of sources as part of their work as elected officials. This includes information received in confidence by the Town that falls under the privacy provisions of the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and other applicable privacy laws, and information received during closed meetings of Council, committees, or Local Boards.
- 11.2 Members shall not disclose, unless expressly authorized by Council or as required by law, confidential information including but not limited to:
 - 11.2.1 matters related to ongoing litigation or negotiation, or that is the subject of solicitor-client privilege;
 - 11.2.2 information provided in confidence, for example, the identity of a complainant where a complaint is made in confidence, personal information of an individual derived from municipal records or other information that a Member receives in confidence by virtue of their office as an elected representative;
 - 11.2.3 price schedules in contract tenders or request for proposal submissions if so specified;
 - 11.2.4 personal matters about an identifiable individual;
 - 11.2.5 “personal information” as defined in the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*;
 - 11.2.6 any census or assessment data that is deemed confidential; and
 - 11.2.7 the purchase or sale of personal or real property by the Town.
- 11.3 Members shall not disclose the content of any confidential information, or the substance of confidential deliberations, of a closed meeting. Each Member has a duty to hold any information received at closed meetings in strict confidence for as long and as broadly as the confidence applies. Members shall not, either directly or indirectly, release, make public, or in any way divulge any such information or any confidential aspect of closed meeting deliberations to anyone, unless authorized by Council or as required by law.
- 11.4 Members shall not disclose, use, or release confidential information in contravention of applicable privacy laws. Members are only entitled to information in the possession of the Town that is relevant to matters before Council. Otherwise, a Member enjoys the same access rights to information as any other member of the community or resident of the Town and must follow the same processes as any private citizen to obtain such information.
- 11.5 Members shall not misuse confidential information in any way or manner such that it may cause detriment to the Town, Council or any other person, or for financial or other gain for themselves or others.

- 11.6 Members shall respect the right to confidentiality and privacy of all clients, volunteers, other Council Members, and staff, and should be aware of their responsibilities under applicable legislation, municipal policies, procedures and rules, ethical standards and, where appropriate, professional standards.
- 11.7 Members shall not disclose any confidential information received by virtue of their office, even if they cease to be a Member.

12.0 Reprisals and Obstruction

- 12.1 Members shall respect the process for complaints and inquiries made under the Code of Conduct, the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*, or any other process for complaints adopted by the Town or required by legislation.
- 12.2 Members shall not act in reprisal or threaten reprisal against a person who makes a complaint or provides information to any duly authorized investigative body, or against the Integrity Commissioner or any other appointee or representative of an investigative body.
- 12.3 The Integrity Commissioner is authorized to report any incidents of threats or reprisals to Council, and may recommend penalties or remedial corrective measures or actions in response to such reported incidents.
- 12.4 Members shall cooperate with the Integrity Commissioner at all times and with respect to any requests for information during any investigations or inquiries of a duly authorized investigative body, and shall not:
 - 12.4.1 interfere with or obstruct an investigation;
 - 12.4.2 destroy or damage documents or erase electronic communications; or
 - 12.4.3 attempt to influence any other Member, Staff or member of the public with respect to the subject matter of the investigation or inquiry.
- 12.5 The Integrity Commissioner is authorized to investigate and to report to Council on any instances of reprisal and obstruction and to impose penalties if it is determined that a contravention has occurred.

13.0 Penalties & Remedial Actions for Non-Compliance with the Code of Conduct

- 13.1 Where the Integrity Commissioner reports to Council that, in its opinion, a Member has contravened this Code, the Integrity Commissioner is delegated the authority by Council to impose the following penalties:
- 13.1.1 reprimand the Member; and/or
 - 13.1.2 suspend the remuneration paid to the Member in respect of their services as a Member for a period up to ninety (90) days.
- 13.2 In addition to the penalties described in Section 13.1, Council may, on the basis of a recommendation from the Integrity Commissioner, also take any or all of the following corrective or remedial actions, and require that the Member:
- 13.2.1 provide a written or verbal apology;
 - 13.2.2 return property or make reimbursement of its value or of money spent;
 - 13.2.3 be removed from or not be appointed to the membership on a committee of Council;
 - 13.2.4 be removed from or not be appointed as chair of a committee of Council; and
 - 13.2.5 comply with any other remedial or corrective action or measure deemed appropriate by the Integrity Commissioner.

14.0 Integrity Commissioner, Complaints & Inquiries Protocol, Legal Fees

- 14.1 The Integrity Commissioner reports directly to Council and is responsible for performing in an independent manner the following functions with respect to the behaviour of Members:
- 14.1.1 the application of this Code of Conduct;
 - 14.1.2 the application of any procedures, rules, and policies of the municipality and local boards governing the ethical behaviour of Members; and
 - 14.1.3 requests from Members for advice respecting their obligations under the Code of Conduct and procedures, rules, or policies of the municipality governing the ethical behaviour of members.
- 14.2 The Complaints & Inquiries Protocol is Appendix “B” to this Code of Conduct and applies to complaints and requests under this Code of Conduct and the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*.
- 14.3 The Integrity Commissioner shall provide an Annual Report to Council in February of each year detailing its activities, including advice, education, and investigations over the previous year. The Integrity Commissioner shall provide a summary of costs for the previous year, divided into categories detailing costs for complaints, advice, and training.
- 14.4 The Integrity Commissioner may also provide periodic reports as the Integrity Commissioner considers necessary for the purposes of discharging its obligations to the Council and the Town.
- 14.5 Members of Council are entitled to seek the advice of the Integrity Commissioner with respect to their own obligations under the Code of Conduct, any ethical procedure, policy or rule, and sections 5, 5.1 and 5.2 of the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*.
- 14.6 Members are solely responsible for their own legal costs if they retain a lawyer or paralegal to provide counsel, advice or representation on any matter related to this Code of Conduct, any ethical procedure, policy or rule, and sections 5, 5.1 and 5.2 of the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*, including, but not limited to, an investigation and penalties imposed by the Integrity Commissioner or remedial or corrective actions imposed by Council, a complaint to the Ontario Ombudsman, or a judicial review application to the courts from a decision from the Integrity Commissioner.

Gifts and Benefits Disclosure Statement

In accordance with Section 10 of the applicable Code of Conduct, Members shall file disclosure when they have received or accepted a reportable gift or benefit and the value exceeds \$300 from a single source during a calendar year. Members shall provide the Disclosure Statement to the Clerk on a quarterly basis for the preceding quarter.

Gifts and Benefits Details	
Name of Member:	
Recipient of Gift or Benefit <small>Gifts and/or benefits to a Member's spouse, child, parent or staff member must be declared</small>	Self <input type="checkbox"/> Another <input type="checkbox"/> Specify:
Source of gift or benefit: <small>(Individual/Organization/Corporation/Group)</small>	
Date of receipt:	
Nature of gift or benefit: <small>(Provide a description of the gift or benefit received)</small>	
Estimated value of gift or benefit:	
Reason for gift or benefit: <small>(Provide a description of the circumstances under which the gift or benefit was given or received)</small>	
What do you intend to do with the gift?	
Authorization	
Signature of Member: _____	Date:

The personal information on this form is collected under the authority of the *Municipal Act, 2001* and will be made public. Questions about this collection can be directed to the Integrity Commissioner, Principles *Integrity*, at 647.259.8697 or at postoffice@principlesintegrity.org

Town of Ajax Report



Report To: General Government Committee

Prepared By: Mary Lou Cosentino, Manager HR Services

Report #: CAO – 2023 – 09

Subject: **2023 Council Member Remuneration**

Ward(s): n/a

Date of Meeting: May 8, 2023

Reference: Council Remuneration By-Law
By-Law Number 08-2023

Recommendation:

That the attached 2023 Council Remuneration By-Law be brought forward to the May 15, 2023 Council Meeting for approval.

That the Clerk be directed to take the necessary steps to ensure that the Deputy Mayor role in Ajax is properly defined within the relevant Town by-laws and/or policies, and report back to Council for related approvals as necessary.

Background:

The *Municipal Act*, 2001, gives municipal councils the authority to set, by by-law, the remuneration of members of Council. Remuneration packages may include salary, benefits, pension, severance, and other entitlements.

The process by which municipalities determine remuneration entitlements for members of Council varies across the province and they use a range of factors to help set compensation levels. The most common practice that municipalities follow is to survey the compensation paid by neighbouring municipalities.

However, an article published in the *Canadian Public Administration* in 2014 argued that quantitative analysis and comparative studies of other municipalities is inherently flawed. The quantitative method follows a rigid method of inquiry, and fails to consider intangible factors such as responsibilities, cost of living, etc. In contrast, public administration officials argue that 'recognition' needs to be a core principle in determining councillor compensation, the role of the elected representative in the subject municipality and the importance of local government for democracy.

Up until this term of Council, HR Services would only conduct annual reviews of the Council remuneration of Clarington, Oshawa, Pickering and Whitby to identify the average of each comparator entitlement and present findings to Council. The original intent of the process, which was established in 2007, was to gradually improve upon Council's remuneration which lagged behind that of Durham's other lakeshore municipalities at the time.

With the above information in mind, staff are recommending a modernized approach to setting Council compensation which is less administratively cumbersome, but looks more holistically at Council compensation at least once per Council term.

Discussion:

Going forward, it is proposed HR Services conducts a comprehensive review of the Council Remuneration By-law and reports to the General Government Committee within three months following a municipal election to present findings, and if required, recommend process updates for reviews and/or changes to entitlements. A new Council Remuneration by-law with the necessary adjustments would be approved early in the term, and set the framework for Council compensation for the remainder of that term. In the intervening years, Council member salaries would be indexed annually as described later in this report. Any other adjustments that arise mid-term could be handled by mid-term reports to Council as required.

Internally, HR Services will continue to conduct periodic reviews of the by-law throughout the term of office to ensure that the level of compensation provided to members of Council remains fair and competitive as the role of local mayor/councillor continues to evolve and expand. Members of Council are now working full-time hours as they are sitting on more committees than ever before and expected to be more accessible and responsive with the growth of technology. In addition to comparative reviews, HR Services will consider other intangible factors such as responsibilities, changing needs of position and cost of living to determine remuneration entitlements for members of Council.

Using the process identified and outlined above, it is recommended that the following entitlements be adjusted/added to the Council Remuneration By-law, and that these changes be retroactive to January 1, 2023:

Annual Salary

It is recommended that increases to Council remuneration be aligned with Exempt non-union staff increases to streamline the process and calculations. Exempt pay increases follow the same timetable and percentage increases set out in the CUPE collective agreement, which is approved by Council. With this change, Council pay adjustments will be applied automatically based on negotiated increases. Currently, Exempt non-union staff increases are set as: 2023 (2%) and 2024 (2%).

The chart below shows the proposed 2023 salary to be paid to each member of Council.

	2023 Salary (excludes benefits and other allowances)
Mayor	\$118,528
Regional Councillor	\$45,357
Local Councillor	\$45,357

Travel Allowance

It is recommended that Council's travel allowance be adjusted to represent the market median of the Lakeshore municipalities.

	2023 Travel Allowance
Mayor	\$14,897
Regional Councillor	\$9,438
Local Councillor	\$9,438

Registered Retired Savings Plan

The Registered Retired Savings Plan contribution amounts were adjusted to reflect the decision of Council on December 12, 2022 to provide the option to members of Council to participate in the OMERS plan and opt out of the Registered Retired Savings Plan.

Council members that choose to contribute to their RRSP will declare this to HR services and provide proper documentation that they have sufficient RRSP room in the year by the first week of January to be eligible for RRSP payments. Contributions can be made on a monthly/bi-weekly basis only to approved RRSP accounts at financial institutions. Alternatively, if payments cannot be directly deposited into an RRSP account, a lump sum payment can be made at the end of the year.

Severance

It is recommended that the severance for members of Council be at the rate of one month per year of service up to a maximum amount payable of 24 months. This severance package represents the median of the Lakeshore municipalities and is the reasonable norm for leadership positions.

Compensation for Deputy Mayor

It is recommended that the position of Deputy Mayor receive an additional \$6,200 per year in compensation to recognize the advancement of the role. Whereas the role of Acting or Deputy Mayor used to refer specifically to their role in presiding over meetings of Council. The time commitment and responsibilities for the position have increased substantially to include representing the Town at high-profile events, speaking engagements, intergovernmental functions, and high-level meetings.

The \$6,200 represents approximately 10% of the regional councillor's current salary and benefits. The \$6,200 would remain in place for the remainder of the Council term and will not be indexed annually.

Financial Implications:

The recommendations within this report result in the following changes to the Mayor and Council compensation for 2023:

	Increases for 2023
Salary increase*	\$7,658
RRSP/OMERS - Salary increase	\$873
Travel allowance	\$336
Deputy Mayor (new)*	\$6,200

RRSP/OMERS - Deputy Mayor Compensation	\$620
Severance Policy change	\$27,314
Total impact for 2023	\$43,001

* Note that the amounts above do not include associated Town funded statutory payroll costs or life insurance premium impacts, where applicable.

The Council severance amount is currently a calculated funded liability and is payable to Council members when they no longer hold their council positions. The proposed change in the policy will increase the liability for Council members that currently have more than 18 years of service.

The 2023 budget included an assumed increase for Mayor and Council salary, travel allowance and RRSPs, leaving an amount of \$36,100 to be funded from corporate surplus in accordance with the Operating Budget Management Policy.

Communication Issues:

The presentation of a council remuneration report and bylaw once per term provides for a comprehensive, holistic and transparent review of all entitlements and intangible factors. This modernized approach also provides for predictability throughout the term and is less administratively cumbersome. The process also allows for in-term adjustments as required. The updated report on the new process and council remuneration bylaw will be made available on the Council section of the Town’s website.

Relationship to the Strategic Plan:

NA

Conclusion:

Introducing a new compensation review process that considers factors such as responsibilities, cost of living, etc. versus continuing with an outdated method that fails to capture and recognize the realities of current duties is an important step to ensuring adequate compensation for elected officials and local government democracy.

Attachments:

ATT-1: Proposed 2023 Council Remuneration By-Law

Prepared by:

Mary Lou Cosentino – Manager, HR Services

Submitted by:

Shane Baker – Chief Administrative Officer

Approved by:

Shane Baker – Chief Administrative Officer

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF AJAX

BY-LAW NUMBER XX-2023

A By-law to provide for the 2023 annual remuneration for the Mayor and Members of Council of the Town of Ajax.

WHEREAS the *Municipal Act, 2001*, as amended, allows for the payment of remuneration and expenses to members of council and local boards and expenses be deemed as expenses incident to the discharge of their duties;

NOW THEREFORE the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Ajax enacts as follows:

1. ANNUAL SALARY

- a. An annual salary shall be paid bi-weekly to each member of Council.
- b. Effective January 1, 2023 the base salary shall be \$118,528.00 for the Mayor and \$45,357.00 for a Regional and Ward Councillor.
- c. The annual salary paid to members of Council does not include remuneration as a member of any agency, board, commission, corporation, or other similar organization to which the member is appointed.
- d. The annual salary provided to members of Council shall be adjusted annually as per the approved percentage increase established for Exempt non-union employees.
- e. The Deputy Mayor position shall be compensated at an amount of \$6,200 per year for the 2022-2026 term of Council. Such remuneration shall be paid bi-weekly and revaluated as part of the comprehensive review at the outset of each term.
- f. Council's salary will be divided by 26 weeks to determine the biweekly pay.

2. TRAVEL ALLOWANCE

- a. In addition to annual salary, each member of Council shall be provided an annual travel allowance in accordance with the market median provided to the Council members in Pickering, Whitby, Oshawa and Clarington.
- b. Effective January 1, 2023 the travel allowance shall be \$14,897.00 for the Mayor and \$9,438.00 for a Regional and Ward Councillor.
- c. Such remuneration shall be paid bi-weekly.

3. INSURED BENEFITS

- a. The Town will pay 100% of the premiums to an Insurance Benefit Carrier to provide benefits to members of Council. Enrollment in the Group Benefit Plan is mandatory.
- b. Newly elected members of Council will be enrolled in the Group Benefit Plan effective the first month following the date in which the Councillor is sworn in.
- c. The Group Benefit Plan will consist of extended health, dental coverage, member life insurance, accidental death & dismemberment (AD&D), and long-term disability benefits. Details of the benefit coverage are outlined in the Benefit Booklet for Elected Officials.
- d. Benefits (including Retiree and Survivor) and eligibility for benefit coverage are subject to the terms and conditions of any governing master policy of the Benefit Carrier and/or any statutory requirements.
- e. HR Services has the authority to add to or amend the Group Benefit Plan as may be required from time to time. In such cases, staff will advise members of Council prior to the change taking effect.

Benefits Over Age 65

- a. Members of Council remaining in office after the age of sixty-five (65) shall continue to receive extended health and dental coverage in accordance with the terms and conditions of the benefits plan.
- b. Life insurance and AD&D coverage shall be reduced to one times (1x) the member's salary when the member turns sixty-five (65).
- c. Life Insurance and AD&D coverage will terminate when the member turns seventy (70) years of age, or when the individual ceases to be a member of Council, whichever occurs first.

Retirement Benefits

- a. A member of Council retiring from office between the ages of fifty-five (55) and sixty-four (64) and who have a minimum of fifteen (15) years of continuous service, will be eligible for Basic Health and Basic Dental benefits.
- b. This benefit will cease on the last day of the month in which the member attains the age of sixty-five (65).

Survivor Benefits

Where a member of Council dies while holding office, their dependent(s) (meaning eligible dependents) who are listed on the member of Council's benefit plan at the time of death, will continue to receive medical and dental benefits until the earliest of:

- a. a period of twenty-four (24) months following the date of death; or
- b. until the end of the month in which the eligible spouse turns sixty-five (65) years of age; or
- c. until the eligible dependent (if no spouse is listed) no longer qualifies as a "dependent" under the definition of the benefit carrier; or the spouse remarries.

4. REGISTERED RETIRED SAVINGS PLAN (RRSP)

- a. The Town will contribute 9% of the Mayor's earnings up to the YMPE (year's maximum pensionable earnings) and 14.6% for earnings above the YMPE and 10% for Councillors to their Registered Retired Savings Plan (RRSP) provided the member is eligible to contribute
- b. Council members will declare to HR services and provide proper documentation that they have sufficient RRSP room in the year by the first week of January to be eligible for RRSP payments. Contributions can be made on a monthly/bi-weekly basis only to approved RRSP accounts at financial institutions. Alternatively, if payments cannot be directly deposited into an RRSP account, a lump sum payment can be made at the end of the year.
- c. The Town's contribution is considered a taxable benefit.
- d. A member who is eligible to contribute may do so up to December 31st of the year they turn 71 years of age.
- e. A member of Council who is no longer eligible to contribute due to age or as otherwise determined by legislation, shall have 10% paid out to them on the last pay of December.
- f. A member of Council who leaves office or dies while in office prior to December 31st, will receive 10% earned as of their last date in office. In the event of death, the monies owed will be paid to the member's estate.
- g. Members of Council who participate in the OMERS plan (as per By-law 08-2023), shall not be eligible for an RRSP contribution from the Town. The Town will deduct the required OMERS contribution rate from the member's bi-weekly salary and the Town will match the contribution.

5. SEVERANCE

- a. A member of Council with service of a minimum of four (4) consecutive years is eligible to receive severance upon ceasing to be a member by reason of:
 - i Election defeat
 - ii Resignation or decision to not seek re-election
 - iii Dying while in office
- b. Severance is payable at the rate of one month per year up of service up to a maximum amount payable of twenty-four (24) months.
- c. If eligibility requirements as stated in 5(a) are met, a member of HR Services will contact the elected official to prepare the severance package. Payment will be submitted as soon as practical.
- d. Severance may be payable in one lump sum or spread equally over a period not to exceed twenty-four (24) months or any combination of the two payment methods.
- e. No member shall be entitled to receive severance who ceases to be a member by reason of, or by resignation which is a result of:
 - i Removal from office by judicial process
 - ii Disqualification and/or removal from office under operation of any Act of the Parliament of Canada or the Legislature of the Province of Ontario

6. PREGNANCY AND PARENTAL LEAVE

- a. Council members are entitled to be compensated in the event of a pregnancy or parental leave in accordance with Town of Ajax Policy 141, "Pregnancy and Parental Leaves for Members of Council."

7. CHANGES TO SALARIES, TRAVEL ALLOWANCES, RRSP CONTRIBUTION AND SEVERENCE PAY

- a. HR Services shall conduct a review of the Council Remuneration By-law and report to the General Government Committee within three (3) months following a municipal election to present findings and recommendations.
- b. HR Services shall endeavor to maintain an awareness of entitlements provided to Council members in the municipalities of Pickering, Whitby, Oshawa and Clarington, during the intervening years between elections, and if required, present findings and recommendations to the General Government Committee for adjustments to remuneration.

8. OTHER EXPENSES

- a. Members of Council shall be paid from time to time for expenses incurred in the normal performance of their duties in accordance with Council approved policies.

9. By-law 22-2022 is hereby repealed.

10. This By-law is deemed to come into force and take effect on January 1, 2023

READ a first and second time this
Fifteenth day of May, 2023.

READ a third time and passed this
Fifteenth day of May, 2023.

Mayor

D-Clerk

Town of Ajax Report



Report To: General Government Committee

Prepared By: Michael Chee, CPA, CMA
Lead, Long Range Financial Planning and Development Finance

Report #: FIN-2023-07

Subject: 2022 Cash in Lieu of Parkland, Cash in Lieu of Parking and Community Benefits Charge - Annual Statement

Ward(s): All

Date of Meeting: May 08, 2023

Reference: By-law No. 60-2022 Parkland Dedication By-law
By-law No. 60-2019 Cash in Lieu of Parking

Recommendation:

That the report “2022 Cash in Lieu of Parkland, Cash in Lieu of Parking and Community Benefits Charge - Annual Statement” be received for information.

Background:

The *Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, 2015* made amendments to the *Planning Act*, which became effective in 2016 requiring reporting on Section 37 (Increased Height and Density Bonusing) and Section 42 (Conveyance of land for park purposes) of the *Planning Act*. In accordance with these changes the Treasurer had to provide a financial statement including opening and closing balances to Council relating to cash in lieu of parkland monies and funds received through increased height and density bonusing. This statement had to be made available to the public.

On October 15, 2019, a Cash in Lieu of Parking By-law was approved by Council which allows the Town to exempt an owner or occupant of land from providing and maintaining onsite parking facilities that are required under a by-law in exchange for a cash in lieu payment of the required parking space. Section 10 of the by-law requires that the Treasurer and/or Planning & Development Services staff makes available a statement of transactions to the public.

On September 18, 2020, O. Reg. 509/20 Community Benefits Charges and Parkland under Ontario’s *Planning Act* came into force. On the same day, the remaining amendments to the *Planning Act* and the *Development Charges Act (DCA)* made by Bill 108 and Bill 197 came into force. The new regulation reversed previously announced changes that would have combined parkland dedication, including cash in lieu of parkland contributions, development charges and Section 37 benefits into one Community Benefits Charge (CBC). While CBCs will replace former section 37 (Increased height and density bonusing) benefits, development charges and

parkland dedication or cash in lieu of parkland dedication will continue to remain separate requirements.

Discussion:

Section 37 (Community Benefits Charge)

Formerly, Section 37 (increased height and density bonusing) of the *Planning Act* allowed municipalities to obtain public benefits, such as public art, affordable housing, or day care facilities, through development agreements in exchange for allowing additional height and density in a development through the zoning by-law amendment process. Any funds collected under bonusing agreements are required to be held in a segregated reserve fund, and spent only for facilities, services, and other items in accordance with provisions of the legislation.

Changes enacted under Bill 108 and Bill 197 eliminated the Section 37 height and density bonusing tool and replaced it with a new Community Benefit Charge (CBC).

The Community Benefits Charge can fund the growth-related capital costs of any potential service, including services recovered partially through DCs or parkland dedication. The CBC charge can only be applied to higher density residential developments with a combination of 10 or more residential units and 5 or more storeys in height. The maximum CBC charge payable is set at 4% of land value prior to drawing a building permit. The Town is currently in the process of preparing a Community Benefit Charge Background Study, and a by-law is expected to be presented to Council this year.

While the former Section 37 height and density bonusing tool can no longer be used, Section 37.1 of the *Planning Act* establishes transition provisions allowing by-laws passed under the former Section 37 to continue to apply. The Town utilized the former Section 37 twice and is currently awaiting payment through the execution of various Site Plan Agreements. The execution date for these agreements lie with the applicants.

There was one amount collected in 2022 with respect to Section 37 height and density bonusing agreements.

Under s.s 37 (47) of the *Planning Act* whereby in each calendar year, a municipality shall spend or allocate at least 60 per cent of the monies that are in the special account at the beginning of the year. The Town ascertains that it has allocated at least 60% of the balance to fund specific projects in 2023.

Section 42 (Conveyance of land for park purposes)

Under Section 42 of the *Planning Act*, a municipality may require, as a condition of development, that land be conveyed to the municipality for park or other public recreational purposes. In certain circumstances, council may require a cash payment in lieu of land dedication, to the value of the land otherwise required to be conveyed. The *Planning Act* allows the municipality to accept parkland dedication at a base rate of 5% for residential uses and 2% for commercial, and industrial uses. Alternatively, municipalities may require parkland dedication at a rate of 1 hectare per 600 dwelling units or 1 hectare per 1,000 units with cash-in-lieu accepted.

On September 26, 2022, the Town passed By-law No. 60-2022 Parkland Dedication By-law. The Parkland Dedication By-law is currently under appeal at the Ontario Land Tribunal.

Additionally, since passing the new Parkland Dedication By-law, Bill 23: *More Homes Built Faster Act* came into force, making significant amendments to the parkland dedication provisions of the *Planning Act*. Staff are continuing to work with the Town's lawyer through the appeal, while awaiting additional regulations.

Funds collected under the Parkland Dedication By-law must be held in a segregated reserve fund restricting the use of allocated interest and monies. This funding is to be spent for recreational purposes including the acquisition of land to be used for park or other recreational means; the construction, improvement or repair of buildings and the acquisition of machinery, particular to park purposes. Attachment 1 contains the 2022 transactions which comply with the Planning Act.

Under the s.s 42 (16.1) of The Planning Act, beginning in 2023 and in each calendar year thereafter, a municipality shall spend or allocate at least 60% of the monies that are in the special account at the beginning of the year. The Town also ascertains that at least 60% of the funding available at the beginning of this year has been spent or allocated to future projects.

Section 40 (Cash in lieu of parking)

In 2019 Council approved a by-law authorizing the acceptance of cash in lieu of parking spaces in accordance with Section 40 of the *Planning Act*. The by-law allows for the exemption from an owner or occupant to provide and maintain onsite parking facilities that are required under a by-law in exchange for a cash in lieu payment of the required parking space. This by-law is only applicable to non-residential uses, unless otherwise authorized by Council, and collections may be used to support parking related initiatives within the Town.

To date the Town has collected the equivalent of 2 parking spaces with respect to redevelopment of a Heritage property in Pickering Village. There were no additional contributions made to this reserve in 2022. Attachment 1 contains the 2022 transactions complying with the reporting requirements stated in the respective by-law.

Financial Implications:

This report discloses the 2022 activity in the Cash in Lieu of Parkland , Cash in Lieu of Parking, and Community Benefits Charge (former Section 37 height and density bonusing) Reserve Funds.

Communication Issues:

Under Sections 37(48), 40(3) and 42(17) of the *Planning Act*, an annual statement of transactions is required to be made available to the public, as such, a copy of this report and attachment will be posted on the Town's website. Section 10 of the cash in lieu of parking by-law also requires that an annual report be presented to Council.

Under subsections 40(3)(d) and 42(16) of the *Planning Act*, the auditor of the municipality, in the auditor's annual report, shall report on the activities and position of the accounts. These transactions will be included in the Town's 2022 financial statements.

Relationship to the Strategic Plan:

This report aligns with the following section of the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan – Action26:

Pillar: Growing our Community
Priority: 1. Embrace dynamic and sustainable growth
1.6 Continue to monitor and respond to legislative changes
Supporting Action: Provincial Legislation (Bill 23 and Bill 109)

Conclusion:

The completion of the Cash in Lieu of Parkland, Cash in Lieu of Parking and Community Benefits Charge Reserve Fund Annual Statement fulfills the reporting requirements of the *Planning Act* and Section 10 of the Cash in lieu of parking by-law.

Attachments:

ATT-1: Cash in lieu of Parkland and Cash in Lieu of Parking as of December 31, 2022

ATT-2: Community Benefits Charges as of December 31, 2022

Prepared by:

Michael Chee, CPA, CMA - Lead, Long Range Financial Planning and Development Finance

Submitted by:

Dianne Valentim, CPA, CGA – Director of Finance/Treasurer

Approved by:

Shane Baker – Chief Administrative Officer

Attachment 1
Statement on Cash in Lieu of Parkland and Cash in Lieu of Parking
For the Year Ended December 31, 2022

	Cash in Lieu of Parkland	Cash in Lieu of Parking
Balance as of January 1, 2022	\$ 4,248,103	\$ 7,266
Plus:		
Cash-in-lieu Contributions Received	1,132,767	
Interest Earned	119,202	170
Subtotal	1,251,968	170
Less:		
Amount Transferred to Capital (or Other) Funds	193,031	-
Subtotal	193,031	-
December 31, 2022 Closing Balance	\$ 5,307,041	\$ 7,436

Attachment 2
Statement on Community Benefits Charge
For the Year Ended December 31, 2022

	Community Benefits Charge
Balance as of January 1, 2022	\$ -
Plus:	
Cash Contributions Received	36,000
Interest Earned	144
Subtotal	36,144
Less:	
Amount Transferred to Capital (or Other) Funds	
Subtotal	-
December 31, 2022 Closing Balance	\$ 36,144
Amount committed in 2023 Capital Budget	36,000
Closing Balance less commitments	\$ 144

Note: funds reported in the Community Benefit Charge Reserve have been collected under the former Section 37 (Increased Height and Density Bonusing) of the Planning Act. The Town currently does not have a Community Benefits Charge (CBC) By-law, and the preparation of a CBC By-law is currently underway.

Town of Ajax Report



Report To: General Government Committee

Prepared By: Michael Chee, CPA, CMA
Lead, Long Range Financial Planning and Development Finance

Report #: FIN-2023-08

Subject: 2022 Canada Community-Building Fund Annual Report

Ward(s): All

Date of Meeting: May 8, 2023

Reference: N/A

Recommendation:

That the report “2022 Canada Community-Building Fund Annual Report” be received for information.

Background:

In December 2011, the passage of Bill C-13 made the Federal Gas Tax fund a permanent annual source of infrastructure funding for Canada’s municipalities. The Town of Ajax receives funding through the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) who administers the program for all Ontario Municipalities except for the City of Toronto. On June 29, 2021, the Gas Tax Fund was renamed the Canada Community-Building Fund (CCBF) to better reflect the program’s evolution over time.

The current CCBF agreement with AMO, which will be in place until 2023, focuses on community benefits, long term planning, asset management, as well as environmental outputs. As part of this agreement municipalities are required to report on project scope, outcome, and output indicators to demonstrate the national objectives of increased productivity and economic growth, cleaner environment, and stronger cities and communities.

The Canada Community-Building Fund allocation to municipalities is based on municipal population and is recalculated every five years using census data to reflect population changes. The contributions to municipalities are indexed bi-annually at 2% per year and the ongoing contribution to the Town has reached just under \$4 million annually by 2023.

Discussion:

The Canada Community-Building Fund enables the Town to complete capital projects that enhance the community’s transportation and pedestrian networks, allow for energy efficient systems, provide stormwater treatment, new recreational opportunities, and support asset management initiatives while not displacing funding previously allocated to take care of our assets.

In 2022, the Town funded \$2,670,473 of eligible expenditures focusing on achieving the CCBF program objectives of providing productivity and economic growth, supporting a cleaner environment, and supporting strong cities and communities. Some of the funded projects include:

- 2022 Road Resurfacing Projects \$877,000
- Ajax Community Centre Boiler Replacement and Energy Improvements \$394,000
- Mclean Community Centre - Replacement of Five Rooftop Condensers \$246,000
- Mclean Community Centre - Pool Filtration System and Pump Replacement \$224,000
- Replacement of Boilers at the Main Branch Library and Fire Station \$230,000

To demonstrate the positive impacts of CCBF investments in our community, and as required under the funding agreement, output and outcome reporting is done once the project construction is complete and/or is ready to be closed. As of the end of 2022, the Town was able to report results for five (5) projects reaching the completion stage. These metrics are detailed in Attachment 2. Any resulting financial impacts driven by these projects have been reflected in the operating budgets.

Financial Implications:

As of December 31, 2022, the Town has received \$55,754,741 in Canada Community-Building Fund funding of which \$44,267,267 has been applied to 146 capital projects since the inception of the program.

The table below identifies the categories and amounts spent in 2022 as well as the total amount of Canada Community-Building Fund spent to date.

Eligible Project Category	2022 Expenditures	2005-2022 Expenditures
Local Roads and Bridges	\$984,244	\$19,417,308
Community Energy Systems	\$1,424,590	\$17,078,551
Recreation	\$145,581	\$2,539,763
Public Transit	\$0	\$1,527,207
Capacity Building	\$116,057	\$1,582,314
Culture	\$0	\$1,126,184
Wastewater	\$0	\$894,161
Solid Waste	\$0	\$72,575
Sport	\$0	\$29,203
Total	\$2,670,472	\$44,267,266

In addition to the \$55.7M allocated to projects as reported above, a total of \$9.9M has been committed through approved budgets to 31 active Town capital projects (new or in-progress) identified in Attachment 1. The remaining uncommitted balance will be applied to future capital projects brought forward in the capital budget process.

Communication Issues:

The Canada Community-Building Fund annual reporting and a listing of the 2022 CCBF funded projects can be found on the Town of Ajax website. Further details on all active and completed projects funded by the Canada Community-Building Fund are available to be viewed at <https://www.buildingcommunities.ca/project-map>. Copies of any Output and Outcome Report can be requested by contacting the Town of Ajax Finance Department.

The Town will continue to recognize CCBF funded projects by installing signs at construction sites as required under the funding agreement and by publishing notifications on social media channels.

Relationship to the Strategic Plan:

This report aligns with the following section of the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan – Action26:

Pillar: Modernizing our Community
Priority: 5. Demonstrate sound financial management
5.1 Manage financial resources and assets to address growing needs
Supporting Action: Infrastructure Management (Stormwater Management Fee, Infrastructure Levy, Asset Management Plan, etc.)

Conclusion:

Eligible projects to be funded by the Canada Community-Building Fund will be identified through the Capital Budget and Long-Range Capital Forecast process and follow requirements under the Canada Community-Building Fund Agreement to ensure that appropriate investments are made in our community with these funds.

Attachments:

ATT-1: Canada Community-Building Fund – 2022 Municipal Projects Report

ATT-2: 2022 Completed Projects – Output and Outcome Reporting

Prepared by:

Michael Chee, CPA, CMA – Lead, Long Range Financial Planning and Development Finance

Submitted by:

Dianne Valentim, CPA, CGA – Director of Finance/Treasurer

Approved by:

Shane Baker – Chief Administrative Officer



Canada Community-Building Fund

2022 Municipal Projects Report

Town of Ajax

<i>Project Title</i>	<i>Project Details</i>	<i>Total Project Cost*</i>	<i>Cumulative CCBF Funds</i>	<i>2022 CCBF Funds</i>	<i>Project Status</i>
Capacity Building					
Walkway & Park Lighting Condition Assessment	The structural condition of walkway and park lighting poles is being evaluated and a report will be provided with asset management recommendations for prioritized pole replacements and maintenance recommendations. The outcomes of the structural condition assessment will inform the long range capital forecast and the asset management plan.	\$ 120,000.00	\$ 13,864.79	\$ 0.00	Ongoing
Integration of Asset Management Systems	The purpose of this project is to integrate Asset Management with the Town's Computerized Maintenance Management System (CMMS) and Geographical Information Systems (GIS) to enable end-to-end connectivity of systems in order to improve service delivery and support the maintenance and rehabilitation of infrastructure and assets.	\$ 657,324.52	\$ 503,276.47	\$ 24,253.51	Ongoing
Asset Level of Service Assessment	The scope of this project is to identify the existing levels of service for all infrastructure assets and develop levels of service for all infrastructure assets. The existing and proposed levels of service will be included in the Town's asset management plan as prescribed by the asset management regulation (O. Reg. 588/17).	\$ 431,117.00	\$ 359,130.50	\$ 91,803.60	Ongoing
Subtotal Capacity Building		\$ 1,208,441.52	\$ 876,271.76	\$ 116,057.11	
Community Energy Systems					
Applecroft Walkway Lighting Replacement	The Applecroft Walkway lighting replacement project includes replacing 8 light poles, converting the existing HPS lights with LED technology, and replacing the buried electrical wires due to its age. The walkway has been identified in the Town's Pole Condition Assessment as in need of upgrades. When light poles are replaced, the Town converts the lights to LED to improve safety, reduce maintenance costs and reduce energy consumption.	\$ 160,000.00	\$ 41,244.55	\$ 41,244.55	Ongoing
Southwood Park Neighbourhood Streetlight Improvement	The scope of work for this project includes the detailed electrical design and construction to convert the existing streetlight system to LED in the Southwood Park Neighbourhood including Simpson Road, Follet Court, Emperor Street, Burcher Road, O'Dell Court, Turnbull Road, Parsons Road, Taylor Road, Foord Road, Gibson Court, Pickering Beach Road, and Preston Court. The streetlight conversion to LED will result in increased energy savings.	\$ 570,086.42	\$ 91,546.29	\$ 27,941.24	Ongoing

* Total Project Cost is the total budgeted or completed cost of the project. Not all projects are 100% funded by the Canada Community-Building Fund.



Canada Community-Building Fund

2022 Municipal Projects Report

Town of Ajax

Project Title	Project Details	Total Project Cost*	Cumulative CCBF Funds	2022 CCBF Funds	Project Status
Replacement of Five Rooftop Units at Ajax Community Centre	The five rooftop units utilize R22 refrigerant and were installed during the major expansion in 1990. The rooftop units require replacement as identified in the 2019 energy audit due to age and the phasing out of the R22 refrigerant. The retrofit is expected to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse emissions by an estimated 7 tonnes annually.	\$ 431,000.00	\$ 179,181.78	\$ 163,408.99	Ongoing
Replacement of Boilers at the Main Branch Library and Fire Station #2	The Town is replacing the three boilers at the Main Branch Library and Fire Station #2 with new high efficiency condensing boilers with an efficiency of 97%.	\$ 292,290.11	\$ 257,787.51	\$ 229,742.47	Ongoing
Ajax Community Centre & McLean Community Centre - Lighting Retrofit - Phase II	The two facilities have a combined total area of 300,000 square feet. The lighting retrofit is therefore being completed in phases. Phase II involves the replacement of approximately 1,000 existing fluorescent fixtures throughout the facilities. Phase II of the lighting retrofit is expected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 9 tonnes at ACC and 3 tonnes at MCC annually.	\$ 615,000.00	\$ 120,230.07	\$ 98,504.31	Ongoing
Neighbourhood Streetlight Improvements	This project includes the removal and replacement of 21 existing high pressure sodium street lighting with new poles, mast arms and LED luminaires in various locations within the Town of Ajax, including on Strathy Rd, Burrells Rd and Lambard Cres resulting in an estimated energy consumption reduction of 45%.	\$ 298,246.67	\$ 298,246.67	\$ 0.00	Complete
Ajax Community Centre Boiler Replacement and Energy Improvements	The proposed scope of work includes the replacement of seven hot water and heating boilers throughout the Ajax Community Centre. These existing boilers have an operating efficiency in the range of 65 -70% and have reached the end of their useful life. These will be replaced with high efficiency condensing boilers that will improve the heating and domestic hot water efficiency. This retrofit is expected to result in a reduction of GHG emissions.	\$ 610,000.00	\$ 466,964.29	\$ 393,981.13	Ongoing
McLean Community Centre - Pool Filtration System and Pump Replacement	The scope of work includes the removal and replacement of the McLean Community Centre pool filtration system and pumps. The existing system has reached the end of its useful life and is being replaced with new higher efficiency components such as variable frequency drive pumps and automation control that will reduce energy consumption and reduce GHG emissions.	\$ 1,185,857.69	\$ 273,884.27	\$ 223,884.27	Ongoing
McLean Community Centre - Replacement of Five Rooftop Condensers	The scope of work includes the removal and replacement of five rooftop condensing units with new condensers and new refrigerant. These rooftop units require replacement due to their condition and age as well as the phase out of R22 refrigerant. The units will be replaced with five new higher efficiency condensing units that will provide a reduction in energy consumption as well as a reduction in GHG emissions.	\$ 307,536.38	\$ 307,536.38	\$ 245,832.62	Complete
Southwood Park Neighbourhood Streetlight Improvements	The project scope involves the removal of the existing high pressure sodium streetlight system including wire, poles and lights. The new streetlight system includes new buried conduit, wires, concrete poles and LED lights.	\$ 559,364.44	\$ 559,364.44	\$ 0.00	Complete

* Total Project Cost is the total budgeted or completed cost of the project. Not all projects are 100% funded by the Canada Community-Building Fund.



Canada Community-Building Fund

2022 Municipal Projects Report

Town of Ajax

<i>Project Title</i>	<i>Project Details</i>	<i>Total Project Cost*</i>	<i>Cumulative CCBF Funds</i>	<i>2022 CCBF Funds</i>	<i>Project Status</i>
ACC - Replacement of Air Handling Units	There are seven air handling units located in the mechanical penthouse that were installed during the major expansion of 1990. The units provide heating, ventilation, and air conditioning to various areas of the facility. The project involves replacing the seven units with new high efficiency units, which will result in improved heating, cooling, and ventilation efficiency.	\$ 517,808.00	\$ 462,645.66	\$ 50.72	Complete
Energy Efficient Systems for LEED Certification of Ajax Fire and Emergency Services HQ	This facility has been designed as a Canada Green Council LEED certified building. LEED initiatives at this facility include - green roof, connection of underground cisterns, ground source heat pump, underfloor ventilation, and high efficiency lighting & control system. This facility is projected to use 50% of the energy when compared to a conventional building of this type and size.	\$ 13,820,000.00	\$ 1,492,602.33	\$ 0.00	Ongoing
Subtotal Community Energy Systems		\$ 19,367,189.71	\$ 4,551,234.24	\$ 1,424,590.30	
Recreation					
Audley Recreation Centre Phase 2	44,800 sq ft expansion to an existing recreation facility that provides an active living studio, change rooms, multi-functional space for programming for all ages, community rooms, and a branch library.	\$ 42,870,700.00	\$ 2,402,680.15	\$ 8,498.71	Ongoing
Playground and Walkway Replacement at Betty Bujold Park	The existing playground and walkway are being replaced with new infrastructure. This investment is required in order to improve accessibility along the paved trail, as well as into the playground area. This project will bring the park up to modern standards by removing old infrastructure that is in dis-repair and replacing it with new asphalt paving that will also provide a safer experience for park users.	\$ 180,000.00	\$ 96,786.07	\$ 96,786.07	Ongoing
Improvements to the Cricket Clubhouse	The clubhouse building consists of a one storey 'A' frame. The clubhouse building has undergone very little maintenance since construction and as such requires substantial rehabilitation to ensure the building is safe.	\$ 3,181,800.00	\$ 40,296.30	\$ 40,296.30	Ongoing
Subtotal Recreation		\$ 46,232,500.00	\$ 2,539,762.52	\$ 145,581.08	
Local Roads and Bridges					
Road Resurfacing - Brennan Rd, Nicholls Ct, Daniels Cr, Darbyshire Ct, Mcnamara Ct	Road Rehabilitation of Brennan Road (1.07 lane km), Nicolls Crt (0.25 lane km), Daniels Cr (.86 lane km), Darbyshire Crt (.25 lane km), McNamara Crt (.47 lane km)	\$ 1,066,629.08	\$ 877,309.14	\$ 877,309.14	Ongoing

* Total Project Cost is the total budgeted or completed cost of the project. Not all projects are 100% funded by the Canada Community-Building Fund.



Canada Community-Building Fund

2022 Municipal Projects Report

Town of Ajax

Project Title	Project Details	Total Project Cost*	Cumulative CCBF Funds	2022 CCBF Funds	Project Status
Admiral Road Reconstruction	Construction of Admiral Road from Parry Road to Roosevelt Avenue. The project includes 560 m of full depth road reconstruction, repair of existing sidewalk and boulevard, repair of existing storm sewer and replacement of existing watermain (by Durham Region). The reconstruction of municipal roads and associated repairs are a critical component of the Town's efforts to modernize existing municipal infrastructure and other assets.	\$ 3,848,400.00	\$ 127,855.77	\$ 39,318.31	Ongoing
Fuller Road Reconstruction	Construction of Fuller Road from Westney Road S to Clements Road W. The project includes 730 m of full depth road reconstruction and installation of new sidewalks. The reconstruction of municipal roads and associated repairs are a critical component of the Town's efforts to modernize existing municipal infrastructure and other assets.	\$ 1,850,000.00	\$ 1,549,462.44	\$ 19,016.90	Ongoing
Reconstruction of Lakeview Boulevard	The scope of work includes the full depth reconstruction of Lakeview Boulevard from Pickering Beach Road to Poplar Ave and from Maple Ave to Shoal Point Road including culvert replacement, drainage improvement, curb replacement, new trail, new streetlighting and installation of top lift asphalt from Pickering Beach Road to Shoal Point Road. Project also includes geotechnical investigations and the detailed design of Range Line Road which will be a future Gas Tax funded project.	\$ 1,050,000.00	\$ 781,689.30	\$ 0.00	Ongoing
Dreyer Drive Reconstruction	The scope of work includes reconstruction of approximately 1.0 km of Dreyer Drive (from Harwood Ave to Clements Rd), including curb and sidewalk replacements.	\$ 1,770,445.96	\$ 1,672,571.81	\$ 0.00	Complete
Lakeview Boulevard Realignment	Realignment of 0.8 lane km of the Lakeview Boulevard as recommended by the Class Environmental Assessment (EA). The scope of work involves realigning Lakeview Boulevard along the original road alignment to the north, removing and restoring the existing road alignment, and installing new LED street lighting, a new cycling trail, new crosswalks, and traffic calming measures.	\$ 2,438,600.00	\$ 420,715.04	\$ 0.00	Ongoing
Design and Implementation of New Bicycle Lanes	Design and implementation of on-road bicycle infrastructure along 8 km of existing roads to expand the bicycle network. Implementation includes pavement markings, wayfinding signage, regulatory signage, and route identification signage.	\$ 89,756.02	\$ 89,756.02	\$ 48,600.00	Ongoing
Extension of Carruthers Trail to connect to Alexander's Crossing	Design and construction of a new section (570 metres) of the Carruthers Trail to connect at Kingston Road and Alexander's Crossing.	\$ 275,000.00	\$ 54,814.19	\$ 0.00	Ongoing

* Total Project Cost is the total budgeted or completed cost of the project. Not all projects are 100% funded by the Canada Community-Building Fund.



Canada Community-Building Fund

2022 Municipal Projects Report

Town of Ajax

<i>Project Title</i>	<i>Project Details</i>	<i>Total Project Cost*</i>	<i>Cumulative CCBF Funds</i>	<i>2022 CCBF Funds</i>	<i>Project Status</i>
Road Network Improvements in Downtown Ajax	EA, Design and Construction of Downtown Ajax Road Network improvements to support the redevelopment and intensification of the Ajax Plaza lands. The reconstruction of Commercial Avenue (472m) from Hunt Street to Station Street includes on-street parking, cycle tracks and sidewalks on both sides of the roadway, new traffic signals and dedicated left turning lanes at four access points. Reconstruction of Commercial Ave and access roads is contingent on the timing of the Central Park development.	\$ 3,110,000.00	\$ 207,016.35	\$ 0.00	Ongoing
Subtotal Local Roads and Bridges		\$ 15,498,831.06	\$ 5,781,190.06	\$ 984,244.35	
Sports					
Harwood South Soccer Pitch Improvements	Installation of new sports field lighting on an existing senior-size soccer field on Harwood Avenue South.	\$ 420,026.00	\$ 20,026.37	\$ 0.00	Ongoing
Subtotal Sports		\$ 420,026.00	\$ 20,026.37	\$ 0.00	
Wastewater					
Installation of Waterfront Rain Gardens	To improve the quality of the stormwater discharging to Lake Ontario, a reduction in stormwater runoff and improvements to water quality through filtration/infiltration systems will be implemented through installation of waterfront rain gardens.	\$ 462,228.00	\$ 72,228.37	\$ 0.00	Ongoing
Subtotal Wastewater		\$ 462,228.00	\$ 72,228.37	\$ 0.00	
Total		\$ 83,189,216.29	\$ 13,840,713.32	\$ 2,670,472.84	

* Total Project Cost is the total budgeted or completed cost of the project. Not all projects are 100% funded by the Canada Community-Building Fund.

Attachment 2

Canada Community-Building Fund

2022 Completed Projects - Output and Outcome Reporting

Town of Ajax

<i>Project Title</i>	<i>Project Details</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Output</i>	<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Result</i>
Neighbourhood Streetlight Improvements	This project includes the removal and replacement of existing high pressure sodium street lighting with new poles, mast arms and LED luminaires in various locations within the Town of Ajax, including on Strathy Rd, Burrells Rd and Lambard Cres resulting in an estimated energy consumption reduction of 45%.	Complete	Replacement of streetlighting with 32 LED fixtures	46% decrease in energy consumption	\$600 in approximate savings reflected in approved operating budgets
McLean Community Centre - Replacement of Five Rooftop Condensers	The scope of work includes the removal and replacement of five rooftop condensing units with new condensers and new refrigerant. These rooftop units require replacement due to their condition and age as well as the phase out of R22 refrigerant. The units will be replaced with five new higher efficiency condensing units that will provide a reduction in energy consumption as well as a reduction in GHG emissions.	Complete	Replacement of 5 rooftop condensing units	27,828 kWh decrease in energy consumption and 1.4 tonnes decrease in Co2 emissions	\$2,800 in approximate savings reflected in approved operating budgets
Southwood Park Neighbourhood Streetlight Improvements	The project scope involves the removal of the existing high pressure sodium streetlight system including wire, poles and lights. The new streetlight system includes new buried conduit, wires, concrete poles and LED lights.	Complete	Replacement of 38 light fixtures	55% decrease in energy consumption	\$800 in approximate savings reflected in approved operating budgets
ACC - Replacement of Air Handling Units	There are seven air handling units located in the mechanical penthouse that were installed during the major expansion of 1990. The units provide heating, ventilation, and air conditioning to various areas of the facility. The project involves replacing the seven units with new high efficiency units, which will result in improved heating, cooling, and ventilation efficiency.	Complete	Replacement of 7 air handling units	51,349 kWh decrease in energy consumption and 2.6 tonnes decrease in Co2 emissions	\$5,100 in approximate savings reflected in approved operating budgets
Dreyer Drive Reconstruction	The scope of work includes reconstruction of approximately 1.0 km of Dreyer Drive (from Harwood Ave to Clements Rd), including curb and sidewalk replacements.	Complete	2.0 lane kms of rehabilitated roads	Increase of 2.0 lane kms of paved road rated as good and above	Investment in roadways

Town of Ajax Report



Report To: General Government Committee

Prepared By: Michael Chee, CPA, CMA
Lead, Long Range Financial Planning and Development Finance

Report #: FIN-2023-09

Subject: 2022 Development Charge Reserve Funds - Treasurer's Annual Statement

Ward(s): All

Date of Meeting: May 08, 2023

Reference: 2018 Development Charges Background Study and Bylaw 50-2018
2020 Amended Development Charges Background Study and Bylaw 55-2020

Recommendation:

That the report "2022 Development Charge Reserve Funds – Treasurer's Annual Statement" be received for information.

Background:

The Development Charges Act (DCA), Section 43 (1) states that "The treasurer of a municipality shall each year on or before such date as the council of the municipality may direct, give the council a financial statement relating to the development charge by-laws and reserve funds established under section 33."

This statement must include:

- the opening and closing balances of the reserve funds including the transactions relating to the funds;
- a listing of all assets whose capital costs were funded under a development charge by-law during the year, and for each asset, the costs not funded under the by-law and the source of other funding;
- a statement indicating compliance with not imposing directly or indirectly a charge related to a development or a requirement to construct a service related to development except as permitted by the DCA or another Act.

Discussion:

In 2015 Ontario Regulation 82/98 and Bill 73, Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, 2015, provided specific guidance with respect to the information to be included in the Treasurer's annual statement. The recent changes to the DCA enacted by Bills 23, 108 & 197 had no impact on the pre-established annual reporting requirements, however, the ability to defer the payment of development charges for specific development types as allowed by section 26.1 of the DCA has had some impact on the tracking and reporting of these balances. Changes to the DCA enacted

by Bill 109 did have an impact on the pre-established annual reporting requirements in which the Treasurer's Annual Statement is made available to the public. The Town is in compliance with Bill 109 and the Treasurer's Annual Statement can be found on the [Town's website](#).

The Development Charge Reserve Funds Annual Statement in Attachment 1 provides the consolidated opening and closing balances of each service category maintained by the Town of Ajax and reports transfers to/from service categories as applicable.

Attachment 2 provides information, by capital project and service category, of the development charge transfers made to capital accounts or to operating funds during the fiscal year, as well as other sources of financing provided to each project.

The annual statement shows

- the closing balance as of December 31, 2022 for all DCs collected and earned (deferred) in 2022,
- the cash balance as of December 31, 2022 net of the DCs and interest that remain to be collected, and
- the balance net of future DC collections and funding commitments for capital projects approved by Council.

Deferred DCs including interest charges are funds that are recorded upon issuance of a first building permit for specific types of developments as allowed under section 26.1 of the DCA, or as detailed in a Section 27 agreement executed between the developer and the Town. Unless stated otherwise in an early/late payment agreement with the Town, the deferred development charges will typically be collected over 6 or 21 years, with the first instalment being received upon occupancy of the first building.

Capital project funding commitments are monies set aside to fund capital projects that have not yet been completed. A list of capital project commitments related to each service category can be found in Attachment 3.

The Town of Ajax affirms that it is compliant with s.s. 35 (2) of the Development Charges Act, whereby a municipality shall spend or allocate at least 60 per cent of the monies that are in a reserve fund for the services related to a highway at the beginning of the year.

Lastly, the Town of Ajax affirms that it is compliant with s.s. 59.1 (1) of the Development Charges Act, whereby it has not imposed directly or indirectly a charge related to development or a requirement to construct a service related to development, except as permitted by the DCA or another Act.

Development Charge Exemptions

The value of development charge exemptions granted by a municipality, such as those eligible through Community Improvement Plans (CIP) or non-statutory DC implementation policies, must be contributed from Town funds to the Town's DC reserve funds. This is a legislative requirement to ensure the financial burden created by municipal policy decisions is not transferred to future developments. In 2022, DC exemptions totaling \$5,764,127 were provided for a development in the Downtown CIP area for which the DC exemptions had been authorized by Council based on pre-suspension criteria of the related CIP (see September 13, 2021 GGC report for further details.) These exemptions were funded from Town Funds previously applied to DC eligible debentures.

Financial Implications:

The changes to the DCA that became effective January 1, 2020 aimed to increase the supply of affordable housing in Ontario and facilitate the creation of much needed spaces for an aging population and hospice care. The changes enacted on that date introduced DC deferrals for rental housing developments and institutional developments including, but not limited to, retirement homes, long-term care homes, and hospices.

In addition, the changes to the DCA that became effective November 28, 2022 further aims to increase the supply of housing (see December 12, 2022 GGC report for further details.). Full DC exemptions for affordable and attainable housing meeting specific criteria are now required, as well as for non-profit housing developments. DC discounts for purpose built rentals based on number of bedrooms (25% discount for 3 bedrooms, 20% discount for 2 bedrooms and 15% for all others) are also now required. Interest charges on frozen and deferred DCs are set at a maximum of Canadian Banks' prime rate plus 1 per cent per annum.

The magnitude of development approvals for DC exempted developments in the Town of Ajax could significantly impact the available cash to fund capital projects in the year subsequent to the issuance of these respective building permits. Future growth related development needs will continue to be balanced with current and anticipated Development Charge collections. Some capital projects currently listed in the long range capital forecast may have to be delayed while other projects deemed essential will require consideration of alternate funding arrangements to match future DC collection timelines.

Communication Issues:

As per O. Reg. 82/98, the Town is required to ensure that the Treasurer's Annual Statement is available to the public, as such, a copy of this report and the attachments will be posted on the Town website.

In addition, under the above noted regulation, a description of the service for which the fund was established and the services in the category must be disclosed. A pamphlet explaining the services for which the fund was established can be found on the [Town's website](#).

It is also a requirement that the annual statement must be provided to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) upon request.

Relationship to the Strategic Plan:

This report aligns with the following section of the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan – Action26:

Pillar 2:	Growing our Community
Priority:	1. Embrace dynamic and sustainable growth
	1.6 Continue to monitor and respond to legislative changes
Pillar 3:	Modernizing our Community
Priority:	5.1 Manage Financial resources and assets to address growing needs

Conclusion:

The completion of the Development Charge Reserve Funds Annual Statement fulfills the reporting requirements of the Development Charges Act.

Attachments:

ATT-1: Development Charge Reserve Annual Statement

ATT-2: Development Related Capital Growth Reserve Funds Transfers

ATT-3: Development Charge Reserve Fund Commitments

Prepared by:

Michael Chee, CPA, CMA – Lead, Long Range Financial Planning and Development Finance

Submitted by:

Dianne Valentim, CPA, CGA – Director of Finance/Treasurer

Approved by:

Shane Baker – Chief Administrative Officer

Attachment 1
Development Charge Reserve Funds Annual Statement
For the Town of Ajax - Town Services
For the Year Ended December 31, 2022

	Notes	Total	Development Related Capital Growth Studies	Fire Stations, Vehicles and Equipment	Transportation (incl Roads and related)	Parks and Recreation (incl Vehicles and Equipment)	Libraries and Related (incl Materials)
Balance as of January 1, 2022		26,179,486	385,502	(148,429)	19,280,599	6,168,567	493,247
Plus:							
Development Charge Collections		14,576,334	257,778	288,600	10,329,501	3,065,095	635,360
Development Charge Collections (Deferred)		-	-	-	-	-	-
Town Contribution for DC Exemptions	(1)	5,764,127	103,066	104,690	3,618,736	1,605,353	332,282
Interest earned		889,194	16,535	3,483	720,716	134,539	13,921
Subtotal		21,229,655	377,379	396,774	14,668,953	4,804,987	981,563
Less:							
Amount Transferred to Capital (or Other) Funds (Attachment 2)		6,934,743	122,576	242,200	4,477,990	2,087,232	4,745
DC eligible projects or debt funded by non-DC sources	(1)	5,764,127	-	-	-	4,959,763	804,364
Subtotal		12,698,870	122,576	242,200	4,477,990	7,046,995	809,109
December 31, 2022 Closing Reserve Balance		34,710,271	640,305	6,145	29,471,562	3,926,559	665,701
Deferred DCs and Interest Collectible		1,117,715	18,269	21,544	755,642	267,656	54,604
December 31, 2022 Closing Balance net of Deferred DCs Collectible (Cash Balance)		33,592,556	622,035	(15,399)	28,715,920	3,658,903	611,097
Commitments for Capital projects approved as of December 31, 2022 (Attachment 3)		12,539,600	234,399	29,290	9,813,988	2,309,913	152,009
December 31, 2022 Balance net of Deferred DCs Collectible and Capital Commitments		21,052,956	387,636	(44,689)	18,901,931	1,348,991	459,087

Notes

¹ Total DC exemptions funded by non-DC sources

Attachment 2
Development Charge Reserve Funds Annual Statement
For the Town of Ajax - Town Services
For the Year Ended December 31, 2022

Development Related Capital Growth Reserve Fund Transfers				
	DC Recoverable Cost Share	Non-DC Recoverable Cost Share		
Capital Project	DC Reserve Fund Draw	Town Reserve Draw	Grants, Subsidies, Other Contributions	Total
Development Related Growth Studies				
1010011 CAIST Study	18,133	8,735	-	26,868
1022311 Transp Demand Mgmt Study Updt	51,081	12,771	-	63,852
1028311 2023 DC Background Study	43,489	-	-	43,489
1028411 2023-28 Library Master Plan	9,873	2,468	-	12,341
Sub-Total Development Related Growth Studies	122,576	23,974	-	146,550
Fire				
1028511 Fire Station 2 Design - FMP	95,000	5,000	-	100,000
Operating - New Recruit / Bunker Gear	147,200	7,747	-	154,947
Sub-Total Fire	242,200	12,747	-	254,947
Transportation (incl Roads and related)				
1005311 Church-Rossland to Hydro Corr.	73,997	9,569	-	83,566
1005511 Rossland EA Westney-Lakeridge	56,785	16,212	-	72,997
1006611 Bicycle Facilities -Town Roads	3,360	2,656	-	6,016
1012911 Westney Rd Streetlighting - R	440,541	23,154	-	463,695
1018611 Ross.Wide Church/Westn Constr	3,619,800	735,289	-	4,355,089
1018811 Harwood AvEA-Taunton-Woodcock	100,568	5,293	-	105,861
1022111 Bicycle Facs on Town Rds 2021	11,768	3,193	-	14,961
1028911 ChrchTop Asphalt Rossl-Hydro C	171,171	18,372	-	189,543
Sub-Total Transportation (incl Roads and related)	4,477,990	813,738	-	5,291,728
Major Indoor Recreation Facilities and Related				
0988511 Audley Recreation Ctr - Ph. 2	24,329	22,246	-	46,575
1029611 Mulberry Mead. NeighPark Const	239,546	19,430	-	258,976
1029711 Meadows North Neigh Park	5,558	446	-	6,004
Audley Recreation Center Debt (2019-2022)	1,817,799	-	-	1,817,799
Sub-Total Major Indoor Recreation Facilities and Related	2,087,232	42,122	-	311,555
Libraries and Related (incl Materials)				
0988511 Audley Recreation Ctr - Ph. 2	4,745	4,338	-	9,083
Sub-Total Libraries and Related (incl Materials)	4,745	4,338	-	9,083
Totals	6,934,743	896,920	-	6,013,863

Attachment 3
Commitments from Prior Years' Budgets and and Council Approvals
For the Town of Ajax - Town Services
For the Year Ended December 31, 2022

Project Number	Project Name	Commitment
Studies		
960011	Comp. Zoning By-Law Update	(21,399)
982211	Green Dev & Env Des Guidelines	(17,542)
1009911	Recreation Master Plan	(14,539)
1022311	Transp Demand Mgmt Study Updt	(9,681)
1028311	2023 DC Background Study	(71,511)
1028411	2023-28 Library Master Plan	(99,727)
Total Studies		(234,399)
Fire		
1028511	Fire Station 2 Design - FMP	(29,290)
Total Fire		(29,290)
Transportation		
996011	Rossland Widen- Church Westney	(16,878)
1001411	Bayly MUP/Harwood-Salem	(112,067)
1005311	Church-Rossland to Hydro Corr.	(178,995)
1005511	Rossland EA Westney-Lakeridge	(146,610)
1006611	Bicycle Facilities -Town Roads	(28,140)
1012911	Westney Rd Streetlighting - R	(160,745)
1013011	Westney Rd Multi-Use Trail	(316,600)
1018611	Rossland Wide Church/Westn Constr	(6,403,022)
1018811	Harwood AvEA-Taunton-Woodcock	(69,721)
1022111	Bicycle Facs on Town Rds 2021	(40,932)
1026511	Salem MUP - Salem to Blowers (north leg)	(85,148)
1028611	Rossland Wide. Westney-Salem	(599,800)
1028711	Harwood Wid.Taunton-Woodcock	(395,000)
1028811	MUT Ravenscrt-Beverton/Paulyn	(18,900)
1028911	ChrchTop Asphalt Rossl-Hydro C	(34,729)
1029011	Rossland Wide Salem/LakeRidge	(614,400)
1029111	Kingston MUT-Salem/LakeRidge	(141,200)
1029211	Kingston Stligh Wicks/LakeRidg	(111,000)
1029311	Hunt St Ext - EA Addendum	(55,100)
1029411	Street Sweeper	(285,000)
Total Transportation		(9,813,988)
Parks and Recreation		
967911	ARC - Future Phases Design	(24,401)
988511	Audley Recreation Ctr - Ph. 2	(770,303)
1029611	Mulberry Mead. NeighPark Const	(1,488,367)
1029711	Meadows North Neigh Park	(26,842)
Total Parks and Recreation		(2,309,913)
Library		
967911	ARC - Future Phases Design	(1,786)
988511	Audley Recreation Ctr - Ph. 2	(150,224)
Total Library		(152,009)
Total commitments for Capital projects approved		(12,539,600)

Town of Ajax Report



Report To: General Government Committee

Prepared By: Julie Mephram, CPA, CA
Manager, Budgets and Accounting

Report #: FIN-2023-10

Subject: **2022 Operating Results and Year-end Reserve Allocations**

Ward(s): All

Date of Meeting: May 8, 2023

Reference: Financial Sustainability Plan (FSP)
GGC Report February 14, 2022 - 2022 Operating Budget
GGC Report September 12, 2022 – Insurance Renewal – July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023
GGC Report December 12, 2022 – FIN-2022-14 2022 Operating Budget Forecast and COVID related Financial Impact

Recommendation:

1. That the report on the 2022 Operating Results be received for information.
2. That Council approve the following 2022 Year End Allocations to Reserves, as recommended by the Director of Finance in accordance with the Financial Sustainability Plan:

Reserve	Allocation
Capital Contingency Reserve	\$ 1,277,686
Vehicle & Equipment Reserve	\$ 1,989,700
Building Maintenance Reserve	\$ 1,647,481
Development Reserve	\$ 930,000
Strategic Initiatives Reserve	\$ 401,200

Background:

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an explanation of the 2022 operating surplus and have Council approve the year end surplus transfers to reserves as recommended by the Director of Finance. On December 12, 2022, the 2022 year-end projection and COVID-related financial impacts was presented by staff. This report provided the estimated Operating Budget Surplus based on projections of revenues and expenditures for the year. The December 12th report was based on actual expenditures to August 31st and projections for September to December. This report now reflects all actual expenditures that have been recorded up to and including December 31, 2022 and highlights the differences in expenditures and revenues that occurred between the budget and actuals in 2022.

During 2022, new and extraordinary events occurred contributing to the year end results. Pandemic related restrictions resulted in Town recreation facilities closing until the end of the first quarter creating a net loss in program and facilities revenues. These losses were offset by the use of COVID funding set aside in a reserve to address these pressures. Staff recruitment efforts throughout the year proved to be difficult resulting in higher than normal vacancy savings. In order to lower the Consumer Price Index, the Bank of Canada increased the overnight rates to levels not seen in decades, causing our deposit and investment rates to surpass budget and forecast expectations. The Town also began to invest with ONE Fund in July 2022 resulting in income and capital gain distribution reinvestments not experienced in the past. Finally, through the review of the Town's DC background study, a catch up payment of Development Charge (DC) funded debt was recorded. This transfer was completed due to having sufficient DC reserve balances and the removal of the 10% discount on eligible capital costs for recreational services enacted through Bill 108.

The majority of the results experienced in 2022 are not typical and would not be expected to occur in the future. Based on findings in the 2022 forecast presented in December, staff have incorporated anticipated ongoing revenues in the 2023 budget providing tax relief to residents and businesses. For example, the investment income was increased by \$300,000 and Development Charges are now funding a large part of previously tax funded DC debt. Further details on the tax reduction from these amounts are provided in the report.

The Financial Sustainability Plan (FSP) directs the allocation of the annual Operating Budget Surplus. It requires that any surplus is first allocated to the Stabilization Reserve to increase the reserve to its target balance. The remainder of the Operating Budget Surplus, if any, should then be allocated to other discretionary reserves based on the recommendation of the Director of Finance/Treasurer. If a net shortfall were to occur, funds would be drawn from the Stabilization Reserve to fund the operating budget deficit.

Discussion:

The major variances between operating budget and actual results are included in **Attachment – 1 - 2022 Operating Results** and summarized below in Table 1:

Table 1 – 2022 Operating Budget Surplus Summary

2022 Operating Budget Surplus Summary (in '000s)					
	Budget	Forecast	Forecast (Surplus) / Deficit	Actuals	Actual (Surplus) / Deficit
Wages & Benefits	62,523	59,915	(2,608)	59,639	(2,884)
Other Expenditures	48,140	51,734	3,594	51,436	3,296
Total Expenditures	110,664	111,649	\$ 986	111,076	\$ 412
Revenues	20,629	19,745	884	20,377	252
Investment Income/Slots/Elexicon	8,044	10,422	(2,377)	10,817	(2,772)
Grants & Donations	615	3,161	(2,546)	3,309	(2,693)
Reserve Allocations	1,911	1,935	(24)	5,051	(3,140)
Total Revenues	31,200	35,263	(4,064)	39,553	(8,353)
Net Operating Surplus			\$ (3,078)		\$ (7,941)
Less: Non Cash Surplus					(1,695)
Surplus for Reserve Allocation					\$ (6,246)

In 2022, the Town realized a net operating budget surplus of \$7.9 million largely due to one-time items and non-cash items. The difference between the \$3.1 million surplus presented in the December 12, 2022 forecast report is primarily due to:

- \$1.8 million one-time transfer from Development Charge (DC) reserve funds to fund the 2019-2022 DC related debt servicing costs for ARC phase 2 that had previously been tax funded.
- \$1.7 million in income/capital gain distributions from the Town’s ONE Fund investment portfolio reinvested in the purchase of additional securities. These reinvestments happen automatically at the end of each financial quarter and the Town had no way to predict the amounts realized in September and December. This is a non-cash surplus that the Town must recognize in its financial statements but is not available for allocation to reserves.
- \$1.4 million from additional revenues or further reductions in expenditures not anticipated by staff at time of preparing the forecast, including:
 - Additional vacancy savings \$276,000
 - Savings in forestry contracted services largely due to block pruning contractor issues and weather delays as well as locate contract backlog for tree replanting \$190,000
 - Materials and supplies savings primarily resulting from less salt/brine usage, delays in anticipated delivery of clothing orders and workwear, ARC pool supplies due to maintenance shut down, and other small tools not required \$186,000
 - Administrative expenses savings include reduced community school expenses and additional savings in printing, event and office supplies costs \$77,500
 - Reductions in tax write-offs based on final settlements \$122,000
 - Automated Speed enforcement program recoveries \$263,000 and additional use of COVID grant funding to offset pandemic related net expenditures \$88,000
 - Net reduction in building permit revenues (\$377,000) offset by increased facility rental and fitness revenues \$323,000

At the end of each fiscal year, the total surplus from under budget expenditures and over budget revenues in all departments, become part of the corporate operating surplus, which is allocated in accordance with Corporate Policy 121 Discretionary Reserve Administration.

Surplus Variance Analysis

The following sections of the report refer to Attachment 1 – (Surplus) / Deficit Breakdown which provides further details on the Operating Budget surplus.

COVID (Surplus) / Deficit (see Attachment 1)

In 2022 the Town drew a total of \$1.6 million from the Public Health Reserve to fund COVID related net recreation revenue losses experienced in the first quarter of the year as well as reduced attendance in recreational programs throughout the year. The grant funding also offsets direct COVID related expenditures and initiatives aimed at providing technological and process improvements to enable a hybrid work model for staff and foster a safe reopening of Town facilities. While the reserve draw represents a surplus of \$1.1 million over the 2022 amount budgeted, the grant funding was always intended to be used to offset lingering operating budget impacts resulting from the pandemic. At the end of 2022 the Town has \$152,000 remaining in the Public Health Reserve which should be fully utilized to complete some final initiatives identified in the 2023 Operating Budget. COVID related impacts are explained below.

Expenditures

- Wages and benefits savings are primarily due to the Q1 recreation facility closure offset by wages paid as a direct result of COVID absences, including Fire overtime (\$1,259,500);
- One time software/hardware purchase savings are due to OLA updates not done as originally planned, payment gateway project budgets was not required for implementation, and electronic signatures project will be less than estimated (\$104,500);
- An increase in education and training related to a De-escalating Violent Situation corporate training program \$25,700;
- Additional contracted security required at the waterfront, parks and facilities and increased cleaning services \$299,800;
- Savings in consulting and professional services due to staff resourcing issues not allowing to proceed with planned projects (\$66,000) - some projects have been deferred to 2023;
- Materials and cleaning supplies required due to reopening of facilities \$49,400;

Revenues

- Lower facility and fitness revenues mainly due to closure of recreation facilities in Q1 \$413,400 + \$103,400;
- Loss of Program registration revenue due to COVID restrictions and staffing shortages to run programs \$1,625,300;
- Grant revenue transferred from Public Health Reserve (\$1,072,800);

- WSIB reimbursements for COVID-19 related time off under the COVID-19 Worker Income Protection Benefit (\$15,600);

Unrealized/Non-Cash Surplus (see Attachment 1)

- The Town recorded \$1.7 million in income and capital gains from the Town's ONE Fund investment portfolio used to repurchase securities. The income earned is automatically distributed and reinvested within the ONE Fund portfolio at the end of each fiscal quarter. Given this income has already been used to increase the Town's investment holdings through reinvestment, it is not available to contribute to general reserves. This income will form part of the Town's accumulated surplus until such time investments are redeemed. This revenue has been removed from the cash surplus that is being allocated to reserves in 2022.

One-time Surplus (see Attachment 1)

- The Town recorded a \$1.8 million one-time transfer from Development Charge (DC) reserve funds to fund the 2019-2022 DC related debt servicing costs for ARC phase 2 that had previously been tax funded. This transfer was made possible by the overall funded status of DC reserves and the removal of the mandatory 10% discount on eligible capital costs for recreation services enacted by Bill 108. An annual payment for the related DC debentures of \$505,000 has been included in the 2023 budget and will continue to be drawn from DCs until full repayment of the two debentures in 2033 and 2034 respectively.

Expenditure/Revenue Offsets (see Attachment 1)

- Vehicle & Equipment maintenance expenditure amount is offset with Recoveries as this is an internal reallocation of expenditures \$655,400;
- Reserve allocations of \$3,358,700 is made up of additional revenues that were collected as a result of increased investment income, additional Casino Ajax revenues, the 2021 Insurance dividend, the allocation of the 2021 Library surplus to fund the Makerspace and a draw from the ASO benefits plan (the details are provided below in table 2):

Table 2: Surplus Revenue Allocation to Capital Reserves as directed by the Financial Sustainability Plan or other agreement

Surplus Revenue Allocation to Capital Reserves (in '000s)					
	Budget	Forecast	Forecast Surplus	Actuals	Actuals Surplus
Slots Revenue	4,000	5,177	1,177	5,102	1,102
Investment Revenue (not incl internal debt)	981	2,181	1,200	2,399	1,418
Insurance Pool Distribution	-	111	111	111	111
2021 Library Surplus distribution (to Library Reserve)	-	524	524	524	524
Draw from ASO Benefits Plan	-	-	-	170	170
Other	-	-	-	34	34
Total	4,981	7,993	3,012	8,306	3,359

- Casino Ajax revenues experienced in 2022 were higher than budgeted by \$1.1 million. Policy 123 Discretionary Capital Reserve states that Slots and Elexicon revenues shall not reduce the general tax levy but shall be allocated to specified Capital Reserves. This additional revenue was contributed to capital reserves and will be added to the 2024 capital budget spending caps.
- The increase in investment revenue from deposit interest, High Interest Savings Accounts (HISAs) and Guaranteed Investment Certificates (GICs) is due to the multiple interest rate increases announced over the course of 2022. This does not include income distributions, dividends or unrealized gains/losses from investments in ONE Fund Equity and Bond Funds. Policy 121 Discretionary Reserve Administration states that “general levy interest income above \$981,000 (2015 budget amount) may be allocated to Discretionary Capital Reserves”. The additional \$1.4 million earned was contributed to the Strategic Initiatives reserve, as recommended by the Director of Finance, to assist with funding upcoming initiatives contemplated in the 2023 and future capital budgets. While interest rates are high at the moment, forecast show them starting to come down within the next year or so in response to cooling inflation. The 2023 budget was however increased by an additional \$300,000 in investment revenue to assist with tax rate pressures on an ongoing basis as this was deemed to be a sustainable amount that could be achieved even with lower interest rates.
- The insurance pool distribution is an annual allocation of surplus funding that is released to pool members on an annual basis. The 2022 surplus was approved for allocation to the Insurance Reserve in the September 2022 GGC report. The annually allocated distributions have been committed in the capital budget until 2028 to fund risk mitigation initiatives. This amount is included in the Miscellaneous Revenue line item under Revenues.
- Through the 2022 Operating budget, the library had identified a surplus in its 2021 operating budget and recommended through the business case that \$524,000 of the 2021 Library surplus be allocated to the Library reserve to help fund the Library Makerspace project. The Library surplus of \$696,700, was received by the Town in May of 2022 and the \$524,000 has been allocated as approved. This amount is included in the Miscellaneous Revenue line item under Revenues.
- On an annual basis a review of the funds held by the Town’s Health Benefits provider is completed and a refund request is sent for any excess premiums paid. The Town requested that \$170,000 be returned and this amount was contributed

to the Benefits Claims reserve. This amount is offset in the Miscellaneous revenues.

- Other amounts include miscellaneous revenues that are collected for specified purposes and contributed to various reserves based on previous program requirements or agreements with developers. These amounts are offset in Miscellaneous revenues.
- Municipal Grant & Subsidies includes the Computek funding transfer of \$1,175,200 (as also identified in the Grants & Donations) offset by a change from the IMPACT Ajax and DCF grants to the new Ajax Partnership Program in 2022 (\$193,900) also shown in Revenue Reserve allocations.
- The CIP Grant (\$806,100) is less than budgeted for 2022 due to pausing the program.
- The (\$104,500) included under Contracted Services represents the removal of IMPACT Ajax funding, which is offset in Reserve Allocation Revenues

General (Surplus)/Deficit (see Attachment 1)

Expenditures

- Wages and benefits net savings are due to vacancies across the organization, primarily in the Operations department (\$1,624,500) due to recruitment challenges experienced over the course of 2022;
- Utility savings are based on reduced electricity consumption for streetlights and within facilities due to closures at ARC and MCC for pool maintenance, pandemic related closures in Q1, and reduced watering of soccer fields due to usage reductions (\$469,600)
- Education and Training reductions due to workload, vacancies, and more virtual options available (\$114,400)
- Increase in Vehicle and Equipment Maintenance is primarily due to
 - a higher number of snow events, including the January storm, requiring additional rotations and snow haulage, and contract price increases \$446,000
 - increase in fuel costs \$243,700
 - rental of two additional vehicles to support in-house boulevard maintenance and vehicle retirement due to high maintenance costs \$46,000;
- Lower forecasted reserve allocation to the Building Approval Reserve as per DAAP (Development Application Approvals Plan) due to lower than budgeted building permit revenue (\$172,700);
- Contracted services savings including boulevard grass cutting done in-house, sidewalk maintenance due to late start, block pruning not done as planned due to contractor issues and weather delays (\$298,000);

- Consulting and professional services costs incurred remain higher than budget. These costs include legal fees to defend the Town against various appeals and provide advice on legislative changes which were not anticipated and can be difficult to predict each year \$247,300;
- Materials and Supplies savings primarily result from less salt usage due to the increased number of plowing events (\$145,700), delays in anticipated delivery of clothing orders, workwear, bunker gear and fire uniforms (\$136,000), reduced recreation facilities and event supplies due to pandemic/other closures (\$98,300), savings in tree planting and sportsfield maintenance materials (\$46,400), fleet related supplies and smalls tools (\$31,500) and other savings due to reduced road maintenance related repairs, general building maintenance. Also reallocated bunker gear costs to one-time purchases (\$59,600).
- Administrative expenses savings include reduced meetings, honorariums, mileage, events across the corporation and public relations expenses due to the pandemic and election (\$154,900), community schools shared expenses not being billed in 2022 (\$66,000), and reduced office supplies due to staff working from home and less printing of materials (\$53,300)
- Financial charges and fees reductions are due to tax write offs from settled appeals (\$122,300) and fewer aquatics programs offered (\$25,200)

Revenues

- Facility Revenues include better than budgeted hall revenues and pool revenues (\$70,300)
- Overnight parking enforcement fines under anticipated levels \$171,700 offset by private transportation revenues surpassing initial estimates (\$55,300), permitted parking revenue (\$20,600) and greater uptake in marriage licences post pandemic (\$23,000)
- Building permit revenue less than budgeted; primarily residential \$636,600
- Other user fees reductions are primarily due to a shortfall in the non-resident user fee that was introduced in 2020 to recover the cost of responding to motor vehicle accidents \$160,800;
- Tax penalties and interest surplus of (\$735,600) due to trending higher tax billing volumes. Forecasting penalties and interest is based on a four-year average given that the actual revenues are dependent on the timely payment of property taxes;
- Grants & Donations of (\$384,400) is related to the Streamline Development approval Fund used to offset wages for staff funded under this grant program and Older adult grant revenue not included in forecast (\$27,600);
- Recoveries relate to WSIB payments received for staff on leave (\$575,900) and Automated Speed Enforcement recoveries for 2021 and 2022 program costs (\$262,700), as well as various recoveries from external organizations for various expenditures incurred such as fire responses to incidents;

- Miscellaneous revenues include a WSIB surplus rebate received by businesses in 2022 due to greater than necessary insurance reserves (\$401,200) and from 2021 Library Surplus payment to the Town in excess of the Makerspace allocation (\$172,700) offset by reduced storage fees and rental revenue for permanent rental groups at recreation facilities;
- Reserve allocations include an unbudgeted contribution from the Development Charges reserves to fund the first set of bunker gear for new recruits (\$147,200) and the Casino Ajax contribution to fund the Ajax Partnership Fund program (\$100,000).

2022 Year-end Reserve Allocations

The Town closed 2022 in a net surplus position and the remaining funds must be transferred to Town reserves. After a thorough assessment of the risks and opportunities facing the Town, the following required and discretionary year-end reserve allocations are recommended by the Director of Finance based on the policies established in the Financial Sustainability Plan:

- a) **Required Reserve Allocations** - *Non-discretionary year-end allocations required by the policies set out in the FSP – included in the calculation of the net operating budget surplus*

Supplementary Tax Revenues

In accordance with the Financial Sustainability Plan, any surplus over budgeted supplementary tax revenues is allocated to the Post Growth Capital Reserve. Given supplementary revenues were less than budget, no allocation was completed in 2022 and this amount was net against the Operating budget surplus.

Supplementary Taxes

2022 Budget	\$400,000
2022 Actual Supplementary Taxes	<u>326,100</u>
Under budget	<u>\$ 73,900</u>

- b) **Discretionary Reserve Allocations from the Net Operating Budget Surplus**

Calculated Net Year End Reserve Allocations

The FSP directs staff to transfer any Payment in Lieu (PIL) tax revenue surplus to reserves in the same manner as the Operating Budget Surplus. Therefore, in determining the net amount available for allocation to the reserves, the variance in PIL tax revenue is first applied against the annual surplus to establish the Net Amount Available for Year-end Reserve Allocations.

In 2022, there was a slight surplus of \$9,200 in budgeted PIL tax revenue. The resulting calculation of the 2022 Net Amount Available for Year-end Reserve Allocations is shown below along with the recommended distribution to Town Reserves:

Table 3 – 2022 Reserve Allocation Calculation

	Amounts	
Operating Budget Surplus	\$ 8,004,292	
Less: Supplementary Taxes/Payments in Lieu of Taxes	\$ 63,205	
Total Financial Surplus		\$ 7,941,088
Less: Reinvested ONE fund income/capital gains		\$ 1,695,019
Net Amount Available for Year-end Reserve Allocations		\$ 6,246,067
Recommended Allocations:		
Capital Contingency Reserve	\$ 1,277,686	
Building Maintenance Reserve	\$1,647,481	
Development Reserve	\$ 930,000	
Strategic Initiatives Reserve	\$ 401,200	
Vehicle & Equipment Reserve	\$ 1,989,700	
Total Recommended Year-end Reserve Allocations		\$ 6,246,067

Stabilization Reserve

The FSP states that any surplus is first allocated to the Stabilization Reserve to increase the reserve to its target balance. Given the reserve balance is within established guidelines of 5% to 15% of the prior year’s net revenue, no additional contribution was made to this reserve.

Capital Contingency Reserve

The Capital Contingency Reserve is an important part of the Town’s overall strategy to manage financial risk. It is used to fund in-year emergency and/or unbudgeted capital projects that would not otherwise be funded from an asset reserve, and is used to allow the Town to take advantage of grant opportunities requiring the matching of Town funds. According to the FSP, after the Stabilization Reserve is at its target, the Operating Budget Surplus should then be used to top up the Capital Contingency Reserve to its target balance of \$2.5 million, if needed.

Over the past several years many emergency, unbudgeted and grant-eligible projects have been funded from this reserve. As this reserve was continually being drawn down, the FSP update recommended changing the funding policy such that emergency or unbudgeted asset management related projects would both be funded from the reserve from which the funding would have been drawn if the project had proceeded through the normal capital budget process. The intent of this change was to relieve pressure on this reserve and ensure that the Town’s capital and asset management reserves intended to support such work were properly utilized.

The 2022 reserve activity is shown below in Table 4 below:

Table 4 – 2022 Capital Contingency Reserve Continuity

Capital Contingency Reserve		
Opening Balance Jan. 1, 2022		\$ 2,661,987
2022 Transfers		(623,533)
Committed Funds		(816,140)
Uncommitted Balance before Surplus Allocation		\$ 1,222,314
Target Balance - \$2.5 million	\$ 2,500,000	
Surplus Allocation – Top Up to Target Balance		\$ 1,277,686
Closing balance at Dec. 31, 2022		\$ 2,500,000

To ensure the Town is well-positioned to benefit from future grant opportunities and funds are available for other emerging priorities, staff recommend that the Capital Contingency Reserve be topped up to its target balance.

Capital Budget Reserves impacted by exceeding spending caps for 2023 Budget

The 2023 Capital budget was approved by Council in February 2023 and included an infrastructure levy totaling \$1.57 million to start bridging the gap between available reserve balances and the cost of asset maintenance requirements. Under the FSP, the discretionary reserves are subject to spending caps which was updated to 90% of the revenues going into the reserves in a given year for future budgets. The purpose of spending caps is to allow the reserves to grow in a sustainable manner over time.

As a result of escalating project construction costs, declining Elexicon dividend revenues, and uncertainty around post-pandemic Casino Ajax revenues, the spending cap guidelines were temporarily increased to 95% for the 2023 budget to allow staff to bring forward necessary projects. Even with this additional allowance, several large maintenance related or strategic projects included in the 2023 capital budget were exempted from spending caps, as alone, they would have consumed the entire annual spending cap. Staff recommended a budget fully aware that the annual revenues forecasted in these key reserves would be insufficient to fund the 2023 projects and that an additional \$4.8 million dollars would have to be drawn from specific reserves in order to move forward with the recommended projects.

During the preparation of the budgets, the Town identified that a surplus would likely be generated for 2022 and a portion of the surplus would be recommended to top up the affected reserves. The 2022 surplus allocation follows through with topping up the affected reserves to protect the reserve balances and will also provide some flexibility for future budgets. Any surplus over the base 2023 budget requirements will be added to the 2024 capital budget spending caps.

The remaining surplus was allocated to the reserves listed in Table 5 based on the indicated rationale.

Table 5 – Surplus allocation to Capital Reserves (after Capital Contingency Reserve top-up)

Reserve	Surplus contributed	Rationale
Building Maintenance Reserve	\$ 1,647,495	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 50% of \$1.8 million DC debenture payment catch up to fund future major facility rehabilitation projects To cover portion of \$1.3 million reserve revenue shortfall resulting from approved 2023 capital projects. Remaining in-year shortfall is covered by 2023 1% infrastructure levy. Also offsets anticipated 2024 budget funding pressures.
Development Reserve	\$ 930,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 50% of \$1.8 million DC debenture payment catch up to fund Town portion of future growth related initiatives and offset anticipated 2024 budget funding pressures
Strategic Initiatives	\$ 401,200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WSIB surplus to assist with funding of 2023 Human Resources Management System and other Strategic Initiatives
Vehicle & Equipment Reserve	\$ 1,989,700	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To cover portion of \$2.8 million reserve revenue shortfall resulting from approved 2023 capital projects. Remaining in-year shortfall is covered by 2023 1% infrastructure levy

A summary of the discretionary reserve balances is included in **Attachment 2**.

Financial Implications:

The goal of the Financial Sustainability Plan (FSP) is to protect the long-term financial health of the Town of Ajax, providing flexibility to meet future challenges and resilience against unexpected economic shocks. The strategies of the FSP aim to achieve this resilience by supporting the growth of reserves and ensuring that the Town can continue to deliver essential community infrastructure long into the future. A complete review of reserve balances and funding strategies is planned in future phases of the FSP update, following the completion of the Town’s Asset Management Plan Update / Level of Service review.

As detailed in **Attachment- 2 - Discretionary Reserve Balances** at December 31, 2022, there was a net increase of \$6 million in the discretionary reserve balances this year. This was partially enabled by the additional \$1.4 million in interest earned on Town investments, additional \$1 million received from Casino Ajax over amounts budgeted and the operating surplus identified in this report.

Although there is an increase in the year over year discretionary reserve balances, there are also over \$13 million worth of commitments to approved projects that have been started but are not yet complete or have yet to be started. The Town is also experiencing significant cost increases on capital projects and needs to ensure sufficient funding is available to balance the needs of our community with expected services levels, while also being able to respond to emergencies or changes to the broader economy that is beyond management’s control.

Communication Issues:

Actual expenditure and revenues will be reported through the Town's Financial Statements which are scheduled to be presented to Council in June and once approved will be posted on the Town's website.

Relationship to the Strategic Plan:

Pillar 3: Modernizing our Community.
Priority 5: Demonstrate sound Financial Management
5.1 Manage financial resources and assets to address growing needs
5.2 Anticipate and respond to risks and opportunities

Conclusion:

This report provides the final 2022 operating budget surplus, variance analysis, and the 2022 year-end reserve allocations based on the recommendations of the Director of Finance/Treasurer.

Attachments:

Attachment 1: 2022 Operating Results
Attachment 2: Discretionary Reserve Balances at December 31, 2022

Prepared by:

Julie Mephram, CPA, CA – Manager, Budgets and Accounting

Submitted by:

Dianne Valentim, CPA, CGA - Director of Finance / Treasurer

Approved by:

Shane Baker – Chief Administrative Officer

**TOWN OF AJAX
2022 OPERATING RESULTS**

	Financial Results			Variance Analysis			(Surplus)/Deficit Breakdown				
	Budget	Forecast	Actuals	Actuals to Forecast Variance	YTD Variance Budget vs Forecast	YTD Variance Budget vs Actuals	COVID (Surplus)/ Deficit	Non-Cash	One-time	Expenditure/ Revenue Offsets	General (Surplus)/ Deficit
Operating Expenditures											
Full Time Salaries & Benefits	51,276,300	49,354,300	49,033,100	(321,200)	(1,922,000)	(2,243,200)	230,200				(2,473,400)
Part Time Wages & Benefits	11,247,100	10,560,800	10,606,300	45,500	(686,300)	(640,800)	(1,489,700)				848,900
One-time Purchases under \$10,000	623,100	552,500	582,900	30,400	(70,600)	(40,200)	(104,500)				64,300
Utilities (Electricity, Natural Gas & Water)	3,998,600	3,689,500	3,529,000	(160,500)	(309,100)	(469,600)					(469,600)
Insurance	1,484,100	1,473,200	1,510,900	37,700	(10,900)	26,800					26,800
Education & Training	509,000	446,000	420,300	(25,700)	(63,000)	(88,700)	25,700				(114,400)
Vehicle & Equipment Maintenance	2,673,900	3,653,000	4,072,100	419,100	979,100	1,398,200				655,400	742,800
Debtenture	2,197,800	2,197,600	2,197,600	-	(200)	(200)					(200)
Reserve Allocations	13,283,300	16,455,700	16,469,300	13,600	3,172,400	3,186,000				3,358,700	(172,700)
Municipal Grants & Subsidies	6,814,800	7,859,500	7,839,600	(19,900)	1,044,700	1,024,800				981,300	43,500
CIP Grant	1,450,800	644,700	644,700	-	(806,100)	(806,100)				(806,100)	-
Contracted Services	6,973,800	7,115,300	6,871,100	(244,200)	141,500	(102,700)	299,800			(104,500)	(298,000)
Equipment Rentals, Service, Lease	449,300	356,600	368,200	11,600	(92,700)	(81,100)					(81,100)
Consulting & Professional Services	791,700	982,700	973,000	(9,700)	191,000	181,300	(66,000)				247,300
Communications & Technology	2,196,800	2,174,900	2,200,700	25,800	(21,900)	3,900					3,900
Materials & Supplies	2,662,600	2,372,400	2,162,300	(210,100)	(290,200)	(500,300)	49,400				(549,700)
Administrative Expenses	1,197,700	1,000,900	923,400	(77,500)	(196,800)	(274,300)	1,400				(275,700)
Financial Charges & Fees	671,300	632,700	522,500	(110,200)	(38,600)	(148,800)					(148,800)
Miscellaneous Expenses	161,500	126,700	148,700	22,000	(34,800)	(12,800)					(12,800)
Total Operating Expenditures	110,663,500	111,649,000	111,075,700	(573,300)	985,500	412,200	(1,053,700)	-	-	4,084,800	(2,618,900)
Revenues / Recoveries											
Facility Revenue	2,647,400	2,025,900	2,304,300	278,400	621,500	343,100	413,400				(70,300)
Fitness Revenue	657,000	483,400	527,900	44,500	173,600	129,100	103,400				25,700
Licencing & Fines	1,772,200	1,689,400	1,700,100	10,700	82,800	72,100					72,100
Program Registration	2,907,700	1,259,800	1,297,000	37,200	1,647,900	1,610,700	1,625,300				(14,600)
Planning Fees	6,140,900	5,377,600	4,640,500	(737,100)	763,300	1,500,400				806,100	694,300
Other User Fees	727,800	547,400	552,400	5,000	180,400	175,400					175,400
Penalties & Interest	1,800,000	2,490,300	2,535,600	45,300	(690,300)	(735,600)					(735,600)
Investment Income / Slots / Elexicon	8,044,300	10,421,600	10,816,600	395,000	(2,377,300)	(2,772,300)		(1,695,000)		(1,102,400)	25,100
Grants & Donations	615,300	3,161,400	3,308,500	147,100	(2,546,100)	(2,693,200)	(1,072,800)			(1,175,200)	(445,200)
Recoveries	3,376,100	4,209,900	4,955,600	745,700	(833,800)	(1,579,500)	(15,600)			(655,400)	(908,500)
Miscellaneous Revenues	599,700	1,661,300	1,926,400	265,100	(1,061,600)	(1,326,700)				(838,200)	(488,500)
Reserve Allocations	1,911,300	1,935,200	5,051,300	3,116,100	(23,900)	(3,140,000)			(1,817,800)	(1,119,700)	(202,500)
Total Revenues / Recoveries	31,199,700	35,263,200	39,616,200	4,353,000	(4,063,500)	(8,416,500)	1,053,700	(1,695,000)	(1,817,800)	(4,084,800)	(1,872,600)
Total Town of Ajax	79,463,800	76,385,800	71,459,500	(4,926,300)	(3,078,000)	(8,004,300)	-	(1,695,000)	(1,817,800)	-	(4,491,500)
Supplementary taxes and Payments in Lieu			63,200	63,200		63,200					63,200
Total 2022 Operating Surplus	79,463,800	76,385,800	71,522,700	(4,863,100)	(3,078,000)	(7,941,100)	-	(1,695,000)	(1,817,800)	-	(4,428,300)

Discretionary Reserve Balances - December 31, 2022

Reserve	Opening Balance Jan. 1, 2022	Budget Allocation	Elexicon Revenue	Casino Ajax Revenue	Interest Income	Transfers (to) / from Capital	Other Inflows (Expenditures)	Year-end Reserve Allocations From Surplus	Closing Balance Dec 31, 2022	Funds Currently Committed	Uncommitted Balance
Building Maintenance	\$ 11,586,178	\$ 844,400	\$ 573,281	\$ 500,210		\$ (2,672,743)	\$ 41,500	\$ 1,647,481	\$ 12,520,307	(268,707)	\$ 12,251,600
Stormwater Maintenance	575,412					(590,000)	114,314		99,726	(53,626)	46,100
Debt Repayment	-						-		-		-
Vehicle / Equipment Replacement	19,517,483	1,657,900	716,601	750,315		(3,045,571)	146,733	1,989,700	21,733,162	(13,407)	21,719,755
Roads Maintenance	13,158,212	1,703,200	429,961	\$ 500,210		(1,634,142)			14,157,441	(149,561)	14,007,880
General Infrastructure	12,891,967	946,900	429,961	\$ 500,210		(1,080,231)			13,688,806	(231,866)	13,456,940
Post Growth Capital	11,052,898	108,300							11,161,198		11,161,198
Debt Reduction (Slots) *	4,331,189			1,250,526		(18,085)	(358,400)		5,205,229	(3,332,302)	1,872,927
Library Capital Reserve	-					(524,000)	524,000		-		-
Development	13,195,527	200,000	573,281	1,250,526		(2,153,237)	31,139	930,000	14,027,235	(3,222,991)	10,804,244
Strategic Initiatives	4,314,335	387,000	143,320	250,105	1,418,129	(475,693)	(118,158)	401,200	6,320,238	(2,711)	6,317,527
Total Capital Reserves	90,623,201	5,847,700	2,866,404	5,002,103	1,418,129	(12,193,702)	381,127	4,968,381	98,913,342	(7,275,171)	91,638,171
Stabilization	7,896,490	(778,000)							7,118,490	(1,481,271)	5,637,219
Benefits Claim Reserve	1,257,049						170,000		1,427,049		1,427,049
Public Health	1,767,726						(1,615,761)		151,965		151,965
Capital Contingency	2,661,987					(623,533)		1,277,686	3,316,141	(816,141)	2,500,000
Insurance / Risk Mitigation	314,720					(315,000)	111,016		110,736		110,736
Total Stabilization Reserves	13,897,971	(778,000)	-	-	-	(938,533)	(1,334,745)	1,277,686	12,124,380	(2,297,412)	9,826,968
Reported Discretionary Reserves	\$ 104,521,172	\$ 5,069,700	\$ 2,866,404	\$ 5,002,103	\$ 1,418,129	\$ (13,132,235)	\$ (953,618)	\$ 6,246,067	\$ 111,037,722	\$ (9,572,583)	\$ 101,465,140
Election Reserve	283,700	73,000					(313,608)		43,092		43,092
CIP Reserve	4,776,339				70,964				4,847,302	(3,247,383)	1,599,920
Total Other Reserves	5,060,039	73,000	-	-	70,964	-	(313,608)	-	4,890,394	(3,247,383)	1,643,011
Grand Total Discretionary Reserves	\$ 109,581,211	\$ 5,142,700	\$ 2,866,404	\$ 5,002,103	\$ 1,489,093	\$ (13,132,235)	\$ (1,267,226)	\$ 6,246,067	\$ 115,928,116	\$ (12,819,965)	\$ 103,108,151

Town of Ajax Report



Report To: General Government Committee

Prepared By: Nadira Tiwari, Financial Data Specialist

Report #: FIN-2023-11

Subject: **Capital Account Closing Report as at March 31st, 2023**

Ward(s): All

Date of Meeting: May 8, 2023

Reference: Capital Expenditure Control Policy
Financial Sustainability Plan

Recommendation:

1. That Council receive the attached listing of Capital Account closings as of March 31st, 2023 for information.
2. That funding transfers to/from the Reserves/Reserve Funds from the March 31st, 2023 Capital Account Closings, in accordance with the Financial Sustainability Plan, and changes in project funding sources as described in this report, be approved as follows:

Reserve / Reserve Fund	Transfers to	Transfers from	Net Transfers
Capital Contingency Reserve	(\$41,876.99)	\$56,472.70	\$14,595.71
Building Maintenance Reserve	(\$118,271.60)	\$41,686.37	(\$76,585.23)
General Infrastructure Reserve	(\$148,901.70)	\$35,491.06	(\$113,410.64)
Strategic Initiatives Reserve	(\$209,076.65)	-	(\$209,076.65)
Roads Maintenance Reserve	-	\$20,355.47	\$20,355.47
Vehicle/Equipment Replacement Reserve	(\$14,486.16)	\$42,775.16	\$28,289.00
Development Reserve	(\$118,158.01)	\$3,954.06	(\$114,203.95)
Stormwater Maintenance Reserve	(\$24,147.02)	-	(\$24,147.02)
Development Charges 2018	-	\$17,541.75	\$17,541.75
Total Transfers	(\$674,918.13)	\$ 218,276.57	(\$456,641.56)

3. That the over-expenditure of \$7,448.81 (net of HST rebate) on 1014411 Automated Speed Enforcement, previously awarded to Signalisation Kalitec on May 10, 2021 by Council, be received for information.

Background:

The Financial Sustainability Plan identifies a requirement to report to Council on the results of capital account closings. The closing report indicates, on a project by project basis, the final balances of capital project accounts that have been completed or cancelled. This is the first of two capital account closing reports for 2023.

Discussion:

From October 2022 to March 31, 2023, staff worked to close 46 capital projects resulting in a net funding transfer to Reserves and Reserve Funds of \$456,642.

An explanation of the net funding transfers to/from reserves is provided below. A summary showing the closed capital projects by funding source is included in Attachment 1.

The main driving factors are:

- **Net favourable Pricing (\$256,802)**

Capital budgets are based on estimates. Subsequent contract awards resulted in net favourable pricing. Less than anticipated pricing was realized on the following projects: (\$103,644) for Barriers & Entrance Features Condition Assessment due to lower consultants' hours required, (\$66,320) for cost savings on the design and construction of the Westney-Millington Signal Construction project done by the Region of Durham, (\$35,187) on Facility Asbestos Audits, (\$16,965) for Feasibility Study – Hunt Street Route Options, (\$15,772) on Roland Michener Playground Assessment project, (\$14,700) on the Waterfront Shore Gap Analysis and (\$12,800) on the ACC Pad 2 Lobby Floor Replacement.

- **Unbudgeted Projects \$130,619**

All unbudgeted/emergency projects were reviewed and approved by the Director of Finance and CAO, and were funded through the Capital Contingency Reserve, Building Maintenance Reserve, or the General Infrastructure Reserve. This report contains the closing of 5 unbudgeted projects which require funding. The three largest unbudgeted projects requiring funding are the BIA Feasibility Study \$56,473, the Outdoor Lighting Repairs at various Town locations \$35,491 and ACC Foundation Wall Emergency Repairs \$28,493.

- **Projects cancelled and rebudgeted (\$121,947)**

The ACC Pool Solarium Glass replacement (\$60,000) was closed and will be rebudgeted with the larger ACC rehabilitation project scheduled to begin in 2025-26 timeframe. The Cedar Park Batting Cage project was closed (\$61,947) and rebudgeted in 2023 at \$170,000.

- **Contingency Not Required (\$95,565)**

Based on best practices to include and fund contingency on contract awards, there can be excess funding at the end of a project if there are minimal or no unexpected costs or changes. The most significant of the 13 projects that did not utilize their full contingency include Roland Michener Playground Replacement \$36,163, Waterfront Shore Gap Analysis \$9,450 and Mill Street Community Centre Parking Lot \$8,117.

- **Other net transfers to reserves (\$112,946)**

This capital closing report includes projects that have allowed funding to be returned to reserves. The projects making up this variance are the Community Improvement Plan Review due to work being performed by staff instead of consultants (\$50,000), the Westney-Millington Signal Design (\$50,000) as sufficient budget was allocated to the Westney-Millington Signal Construction project to cover the design costs, and (\$25,000) on Barriers

and Entrance Features Condition Assessment that was budgeted for ownership confirmation but done by staff. Offsetting these are a scope change of \$18,465 on Green Development & Environmental Design Guidelines project that had been ongoing since 2016.

Over award report - 1014411 Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE) capital project

Under the Capital Expenditure Control Policy, staff are required to report back when project expenditures have exceeded the approved spending limit by more than \$5,000. Expenditures related to the \$30,589.06 Kalitech award approved by Council to purchase radar feedback speed signs exceeded the original award by \$7,448.81. This additional cost was incurred to purchase more advanced/specialized units than was contemplated upon award approval due to supply shortages and the time sensitive nature of requiring these units prior to the launch of the ASE program. This award was brought to Council for approval in May 2021 as a scope change to the original capital project. Despite going over the awarded balance, the project was under budget overall and remaining funds are being returned to the reserve through this report.

Reserve Funds – Funding not transferred:

Projects funded by obligatory reserve funds reflect the approved funding as fully committed from these reserve funds even though the funding transfer only occurs after expenditures have been incurred. As such, when these capital projects are completed, there is no transfer back to the reserve fund, but any remaining funding must be uncommitted. Through this report the Town will uncommit a total of (\$292,768.28) from the Canada Community Building Reserve Fund and (\$155,476) from the DC (2018) Reserve Funds and Development Reserve.

The reasons for the uncommitted funding include price savings and contingencies not used for:

- Neighbourhood Street Light improvement projects (\$211,753) and (\$25,853), and
- The ACC-Replacement of 7 air handling units (\$55,100)

In addition, \$150,000 was uncommitted for the Kingston Rd. Street Lighting – Salem to Galea project as the town does not intend to proceed with this work previously identified by the Region.

Financial Implications:

The net budget/funding from completed capital projects being transferred to reserves and uncommitted from Reserve/Reserve funds is as follows:

Reserve / Reserve Fund	Net Transfers (to) / from Reserves	Total Uncommitted
Capital Contingency Reserve	\$14,595.71	-
Building Maintenance Reserve	(\$76,585.23)	-
General Infrastructure Reserve	(\$113,410.64)	-
Canada Community Building Fund	-	(\$292,768.28)
2018 DC Reserve Fund	\$27,541.75	(\$146,195.98)
Strategic Initiatives Reserve	(\$209,076.65)	-
Roads Maintenance Reserve	\$20,355.47	-
Vehicle/Equipment Replacement Reserve	\$28,289.00	-
Development Reserve	(\$114,203.95)	(\$9,280.37)

Reserve / Reserve Fund	Net Transfers (to) / from Reserves	Total Uncommitted
Stormwater Maintenance Reserve	(\$24,147.02)	-
Total Transfers	(\$456,641.56)	(\$448,244.63)

The negative amounts from the chart above will be available in the reserves/reserve funds to assist with funding future capital projects and help mitigate the inflationary pressures the Town is currently experiencing on capital projects.

Communication Issues:

N/A

Relationship to the Strategic Plan:

Pillar 3: Modernizing our Community.
 Priority 5: Demonstrate sound Financial Management
 5.1 Manage financial resources and assets to address growing needs
 5.2 Anticipate and respond to risks and opportunities

Conclusion:

This report includes the closing of 46 capital projects with a net total of \$456,642 being transferred back to reserves and \$448,245 uncommitted from Reserve and Reserve Funds.

The amounts being returned will:

- Assist with funding of over budget projects
- Protect against reserve revenue uncertainties
- Ensure funding is available to take care of our assets

The presentation of this report to Council complies with the requirements of Corporate Policies 120 and 127, the Financial Sustainability Plan and the Capital Expenditure Control Policy.

Attachments:

ATT-1: Closed Capital Projects as of March 31st 2023

Prepared by:

Nadira Tiwari – Financial Data Specialist

Submitted by:

Dianne Valentim, CPA, CGA – Director of Finance/Treasurer

Approved by:

Shane Baker – Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT #1 - CAPITAL ACCOUNTS CLOSED AS OF MARCH 31, 2023

ACCT	PROJECT NAME	* Council Award / Approval	Year Approved	Approved Budget	Additional / Unbudgeted Funding Approved	Council Approved Budget and Additional Funding	Funding not transferred	Expenditures	Project Balance	Comments
<u>Capital Contingency Reserve</u>										
1018211	Harwood Ave & Haskell Ave Ped. Crossing	*	2020		(110,237.41)	(110,237.41)		107,692.40	(2,545.01)	Contingency not required
1026111	Lower Harwood MUP Feas. Study	*	2021	(50,000.00)		(50,000.00)		35,182.49	(14,817.51)	Contingency not required, pricing
1026211	Feasibility Study - Hunt St. Route Options		2021	(100,000.00)		(100,000.00)		75,485.53	(24,514.47)	Contingency not required, pricing
1027211	BIA Feasibility Study		2022	-		-		56,472.70	56,472.70	Unbudgeted
1039111	2022 Rainstorm Clean Up	*	2022	-	(503,973.51)	(503,973.51)		503,973.51	-	Unbudgeted
				(150,000.00)	(614,210.92)	(764,210.92)	-	778,806.63	14,595.71	
<u>Building Maintenance Reserve</u>										
1019411	Acc Pool Solarium Glass Replacement		2021	(60,000.00)		(60,000.00)		-	(60,000.00)	Project cancelled - to be rebudgeted
1019611	ACC - Pad 2 Lobby Flooring Repl		2021	(50,000.00)		(50,000.00)		30,986.92	(19,013.08)	Contingency not required, Pricing
1027711	Facility Asbestos Audits		2022	(60,000.00)		(60,000.00)		24,813.25	(35,186.75)	Pricing
1037711	ARC Pool Regrouting/filter Rep		2022	(130,000.00)		(130,000.00)		125,928.23	(4,071.77)	Contingency not required, Pricing
1039511	Emg. Rep. - ACC Foundation Wall		2021	-		-		28,492.78	28,492.78	Unbudgeted
1040311	Emg. Re. ARC Sump Pump		2021	-		-		10,162.77	10,162.77	Unbudgeted
				(300,000.00)	-	(300,000.00)	-	220,383.95	(79,616.05)	
<u>Roads Maintenance Reserve</u>										
1021511	Streetlight Repl. Lake Vista-Design		2021	(100,000.00)		(100,000.00)		100,894.98	894.98	Pricing
1021811	Retaining Wall Replacement		2021	(115,000.00)		(115,000.00)		134,460.49	19,460.49	Pricing
				(215,000.00)	-	(215,000.00)	-	235,355.47	20,355.47	
<u>General Infrastructure Reserve</u>										
1013911	ACC-Tennis Court (South) Upgrade		2020	(365,000.00)	(6,410.88)	(371,410.88)		357,508.40	(13,902.48)	Contingency not required, Pricing, Additional funding
1020811	Roland Michener Playground Replacement	*	2021	(310,000.00)	(34,925.80)	(344,925.80)		292,990.96	(51,934.84)	Contingency not required, Pricing
1034311	Retaining Wall Condition Assessment		2022	(25,000.00)		(25,000.00)		21,369.59	(3,630.41)	Contingency not required, Pricing

ATTACHMENT #1 - CAPITAL ACCOUNTS CLOSED AS OF MARCH 31, 2023

ACCT	PROJECT NAME	* Council Award / Approval	Year Approved	Approved Budget	Additional / Unbudgeted Funding Approved	Council Approved Budget and Additional Funding	Funding not transferred	Expenditures	Project Balance	Comments
1035411	Mill St Com Ctr Parking Lot (Recon)		2022	(100,000.00)		(100,000.00)		82,513.23	(17,486.77)	Contingency not required, Pricing
1036411	Cedar Park Batting Cages Replacement		2022	(65,000.00)		(65,000.00)		3,052.80	(61,947.20)	Project Cancelled and Rebudgeted
1039411	Outdoor Lighting Repairs		2022	-		-		35,491.06	35,491.06	Unbudgeted
				(865,000.00)	(41,336.68)	(906,336.68)	-	792,926.04	(113,410.64)	
<u>Strategic Initiatives Reserve</u>										
1014411	Automated Speed Enforcement	*	2020	(75,000.00)		(75,000.00)		61,971.51	(13,028.49)	Contingency not required, Pricing
1024711	Barriers & Entrance Features Condition Assessment		2021	(210,000.00)		(210,000.00)		73,960.13	(136,039.87)	Contingency not required, Pricing, Scope
1028211	Specialty Crosswalks and Road Art		2022	(40,000.00)		(40,000.00)		29,991.71	(10,008.29)	Contingency not required, Pricing
1038211	Community Impr. Plan Review		2022	(50,000.00)		(50,000.00)		-	(50,000.00)	Work done by staff instead of consultants
				(375,000.00)	-	(375,000.00)		165,923.35	(209,076.65)	
<u>Vehicle and Equipment Replacement Reserve</u>										
1016611	Fleet - Repl, FES Vehicle 2020		2020	(125,000.00)		(125,000.00)		112,965.98	(12,034.02)	Pricing
1022511	Repl. Ctr FitnessCtr Equip		2021	(41,000.00)		(41,000.00)		40,543.05	(456.95)	Pricing
1023411	Repl. 13003 Stake Truck 2021		2021	(85,000.00)		(85,000.00)		101,191.33	16,191.33	Pricing
1023511	Repl 13004 Pickup 2021		2021	(50,000.00)		(50,000.00)		53,164.60	3,164.60	Pricing
1023611	Repl 13005 Pickup 2021		2021	(50,000.00)		(50,000.00)		52,824.60	2,824.60	Pricing
1024311	Repl 11007 (Car 47) van 2021		2021	(43,500.00)		(43,500.00)		46,611.73	3,111.73	Pricing
1024411	Repl 11009 (Car 49) van 2021		2021	(43,500.00)		(43,500.00)		46,611.73	3,111.73	Pricing
1032511	Dep Chief SUV#10042 Repl 2022		2022	(60,000.00)		(60,000.00)		58,004.81	(1,995.19)	Pricing
1036711	Crew Trailer Unit #646-3 2022		2022	(12,000.00)		(12,000.00)		16,790.39	4,790.39	Pricing
1036811	Crew Trailer Unit 646-7 2022		2022	(12,000.00)		(12,000.00)		16,790.39	4,790.39	Pricing
1036911	Crew Trailer Unit 646-8 2022		2022	(12,000.00)		(12,000.00)		16,790.39	4,790.39	Pricing
				(534,000.00)		(534,000.00)		562,289.00	28,289.00	

ATTACHMENT #1 - CAPITAL ACCOUNTS CLOSED AS OF MARCH 31, 2023

ACCT	PROJECT NAME	Council Award / Approval	Year Approved	Approved Budget	Additional / Unbudgeted Funding Approved	Council Approved Budget and Additional Funding	Funding not transferred	Expenditures	Project Balance	Comments
<u>Development Reserve</u>										
1007011	Westney-Millington Signal Design	*	2019	(50,000.00)		(50,000.00)		-	(50,000.00)	Design completed and paid with construction project (1014211)
1014211	Westney-Millington Signal - Construction		2020	(270,000.00)		(270,000.00)		203,679.76	(66,320.24)	Pricing
1038011	Handheld Retroreflector		2022	(17,000.00)		(17,000.00)		15,162.23	(1,837.77)	Pricing
				(337,000.00)	-	(337,000.00)	-	218,841.99	(118,158.01)	
<u>Federal Gas Tax</u>										
1011611	ACC-Repl 7 Air Hd Units - Ph1		2020	(500,000.00)		(500,000.00)	55,162.33	444,837.67	-	Contingency not required, Pricing
1013411	Neighbourhood Street Light Improvement	*	2020	(510,000.00)		(510,000.00)	211,753.33	298,246.67	-	Contingency not required, Pricing
1020711	Neighbourhood Streetlight Imp. - Design		2021	(100,000.00)		(100,000.00)	25,852.62	74,147.38	-	Contingency not required, Pricing
				(1,110,000.00)	-	(1,110,000.00)	292,768.28	817,231.72	-	
<u>Stormwater Maintenance Reserve</u>										
1022011	Waterfront Shore Gap analysis		2021	(104,000.00)		(104,000.00)		79,852.98	(24,147.02)	Contingency not required, Pricing
				(104,000.00)	-	(104,000.00)	-	79,852.98	(24,147.02)	
<u>Parkland Reserve Fund</u>										
1038811	Real Estate Acquisitions/Dispositions (2022)	*	2022		(193,030.83)	(193,030.83)		193,030.83	-	
				-	(193,030.83)	(193,030.83)	-	193,030.83	-	
<u>Mixed Funding</u>										
<u>DC Reserve/Development Reserve</u>										
982211	Green Dev. & Env. Design Guidelines		2016	(80,000.00)		(80,000.00)		98,465.00	18,465.00	Scope
1010011	Central Ajax Intensification Serv.& (CIAST)		2019	(247,000.00)		(247,000.00)	5,476.35	241,523.65	-	
1012811	Kingston Rd StreetLighting-Salem to Galea		2020	(150,000.00)		(150,000.00)	150,000.00		-	Canceled/rebudgeted
				(477,000.00)	-	(477,000.00)	155,476.35	339,988.65	18,465.00	

ATTACHMENT #1 - CAPITAL ACCOUNTS CLOSED AS OF MARCH 31, 2023

ACCT	PROJECT NAME	* Council Award / Approval	Year Approved	Approved Budget	Additional / Unbudgeted Funding Approved	Council Approved Budget and Additional Funding	Funding not transferred	Expenditures	Project Balance	Comments
Building Maint Reserve, Dev. Res										
1004211	St. Andrew's Improv - Design		2019	(40,000.00)		(40,000.00)		46,061.63	6,061.63	Pricing
				(40,000.00)	-	(40,000.00)	-	46,061.63	6,061.63	
	Total			(4,507,000.00)	(848,578.43)	(5,355,578.43)	448,244.63	4,450,692.24	(456,641.56)	

Town of Ajax Report



Report To: General Government Council (GGC)
Prepared By: Aaron Burridge, Interim Fire Chief
Report #: AFES-2023-02
Subject: **Contract Award – Supply & Delivery ~ Pumper/Rescue Fire Truck**
Ward(s): ALL
Date of Meeting: May 8, 2023
Reference: RFP #23006
1032411.5840

Recommendation:

1. That council award the contract for the supply and delivery of a Pumper/Rescue Fire Truck to Commercial Emergency Equipment in the amount of \$1,521,611.67 (inclusive of all taxes).
2. That council approve funding of \$36,158.43 to be allocated to Capital No. 1032411 from the Vehicle/Equipment Replacement Reserve.

Background:

Pumper/Rescue P45 has been in service since 2006. Due to the age of this fire apparatus, it is lacking many updated safety devices, sensors, and anti-roll features. Currently the apparatus has been moved into a spare truck role to respond, as required, and is a temporary replacement for first line apparatus when these are out of service. It is in the Town’s best interests to move forward with this planned replacement to continue to provide the essential emergency services to its residents.

Discussion:

Request for Proposal (RFP) documents were posted to the Town’s eBidding platform and 8 prospective proponents registered for the opportunity with proposals being received from 3 of these, prior to the closing on April 12, 2023.

NAME OF PROPONENTS
City View Specialty Vehicles
Commercial Emergency Equipment
Dependable Emergency Vehicles

The following is the Proposal Evaluation Criteria used for this RFP:

MANDATORY SUBMISSION REQUIRMENTS (firms not meeting the mandatory requirements may be deemed non-responsive & subject to rejection)		
Insurance	Pass/Fail	
WSIB	Pass/Fail	
EVALUATION CRITERIA	WEIGHTED POINTS	TOTAL AVAILABLE POINTS
QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE		
Proof of FAMA Membership	5	10
Proof of Required Certifications/Licenses	5	
QUALITY OF PROPOSAL SUBMISSION		
Responsiveness/Completeness of Submission	5	35
Demonstrated Willingness to Comply with Terms of the Bid Document	5	
Evaluation of Warranty Documents	10	
Appropriate Completion & Justification of Any Items Listed in the Table of Exceptions	15	
APPROACH & METHODOLOGY		
Demonstrated Understanding of the Requirements	7	25
Detailed Schedule for Construction of Apparatus	8	
Ability to Meet Time Estimates/Deadlines for Apparatus Delivery	10	
PRICING		
Cost Effectiveness of the Proposal		30
	TOTAL POINTS	100
	INTERVIEW (if applicable)	50
	GRAND TOTAL	150

An evaluation committee, made up of Fire & Emergency Services staff, reviewed all the proposals received. Based on the evaluation criteria, specified in the RFP document, Commercial Emergency Equipment was the highest scoring proponent and met all the needs of the Town. City View Specialty Vehicles scored the second highest, and Dependable Emergency Vehicles scored the lowest.

Listed below are the Bids received:

NAME OF BIDDER	TOTAL BID AMOUNT
City View Specialty Vehicles	\$1,703,881.80
Commercial Emergency Equipment	\$1,521,611.67
Dependable Emergency Vehicles	\$1,520,980.00

Financial Implications:

1032411.5840 – Fleet – Repl. P45 Pumper Rescue

Approved Capital Budget	2022 & 2023		\$ 1,474,100.00
Contract (net of HST rebate)		\$1,370,258.43	
Replacement Equipment and Tools		\$ 110,000.00	
Contingency and Travel		<u>\$ 30,000.00</u>	
			\$1,510,258.43

Over Budget

(\$ 36,158.43)

Following the approval of the initial Capital Budget Sheet, costs related to the replacement of this fire apparatus have risen largely related to inflationary pressures partially attributed to supply chain issues, world events and the lower value of the Canadian Dollar versus the American Dollar. The lower value of the Canadian Dollar has a direct impact upon the cost of fire apparatus as the chassis and many components for the apparatus are built in the United States.

The contingency will be used to fund any necessary design changes that may be required to improve the functionality of the Apparatus.

Additional funding, not to exceed \$36,158.43, will be allocated from Vehicle/Equipment Replacement Reserve.

The Capital Detail sheet is attached for information. Note: \$374,100 was funded in 2022 and is not shown on the detail sheet.

Communication Issues:

N/A

Relationship to the Strategic Plan:

Investing in our community – modernizing existing municipal infrastructure and other assets.

Conclusion:

It is the recommendation of Staff that Commercial Emergency Equipment be awarded the contract to supply and deliver the required Pumper/Rescue Fire Truck.

Attachments:

ATT-1 – LC020100 Fleet & Equipment Replacement Program – Fire

Prepared by:

Aaron Burrige – Interim Fire Chief, Fire & Emergency Services

Submitted by:

Aaron Burrige – Interim Fire Chief, Fire & Emergency Services

Approved by:

Dianne Valentim - Director of Finance/Treasurer

Approved by:

Shane Baker – Chief Administrative Officer

TOWN OF AJAX
2023 CAPITAL BUDGET / 2024-2032 LONG RANGE CAPITAL FORECAST
DETAIL SHEET

Project Name **Fleet & Equipment Replacement Program - Fire**
Project Number **LC020100**

Program Description

The Fire Fleet & Equipment Replacement program identifies vehicles and equipment at the end of their expected life cycle due for replacement in the Fire & Emergency Services department. Currently the Town maintains 10 Fire Trucks (Pumper Rescues, Pumper Tanker, Aerial Ladders and Heavy Rescue), 12 vehicles and 1 trailer used for education on fire prevention and public safety.

Vehicles and equipment at the end of their expected life cycle require replacement in order to maintain the current service levels each asset supports. Extending the life cycle of vehicles may increase maintenance and repair budgets and could result in significant service delivery interruptions caused by unplanned mechanical failures.

EXPENDITURES / FUNDING

	2023	2024	2025	2026-2032	Total
Expenditures					
1032411 Pumper Apparatus Unit #P45	1,100,000	-	-	-	1,100,000
23020102 Aerial Fire Apparatus Unit #A42 (2006)	630,000	1,470,000	-	-	2,100,000
23020103 SCBA Air Pack Update	250,000	-	-	-	250,000
23020104 Repl. Air Monitors	57,500	-	-	-	57,500
23020105 Hybrid Sedan 15303 (2015)	-	-	-	45,600	45,600
23020106 Hybrid Sedan 17304 (2017)	-	-	-	45,600	45,600
23020107 Repl. Fire Hose Tester	17,000	-	-	-	17,000
23020108 Repl. SCBA Cylinders	29,600	-	-	-	29,600
24020101 Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) System	-	1,200,000	-	-	1,200,000
24020102 Pumper Apparatus P410 (2007)	-	450,000	1,000,000	-	1,450,000
24020103 Repl. Thermal Imaging Cameras	-	100,000	-	100,000	200,000
24020104 Crew Cab Pickup 15948 (C48) (2015)	-	-	-	90,000	90,000
24020105 Repl. Tech Rope Rescue Equipment	-	20,000	-	52,000	72,000
24020106 Repl. SCBA Cylinders 2024-2032	-	22,200	39,000	157,300	218,500
25020101 Pumper Apparatus Unit P47 (2010)	-	-	450,000	1,000,000	1,450,000
25020102 Repl. Fire Hazard Trailer #395-1 (2002)	-	-	160,000	-	160,000
25020103 Repl. Communications Ergo Desk	-	-	45,000	-	45,000
25020104 Hybrid Sedan Unit #18301 (C413)(2018)	-	-	-	40,000	40,000
25020105 Repl. SCBA Test Equipment (posi check)	-	-	21,400	-	21,400

TOWN OF AJAX
2023 CAPITAL BUDGET / 2024-2032 LONG RANGE CAPITAL FORECAST
DETAIL SHEET

Project Name **Fleet & Equipment Replacement Program - Fire**
Project Number **LC020100**

EXPENDITURES / FUNDING					
	2023	2024	2025	2026-2032	Total
Expenditures					
26020101 Hall Mower 680-6 (2001)	-	-	-	45,000	45,000
27020101 Repl. Hazmat Equipment	-	-	-	90,000	90,000
27020102 SUV 21341 (2021)	-	-	-	80,000	80,000
28020101 Tanker T48 (2013)	-	-	-	1,300,000	1,300,000
28020102 SUV Response 21345 (2021)	-	-	-	100,000	100,000
28020103 Passenger Van 21601 (2021)	-	-	-	60,000	60,000
28020104 Passenger Van 21602 (2021)	-	-	-	60,000	60,000
28020105 Repl. SCBA Air Compressor- Stn 2	-	-	-	40,000	40,000
29000401 Repl. Defibrillators	-	-	-	35,000	35,000
29020101 Repl. SCBA Air pack	-	-	-	1,000,000	1,000,000
29020102 SUV 22342 (2022)	-	-	-	80,000	80,000
29020103 SUV 22343 (2022)	-	-	-	80,000	80,000
29020104 Pickup Truck 201203 (2020)	-	-	-	60,000	60,000
29020105 Hybrid Sedan 22306 (2022)	-	-	-	45,600	45,600
29020106 Repl. SCBA Air Compressor- HQ	-	-	-	40,000	40,000
30020101 Repl Fire Fighter Survival Maze Training	-	-	-	80,000	80,000
30020102 Hybrid Sedan 23301 (2023)	-	-	-	45,600	45,600
30020103 Hybrid Sedan 23302 (2023)	-	-	-	45,600	45,600
30020104 Hybrid Sedan 23303 (2023)	-	-	-	45,600	45,600
30020105 Repl. Air Monitors	-	-	-	50,000	50,000
31020101 Hybrid Sedan 22306 (2022)	-	-	-	50,000	50,000
31020102 Aerial Ladder 17A41 (2016)	-	-	-	1,500,000	1,500,000
31020103 Repl. Vehicle Stabilization Equipment	-	-	-	75,000	75,000
Total Expenditures	2,084,100	3,262,200	1,715,400	6,537,900	13,599,600
Financing					
Vehicle/Equipment Replacement Reserve	2,084,100	2,662,200	1,692,900	6,537,900	12,977,100
Recoveries - Municipalities	-	600,000	22,500	-	622,500
Total Financing	2,084,100	3,262,200	1,715,400	6,537,900	13,599,600
Annual Operating Costs	-	190,000	-	-	190,000

Town of Ajax Report



Report To: General Government Committee

Prepared By: Ranil Fernando, Manager, Infrastructure and Asset Management

Report #: OES-2023-16

Subject: **Contract Award – Range Line Road Reconstruction from Pickering Beach Road to Shoal Point Road**

Ward(s): 3

Date of Meeting: May 8, 2023

Reference: 1034111 – Range Line Road Reconstruction – Pickering Beach Road to Cherry

1034011 – Range Line Road Resurfacing – Cherry Road to Shoal Point Road

1033911 – Shoal Point Road Mill and Overlay – Range Line Road to Asbury Boulevard

Recommendation:

1. That Council award the contract for Range Line Road Reconstruction from Pickering Beach Road to Shoal Point Road including mill and overlay of Shoal Point Road to Dufferin Construction Company in the amount of \$3,444,333.79 (inclusive of all taxes).
2. That Council approve funding of \$1,817,295.24, to be allocated from the following Capital Accounts from the Canada Community Building Fund:

1034011 – Range Line Resurfacing – Cherry Road to Shoal Point Road	\$1,821,711.96
1034111 – Range Line Recons - Pickering Beach Road to Cherry Road	<u>(\$ 4,416.72)</u>
Total	<u>\$ 1,817,295.24</u>

3. That Council award the contract for the Contract Administration and Material Testing to R.V. Anderson in the amount of \$290,797.31 (inclusive of all taxes) for the Range Line Road Reconstruction project.

Background:

Range Line Road is located in south Ajax, east of Pickering Beach Road. The project limits are indicated in Figure 1.

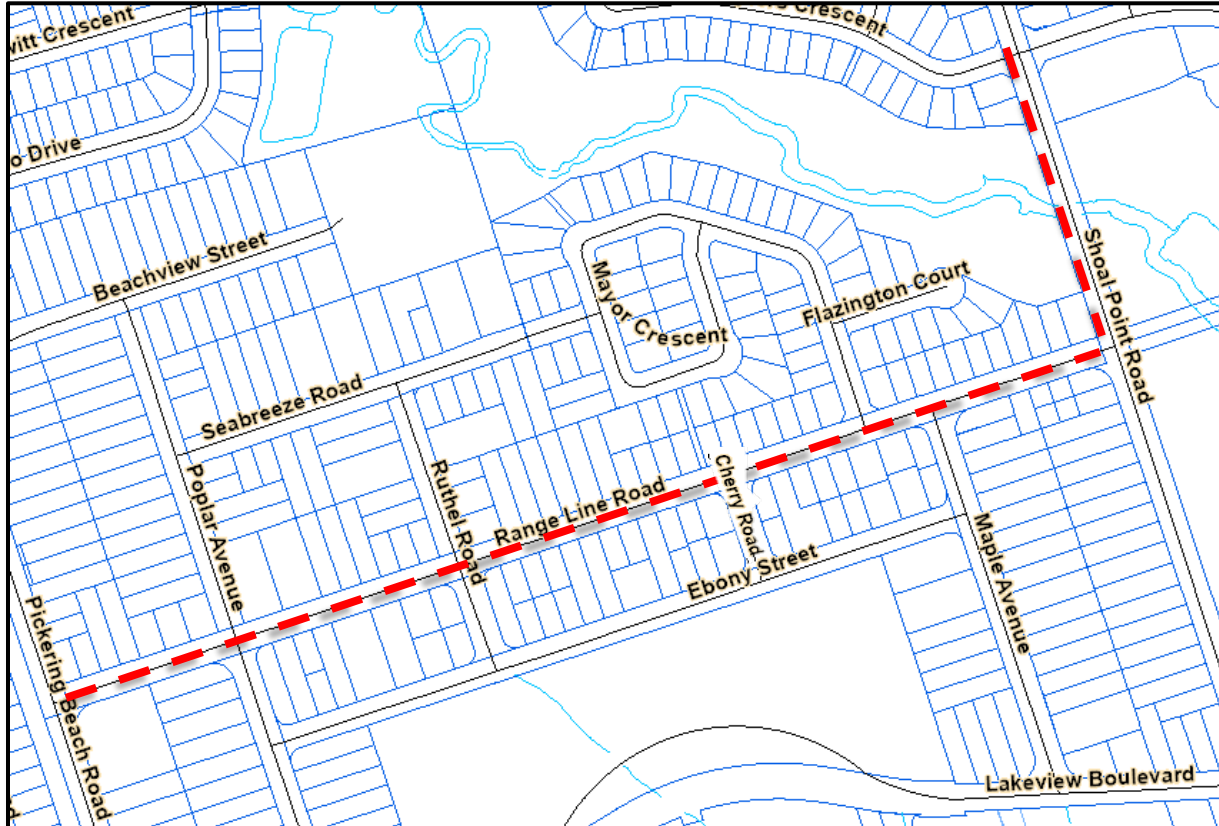


Figure 1 – Project Limits

Range Line Road

The approved 2022 Capital Budget includes the provisions for the reconstruction of Range Line Road from Pickering Beach Road to Cherry Road and Resurfacing of Range Line Road from Cherry Steet to Shoal Point Road. The existing conditions of Range Line Road are as follows:

- Pickering Beach Road to Cherry Road to is a two lane, paved, rural roadway classified as a local road
- Cherry Road to Shoal Point Road to is a two lane, paved, urban roadway with a sidewalk on the north side classified as a local road

The posted speed is 40 km/h and the total length of roadway for the project is approximately 0.8 km. The segment from Pickering Beach Road to Cherry Road is in very poor condition and in need of immediate repair. Furthermore, the two mini roundabouts at Poplar Avenue and at Ruthel Road meant for traffic calming are not effective, and speeding continues to be an issue. The lack of a continuous pedestrian walkway within this segment puts pedestrians at risk, as pedestrians are currently forced to walk on the gravel shoulder.

The improvements to Range Line Road include the following:

- Full reconstruction of Range Line Road from Pickering Beach Road to Cherry Road
- New 3 way stop controlled intersection at Pickering Beach Road and Range Line Road providing safe pedestrian access to the Waterfront Trail including new tactile surface indicators and curb depression to meet Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)
- New sidewalk on the south side from Pickering Beach Road to Ruthel Road (Figure 2)
- New sidewalk on the north side from Ruthel Road to connect to the existing sidewalk (Figure 3)
- Removal of the existing roundabouts and construction of new raised intersections at Poplar Avenue and Ruthel Road to address speeding issues
- New Speed cushions 40m east of Poplar Avenue and 40m west of Ruthel Road including signage and flexible bollards to further address speeding issues
- New tactile surface indicators and curb depression at intersections to meet Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)
- New Duraslot surface drains and new culverts to address drainage
- New traffic control measure in the form of curb extensions at Mayor Crescent, Maple Avenue and Shoal Point Road

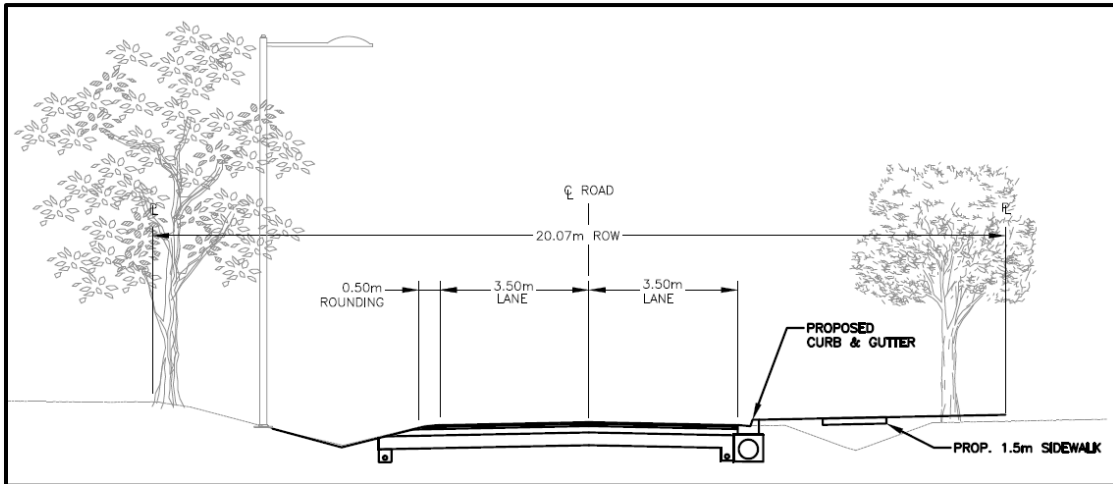


Figure 2 – Proposed sidewalk south side Pickering Beach Road to Ruthel Road

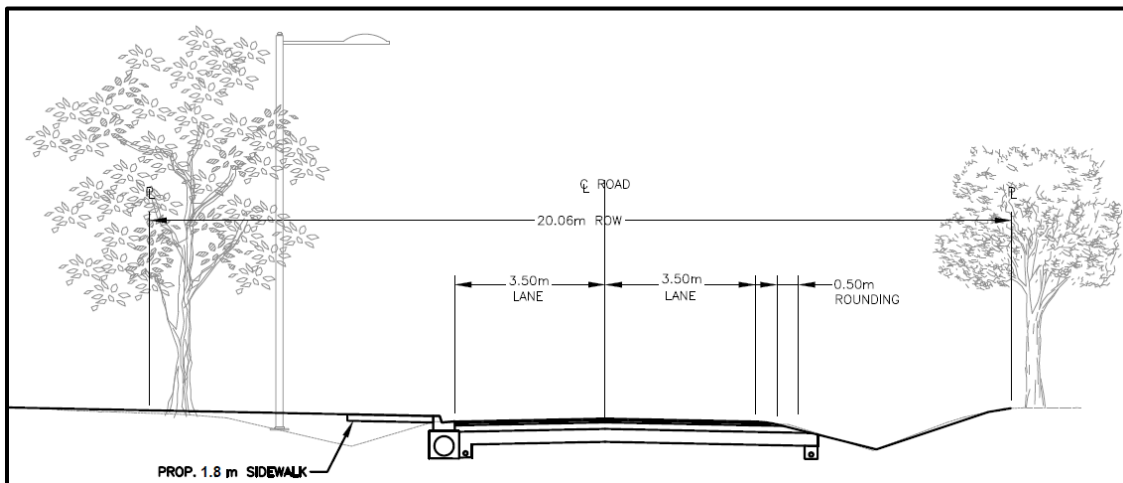


Figure 3 – Proposed sidewalk north side Ruthel Road to existing sidewalk

Shoal Point Road

Shoal Point Road is a two-lane urban road with a posted speed of 50km/h. Shoal Point Road from Range Line Road to Asbury Boulevard has been identified for mill and overlay. The resurfacing of municipal roads and associated curb, sidewalk and culvert repairs are a critical component of the Town's infrastructure maintenance program. The roads to be resurfaced and/or reconstructed each year are prioritized based on the Town's Pavement Management System and coordinated with the Region of Durham's construction projects.

Class Environmental Assessment

The Town has classified the undertaking as a Schedule A+ under the Class Environmental Assessment (EA), as outlined in Municipal Class Environmental Assessment document prepared by the Municipal Engineers Association (MEA) in October 2000 and amended in 2007 and 2011.

The Project has been classified as a Schedule A+ as it involves the reconstruction of a road for the same purpose, use, capacity and at the same location as the existing road. Schedule A+ projects are pre-approved, however, the public must be advised prior to the project implementation.

The Town held a public information session on September 30, 2021, to inform the public and solicit comments. All comments have been considered and construction drawings have been updated accordingly.

Schedule:

The proposed schedule for the work is summarized below:

- Project commencement May 26th, 2023
- Project completion October 27th, 2023

Discussion:

The current Purchasing By-Law allows for purchases through negotiations, under certain conditions, more specifically, "where, at the discretion of the Department Head, in consultation with the Manager of Purchasing, it is deemed to be in the best interest of the municipality to negotiate with vendors."

The Town undertook a Request for Pre-Qualification [RPQ No. PQ2202] for General Contractors ~ Range Line Road Reconstruction in March 2022 to cover Road Reconstruction requirements. This RPQ resulted in the appointment of 6 pre-qualified Bidders.

Request for Tender (RFT) documents were posted to the Towns' eBidding platform, and the 6 pre-qualified bidders were invited to register for the opportunity. Of the invited bidders, 5 registered for the opportunity with bids being received from 3 of these, prior to the closing on April 10, 2023.

Listed below is a summary of the bids considered:

NAME OF BIDDER	TOTAL TENDER AMOUNT
Dufferin Construction Company	\$3,444,333.79
Mar-King Construction Company Ltd.	\$ 4,289,324.59
Elirpa Construction & Materials Ltd.	\$ 4,411,551.49

Contract Administration and Material Testing:

The current Purchasing By-Law allows for purchases through negotiations, under certain conditions, more specifically, “where, at the discretion of the Department Head, in consultation with the Manager of Purchasing, it is deemed to be in the best interest of the municipality to negotiate with vendors.”

It is recommended that the contract administration, inspection, and material testing services be awarded to R.V. Anderson Associates Limited as a single source contract to ensure that the work is completed in a cost effective and timely manner. R.V. Anderson Associates Limited is best suited for this project as they completed the detailed design, awarded through a Prequalification Process, RPQ No. PQ1710. During detail design, they worked closely with the Toronto Regional Conservation Authority (TRCA) and local residents to address all concerns and implement the requirements into the detail design. R.V. Anderson is familiar with the existing site conditions and well suited to addressing potential challenges that may arise during construction.

Financial Implications:

Approved Capital Budget (CCBF)

1034011 – Range Line Resurfacing – Cherry Road to Shoal Point Road	\$205,000.00	
1034111 – Range Line Recons - Pickering Beach Road to Cherry Road	<u>\$1,716,000.00</u>	\$1,921,000.00

Current Award

Contract - Dufferin Construction (net of HST rebate)	\$2,997,916.48	
Contingency (15%)	\$449,687.47	
CA and Geotechnical (net of HST rebate)	\$252,775.04	
Contingency (15%)	<u>\$37,916.25</u>	<u>\$3,738,295.24</u>

Over budget \$1,817,295.24

Approved Capital Budget (Road Maintenance Reserve)

1033911 – Shoal Point M&O Range Line to Ashbury Blvd		\$239,100.00
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Current Award

Contract - Dufferin Construction (net of HST rebate)	\$103,812.78	
Contingency (15%)	\$15,571.92	
CA and Geotechnical (net of HST rebate)	\$9,096.94	
Contingency (15%)	<u>\$1,364.54</u>	<u>\$129846.18</u>

Under budget (\$109,253.82)

A 15% contingency has been identified to ensure sufficient funding is available to address site specific issues that can be encountered during construction. Risk factors for this project include:

- Unusual soil or base conditions, site conditions different than those anticipated,
- Unanticipated utilities encountered during the construction,
- Additional environmental management required due to proximity to creeks,
- Dewatering requirements,
- Contamination of soil, and/or,
- Poor weather conditions.

These risks can cause delays, necessitating additional material and labour associated with construction.

The cost increase can be attributed to the shortage of skilled labour supply, elevated fuel prices and shortage of construction materials due to supply chain issues. The bid analysis indicated higher-than-normal unit costs for all products related to concrete. These include the cost of sidewalk, concrete manholes, concrete pipe, catch basins, and curb and gutter.

Furthermore, the Excess Soil Management Regulation, O. Reg 406/19, took effect under the Province's Environmental Protection Act ("EPA"). The Regulation introduces a new framework for the excavation, removal and transport of "excess soils" between two or more sites that will affect overall projects costs. These costs include additional sampling and testing, additional costs of trucking and disposal and costs of importing clean fill to site.

Communication Issues:

A communication strategy has been developed to keep residents and Council up to date on the progress of these construction projects. The plan includes:

- Mailing notices to residents in the immediate area,
- Providing information on the Town's website, social media and the local paper,
- Posting information signs at the construction site,
- Issuing a news release and,
- Regular newsletters on the project schedule and progress.

Signage will be posted a minimum of 10 days in advance of construction and be arranged through the Town's Road Occupancy/Road Closure By-Law. As per the By-Law, notices will be sent to residents, emergency services and transit prior to the construction. All efforts will be made to complete the construction work as quickly and efficiently as possible to minimize the impact to the public.

Relationship to the Strategic Plan:

This report aligns with the following section of the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan – Action 26:

Pillar 2: Growing Our Community

Priority 1: Embrace dynamic and sustainable growth

1.5: Improve road transportation network

Conclusion:

It is the recommendation of staff that:

- Dufferin Construction Company be awarded the contract for Range Line Road Reconstruction from Pickering Beach Road to Shoal Point Road including Mill and Overlay of Shoal Point Road, being the lowest bidder meeting minimum specifications,
- R.V. Anderson Associates Limited be awarded the contract for contract administration inspection and material testing services as a single source purchase.

Attachments:

ATT-1: 1034111 – Range Line Recons - Pickering Beach Road to Cherry Road

ATT-2: 1034011 – Range Line Resurfacing - Cherry to Shoal Point

ATT-3: 1033911 – Shoal Point Road M&O Range Line to Ashbury Blvd.

Prepared by:

Ranil Fernando – Manager of Infrastructure and Asset Management

Submitted by:

Dave Meredith – Director of Operations and Environmental Services

Approved by:

Shane Baker – Chief Administrative Officer

TOWN OF AJAX
2022 CAPITAL BUDGET / 2023-2031 LONG RANGE CAPITAL FORECAST
DETAIL SHEET

Department	Operations & Environmental Services	Initially budgeted in 2021
Section	Infrastructure Engineering	
Project Name	Range Line Recv-Pick Bch/Cherr	
Submitted By	Ranil Fernando, Manager of Infrastructure & Asset Management	
Start Year	2022	
Project Number	1034111	

PROJECT DESCRIPTION / JUSTIFICATION

Scope: The scope of work includes the resurfacing of roads, crack sealing, geotechnical investigations, design, road patching, curb replacements, sidewalk repairs and Pavement Management Systems Update.

Rationale: The resurfacing of municipal roads and associated repairs are a critical component of the Town's Infrastructure Maintenance Program. The roads to be resurfaced and/or reconstructed each year are prioritized based on the Town's Pavement Management System and coordinated with the Region of Durham's construction projects.

Reference: Pavement Management System, 2018-2020 Strategic Plan; Investing in Our Community
 "Modernizing existing municipal infrastructure and other assets"

EXPENDITURES / FUNDING

	2022	2023	2024	2025-2031	Total
Total Expenditures	1,716,000	-	-	-	1,716,000
Canada Community-Building Fund	1,716,000	-	-	-	1,716,000
Total Funding	1,716,000	-	-	-	1,716,000

TOWN OF AJAX
2022 CAPITAL BUDGET / 2023-2031 LONG RANGE CAPITAL FORECAST
DETAIL SHEET

Department	Operations & Environmental Services	Initially budgeted in 2021
Section	Infrastructure Engineering	
Project Name	Range Line Res-Cherry/Shoal Pt	
Submitted By	Ranil Fernando, Manager of Infrastructure & Asset Management	
Start Year	2022	
Project Number	1034011	

PROJECT DESCRIPTION / JUSTIFICATION

Scope: The scope of work includes the resurfacing of roads, crack sealing, geotechnical investigations, design, road patching, curb replacements, sidewalk repairs and Pavement Management System Update.

Rationale: The resurfacing of municipal roads and associated repairs are a critical component of the Town's Infrastructure Maintenance Program. The roads to be resurfaced and/or reconstructed each year are prioritized based on the Town's Pavement Management System and coordinated with the Region of Durham's construction projects.

Reference: Pavement Management System, 2018-2020 Strategic Plan; Investing in Our Community "Modernizing existing municipal infrastructure and other assets"

EXPENDITURES / FUNDING

	2022	2023	2024	2025-2031	Total
Total Expenditures	205,000	-	-	-	205,000
Canada Community-Building Fund	205,000	-	-	-	205,000
Total Funding	205,000	-	-	-	205,000

TOWN OF AJAX
2022 CAPITAL BUDGET / 2023-2031 LONG RANGE CAPITAL FORECAST
DETAIL SHEET

Department	Operations & Environmental Services	Initially budgeted in 2021
Section	Infrastructure Engineering	
Project Name	Shoal Pt M&O-Range Line/Ashbur	
Submitted By	Ranil Fernando, Manager of Infrastructure & Asset Management	
Start Year	2022	
Project Number	1033911	

PROJECT DESCRIPTION / JUSTIFICATION

Scope: The scope of work includes the resurfacing of roads, crack sealing, geotechnical investigations, design, road patching, curb replacements, sidewalk repairs and Pavement Management System update.

Rationale: The resurfacing of municipal roads and associated repairs are a critical component of the Town's Infrastructure Maintenance Program. The roads to be resurfaced and/or reconstructed each year are prioritized based on the Town's Pavement Management System and coordinated with the Region of Durham.

Reference: Pavement Management System, 2018-2020 Strategic Plan; Investing in Our Community "Modernizing existing municipal infrastructure and other assets"

EXPENDITURES / FUNDING

	2022	2023	2024	2025-2031	Total
Total Expenditures	239,100	-	-	-	239,100
Road Maintenance Reserve	239,100	-	-	-	239,100
Total Funding	239,100	-	-	-	239,100

Town of Ajax Report



Report To: General Government Committee

Prepared By: Rassel Solaiman, Capital Projects Coordinator

Report #: OES-2023-12

Subject: **Contract Award – Buried Streetlight System Replacement**

Ward(s): 3

Date of Meeting: May 8, 2023

Reference: RFT No. T23015 & RFS No. S23008
Account No. 23034001.5870/4108 – Lake Vista Neighbourhood Buried Streetlight System Replacement

Recommendation:

1. That Council award the contract for Buried Streetlight System Replacement, to Hastings Utilities Contracting Ltd. in the amount of \$736,308.00 (inclusive of all taxes).
2. That Council award the contract for Contract Administration ~ Buried Streetlight System Replacement, to Morrison Hershfield Limited in the amount of \$42,250.70 (inclusive of all taxes).

Background:

Streetlight improvements are typically completed in neighbourhoods with older streetlighting infrastructure requiring full replacement or upgrading due to age, breakdown or reliability. The on-going replacement and upgrading program for streetlights is considered necessary to maintain a reliable, safe and efficient streetlighting system for residents, pedestrians and motorists.

In May 2021, staff retained Morrison Hershfield Limited to complete a design for the replacement of buried streetlight wires in the Lake Vista Neighbourhood including the streets listed below and as shown in Figure 1.

- Burcher Road from Bayly Street East to Emperor Street
- Ambassador Street
- Lucille Street
- Billingsgate Crescent
- Thorncroft Crescent
- Tulloch Drive
- Hurley Road

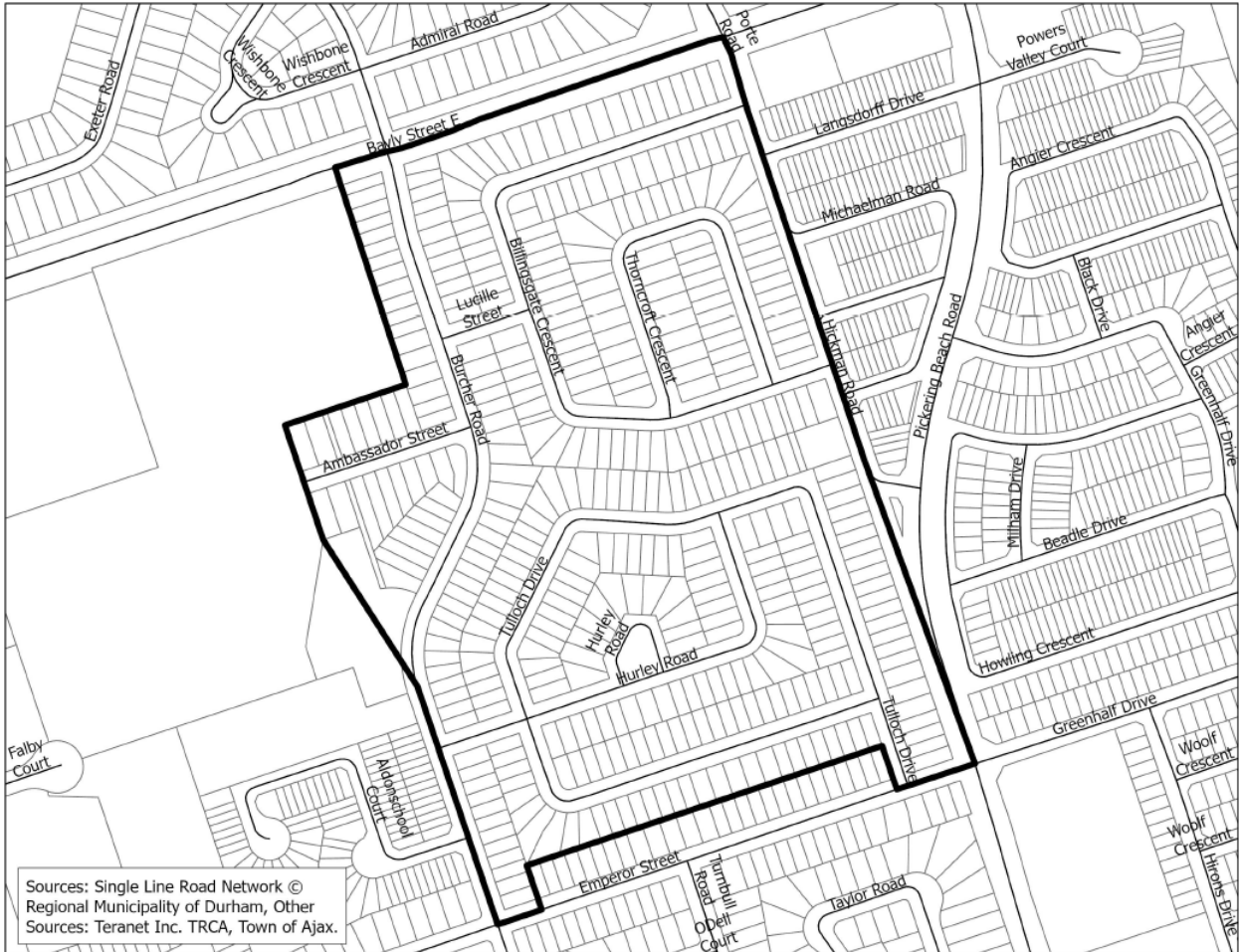


Figure 1: Lake Vista Neighbourhood – Buried Streetlight System Replacement

The replacement of the underground streetlight wires for this neighbourhood was recommended due to the age and the susceptibility of the underground wiring system to burn-offs or faults. Ongoing maintenance in the Lake Vista Neighbourhood area has resulted in some of the underground wiring being temporarily connected overhead.

The project scope also includes relocating existing power supply lines coming from hydro poles located in the rear yard of private property to a power supply located within the Town’s Right of Way. Existing aerial power supply lines coming from private property will be de-energized and removed, lines in underground conduits will be removed and direct buried lines will be abandoned. The Town will coordinate with homeowners to obtain permission to access private property where required to complete the work.

The replacement of the aging underground streetlight wires and related infrastructure in the Lake Vista Neighbourhood will result in safe illumination for all traffic, reduced maintenance costs and a more reliable streetlight system for the area.

Discussion:

Construction Contract

Request for Tender (RFT) documents were posted to the Towns’ eBidding platform and 11 prospective bidders registered for the opportunity with bids being received from 6 of these, prior to the closing on April 4, 2023. Listed below is a summary of the bids received:

NAME OF BIDDER	TOTAL TENDER AMOUNT
Hastings Utilities Contracting Ltd.	\$ 736,308.00
Black & McDonald Limited	\$ 747,743.54
Montgomery Industrial Services	\$ 788,676.16
Fellmore Electrical Contractors Ltd.	\$ 875,567.31
Beacon Utility Contractors Limited	\$ 953,368.49
Nick Carchidi Excavating Limited	\$ 974,811.28

Contract Administration

The current Purchasing By-Law allows for purchases through negotiations, under certain conditions, more specifically, “where, at the discretion of the Department Head, in consultation with the Manager of Purchasing, it is deemed to be in the best interest of the municipality to negotiate with vendors.”

It is in the Town’s best interest to single source the Contract Administration Contract to Morrison Hershfield Limited as they have completed the detailed design and are familiar with existing site conditions.

Contract commencement is June 5, 2023 and completion is expected by November 30, 2023.

Financial Implications:

Capital Account No. 23034001.5870/4108 – Lake Vista Neighbourhood Buried Streetlight System Replacement

Approved Capital Budget	\$793,000.00
Construction Contract (net of HST rebate)	\$663,068.16
Contingency (10%)	\$ 66,306.82
Contract Administration (net of HST rebate)	\$ 38,048.06
Contingency (10%)	\$ 3,804.81 <u>\$771,227.85</u>
Under Budget	<u>\$ 21,772.15</u>

A 10% contingency has been identified to ensure sufficient funding is available to address site specific issues that can be encountered during construction. Risk factors for this project are listed below. These risks may result in project delays and additional costs.

- Poor soil conditions,
- Sidewalk repairs,
- Additional conduit and wiring, and
- Unforeseen utility conflicts.

The Capital Detail Sheet is attached for information.

Communication Issues:

A Notice of Construction will be issued to residents located near and within the project boundary ten (10) days prior to the start of construction and will also be posted on the Town’s website and social media.

Relationship to the Strategic Plan:

This report aligns with the following section of the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan – Action 26:

Pillar 2: Growing our Community
Priority 1: Embrace dynamic and sustainable growth

Pillar 3: Modernizing our Community
Priority 1: Lead the green transition

Conclusion:

It is the recommendation of staff that Hastings Utilities Contracting Ltd. be awarded the contract for Buried Streetlight System Replacement, being the lowest bidder meeting minimum specifications.

It is the recommendation of staff that Morrison Hershfield Limited be awarded the contract for Contract Administration ~ Buried Streetlight System Replacement, as a single source purchase.

Attachments:

ATT-1: Capital Detail Sheet – Streetlighting Lifecycle Maintenance Program LC03400

Prepared by:

Rassle Solaiman – Capital Projects Coordinator

Submitted by:

Dave Meredith – Director of Operations & Environmental Services

Approved by:

Shane Baker – Chief Administrative Officer

TOWN OF AJAX
2023 CAPITAL BUDGET / 2024-2032 LONG RANGE CAPITAL FORECAST
DETAIL SHEET

Project Name **Streetlighting Lifecycle Maintenance Program**
Project Number **LC034000**

Program Description
<p>The Streetlighting Lifecycle Maintenance program provides for replacement of 11,643 streetlights, 10,162 poles and other related assets such as underground wiring.</p> <p>Timely repair or replacement of streetlighting assets ensures public safety, reduces the lifecycle cost of operation and minimizes the risk of unplanned service outages.</p>

EXPENDITURES / FUNDING					
	2023	2024	2025	2026-2032	Total
Expenditures					
23034001 Lake Vista Neigh Buried SL System Repl	793,000	-	-	-	793,000
23034002 Southwood Ph2 Neigh SL Improvements	571,000	-	-	-	571,000
24034001 Midtown Neigh SL Improv Ph1	-	206,000	830,000	-	1,036,000
25034001 Streetlight Pole Repl -Various Locations	-	-	186,000	-	186,000
25034002 Buried SL System Repl Bolland Pittman	-	-	125,000	425,000	550,000
26034001 Midtown Ph2 Neigh Streetlight Improv	-	-	-	830,000	830,000
Total Expenditures	1,364,000	206,000	1,141,000	1,255,000	3,966,000
Financing					
Canada Community-Building Fund	571,000	206,000	830,000	830,000	2,437,000
Road Maintenance Reserve	793,000	-	311,000	425,000	1,529,000
Total Financing	1,364,000	206,000	1,141,000	1,255,000	3,966,000
Annual Operating Costs	(500)	-	(2,400)	-	(2,900)

Town of Ajax Report



Report To: General Government Committee

Prepared By: Dave Meredith, Director of Operations and Environmental Services

Report #: OES-2023-17

Subject: **Removal/Replacement of Digital Screens**

Ward(s): All

Date of Meeting: May 8th, 2023

Reference: N/A

Recommendation:

1. That Council award the contract for the removal and/or replacement of four (4) digital screens, to Provincial Sign Systems in the estimated amount of \$152,098.00 (inclusive of all taxes).
2. That Council approve funding of \$148,060.00 to be allocated to a Capital Account from Capital Contingency Reserve.

Background:

Since digital signs were originally adopted as a communications vehicle by the Town in the early 2000s, advancements in technology have made substantial and fast-paced changes to the way that municipalities are able to, and are expected to, communicate to residents, businesses and community groups. The public expects communications from the Town to be timely, current and convenient to access. There has been a significant transition in recent years to utilizing online communications via channels such as websites, social media and mobile apps as the primary and preferred communication method. This is due to a number of factors, such as the speed and convenience of online communications, and also increased usage of smart phones and social media across demographics.

The messaging presented on digital signs is not as timely or convenient as other avenues, like the ones listed just prior, due to the lack of user-friendly upload methods to the signs, limited character count and as the messaging is only seen at a glance when travelling past the select sign locations.

Further, unfortunately due to a number of factors outside of staff's control, including changing technology, and general technology issues, the maintenance and repairs on the digital signs have resulted in the signs having significant periods of "down time", rendering the promotional aspect of the signs unusable. The ongoing need of constant maintenance, repairs and updating technology over the years hasn't only been costly monetarily but has also resulted in significant

staff time to be allocated to the upkeep of these signs and their messaging. Overall, the time and resources allocated currently to the digital sign program could be invested in advancing our communication strategy through other more reliable, efficient, convenient and expected forms of information sharing.

Discussion:

The current Purchasing By-Law allows for purchases through negotiations, under certain conditions, more specifically, “where, at the discretion of the Department Head, in consultation with the Manager of Purchasing, it is deemed to be in the best interest of the municipality to negotiate with vendors.

The Town has had significant challenges with its sign vendor(s) in recent years. Most recently, Provincial Sign Systems were retained to complete an initial conditional assessment of each sign and identify options for the Town to consider in developing a longer term strategy regarding the use of these digital signs.

The Town currently has four (4) electronic signs situated at the following locations:

- Town Hall (along Harwood Avenue)
- Audley Recreation Centre (along Audley Road)
- South-East Corner of Kingston Road and Westney Road
- Fire Hall Headquarters (south-west corner of Salem and Rossland)

As referenced, the existing digital technology require frequent repairs, and are not operational for significant periods of time, leading to resident frustration.

Staff have examined a range of options, including the replacement of each digital screen with more modern digital screens and updated technology. This is a costly initiative, when weighing the community benefit, and the likelihood these assets will require upgrades/replacements on a regular cycle, as technology continues to advance.

Staff are recommending the removal and replacement of existing LED screens (at three locations), with fascia signs featuring illumination and full colour Printed Digital Graphics (see appendix “A”)

It is further recommended that the digital screen at Town Hall be replaced with two (2) new LED digital boards (back-to-back) into the existing pylon digital fascia sign, and also that the sign be elevated 3’ in height to enhance its profile along Harwood Avenue.

Estimated Project Costs:

Sign #1 Westney and Kingston Rd	\$30,500.00
Sign #2 – Audley Recreation Centre	\$21,100.00
Sign #3 – Fire Hall Headquarters - Salem and Rossland	\$19,300.00
Sign #4 - Town Hall - Re and Re Digital Displays	\$58,200.00
Shop Drawing and Engineering Review	\$ 5,500.00
Contingency	<u>\$13,460.00</u>
 Total	 \$148,060.00

Project Timelines:

Projected Lead time for the installation of three locations being replaced by fascia signs
- 8 weeks from sign permit issuance

Projected Lead time for the installation of one location being replaced by with new digital sign
- 8-10 weeks from sign permit issuance

Financial Implications:

Capital Account – Removal and Replacement of Four (4) Digital Screens

The Removal and Replacement of Four (4) Digital Screens is an unbudgeted capital project.

The Removal and Replacement of four (4) digital signs is an unbudgeted Capital Project.

Contract (net of HST rebate)	\$129,100.00
Contingency (delete line if N/A)	\$ 13,460.00
Other Fees (shop drawings)	<u>\$5,500.00</u>
Total Project Cost	<u>\$148,060.00</u>

A 10% contingency amount will be used for technology requirements (modems, antennas, wi-fi connectivity), use of hoist, footing upgrades, power upgrades etc., if required.

Funding not to exceed \$148,060.00, will be allocated from Capital Contingency Reserve

Relationship to the Strategic Plan:

This report aligns with the following section of the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan

- Pillar: Modernize our Community
 - 2. Re-Think the way we Communicate
 - 2.1 Implement Innovative Communication Technology and Tools

Conclusion:

It is the recommendation of staff that Provincial Sign Systems be awarded the contract for the removal and replacement of four (4) digital signs as a single source purchase.

Attachments:

ATT-1: Digital Screen Replacement with Coloured Fascia Graphic

Prepared by:

Dave Meredith – Director of Operations and Environmental Services

Submitted by:

Dave Meredith – Director of Operations and Environmental Services

Approved by:


Shane Baker – Chief Administrative Officer

Town of
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Town of Ajax Report



Report To: General Government Committee

Prepared By: Samuel Twumasi
Manager of Economic Development & Tourism

Report #: PDS-2023-19

Subject: **Review of Underutilized Town Facilities Update**

Ward(s): All

Date of Meeting: May 8, 2023

Reference: GGC Report (In Camera) (November 15, 2021): Review of Underutilized Town Facilities
Council Report (August 31, 2021): Lease Agreement: The Durham Distillery Ltd. Mill Street Fire Hall (25 Mill Street)
GGC Report (April 12, 2021): Sundial Sales Pavilion Update
2021-2025 Ajax Economic Development Action Plan

Recommendations:

1. That the report titled “Underutilized Facilities Report Update” be received for information;
2. That Council direct staff to maintain Hartrick House based on current usage and expand promotion to better maximize usage during weekdays;
3. That staff be directed to report back following the approval of the Arts and Cultural Plan, on the long-term usage of the Sundial Sales Pavilion space.

1.0 Background:

In 2021, staff conducted a review of Town facilities identified to be vacant or underutilized and assessed their suitability to be leased to innovative start-up businesses as part of an “Innovate Ajax” program. The program was to provide selected start-up businesses with dedicated office space to kick start their business and provide them with access to Economic Development support to grow and scale their operations.

An example of this arrangement is the three-year lease agreement the Town entered into with Durham Distillery Ltd. for the former Mill Street Firehall (25 Mill Street). The Durham Distillery is an award-winning small batch distillery, creating spirits to sell to the local community.

Of the 8 Town facilities analyzed, three were identified as potentially being suitable for lease:

- Sundial Sales Pavilion (currently vacant)
- Hartrick House (currently utilized for Town programs and rentals)
- Quaker Meeting House basement (vacant/unfinished)

As per Council's motion from the November 15th 2021 General Government Committee (GGC) meeting, staff were directed to develop a framework to identify, evaluate and select innovative start-up businesses to lease identified underutilized facilities to, as a foundational component of a future "Innovate Ajax" program, and to conduct appraisals on the Hartrick House and Sundial Sales Pavilion properties.

2.0 Discussion:

i. Innovate Ajax Update

At present, there are 18 Regional Innovation Centres (RICs) across Ontario, all centered around technology and innovation. In Durham Region alone, there are five Accelerator Centres: Spark Centre (Oshawa), 1855 Whitby (Whitby), Community iLab (Oshawa), Venture Development Institute (Pickering), and Centre for Canadian Nuclear Sustainability (Pickering). In addition, Ajax presently has three Business Centres: Ajax Business Centre, The Lauf, and The Work Hub. All three offer spaces for entrepreneurs and businesses to use as needed.

The Town is in the midst of completing a new 10-year Arts and Culture Plan and one of the opportunities noted through the community consultations was to investigate supporting the arts and cultural sector through a variety of mechanisms and looking to create a 'Cultural Hub' with dedicated space.

Facilitating The Durham Distillery's lease of the Mill Street Firehall has proven to be a challenging undertaking due to the significant scope/cost of leasehold improvements the building requires to make it suitable for The Durham Distillery's needs.

Following a comprehensive review of the innovation hubs and programs in the Region of Durham, and the Province of Ontario, Economic Development & Tourism staff have concluded that an Innovation Program is not currently needed in Ajax.

In consideration of these challenges, staff are hesitant to proceed with leasing additional facilities that require significant leasehold improvements like the Quaker Meeting House Basement.

ii. Analysis of identified underutilized facilities: Quaker Meeting House Basement, Hartrick House, and Sundial Sales Pavilion

Although there are organizations that identify, evaluate, and select innovative start-up businesses, there remains an opportunity to repurpose underutilized Town facilities to accommodate space needs in the community. ATT – 1 (Framework to Evaluate Business/Not-for-Profit Lease Proposals) is the lease criteria framework that can be used to evaluate proposals of businesses and not-for-profit organizations interested in leasing these properties.

The following is a detailed analysis of the three facilities including their ideal/potential uses (based on zoning and neighbourhood characteristics), current revenues, forecasted capital improvements/costs, potential lease revenues, and the appraised value of the facility.

Table #1: Quaker Meeting House - Basement (457 Kingston Road West)

Building features	Unfinished Approximately 3,713 ft ² (345 m ²) in size
Current Usage	Vacant and unfinished The upstairs of the Quaker Meeting House saw just under \$33,000 in rental revenue from 76 permitted bookings in 2022 , with Weekends being the bulk of these rentals. This facility was also impacted by several months of closures and restrictions due to COVID. So far for 2023, there have been 43 permitted bookings .
Zoning & Permitted Uses	Institutional A (I-A) Zone Permitted Uses include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Centre • Crisis Care Facility • Day Care Facility • Library • Nursing Home • Place of Worship • School
Current Revenues	None
Potential Lease Rates/Revenues	N/A
Required Capital Improvements	The basement is currently unfinished, and would require design consultation and construction, which would likely include the addition of washrooms and accessibility improvements (i.e., elevator or lift) to facilitate entry and means of egress. The roof on the facility has also been scheduled for replacement through the Town's capital program in 2024.
Appraised value	N/A
Recommendation	Due to the significant capital investment needed in order to convert the space for private use, staff are recommending this facility be removed as a lease option. Should Council wish to further explore the lease potential, further design and review of the cost of the necessary capital improvements would need to be completed.

Table #2: Hartrick House (120 Roberson Drive)

Building features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A total floor area of 3,309 ft² (307 m²); • Building consists of a Community Hall, Kitchen, small sitting area, outside deck and washrooms; • Parking for approximately 20 vehicles; • Located within a residential subdivision.
Current Usage	The facility is a popular rental facility. It is also used for several Town programs including summer camps.
Zoning & Permitted Uses	Agricultural (A) Zone Permitted Uses include:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural Operations • Equestrian Centre • Home Based Business • Resource Management Uses • Seasonal Farm Sale Outlet
Current Revenues	2021 – \$2,800 (<i>Covid Restrictions</i>) 2022 – \$35,200 (<i>Covid restrictions</i>)
Potential Lease Rates/ Revenues	N/A
Required Capital Improvements	The roof on the facility has also been scheduled for replacement through the Town’s capital program in 2024.
Appraised value	\$1,425,000 based on Office Space as the Highest and Best Use of the facility
Recommendation	Given the historical significance of the building, staff are recommending the Town retain the facility and continue to permit and utilize the space for facility rentals and meetings, along with Town programs including summer camps, with an increased emphasis on marketing and promotion efforts to maximize usage.

Table #3: Sundial Sales Pavilion (99 Barnham Street)

Building features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A total floor area of 4,759 ft² (442 m²); • Building consists of a main floor and full, unfinished basement; • Two unisex accessible washrooms on the main level; • Rough-in for future washroom facilities in the basement; • Floor drain in the basement to accommodate a future elevator; • A total of 16 parking spaces, located on the east side of the building; • An outdoor amenity area.
Current Usage	Vacant
Zoning & Permitted Uses	Open Space (OS) Zone Permitted uses include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passive Recreational Uses • Public Park • Recreational Facility • Refreshment Pavilion • Resource Management Uses • Stormwater Management Uses • Library (Exception 149) • Daycare (Exception 149) • Community Centre (Exception 149) • Concession Stand (Exception 149)
Current Revenues	None
Potential Lease Rates/Revenues	\$12-15/ft ² (Office type uses)

	\$57,000-\$71,000/year
Required Capital Improvements	Minor repairs to front concrete steps (approximate cost of \$3,000) required in the short term. Accessibility improvements (i.e. elevator to basement for which rough-in exists) may be required if basement is to be utilized. Ongoing general maintenance of the building would become the responsibility of a future tenant.
Appraised value	\$1,355,656 represents the value of the Building and Improvements (parking lot) ONLY. If Council would like to dispose of the facility, the building and improvements would need to be severed and would need to be appraised again on its own based on zoning and permitted uses.
Recommendation	Understanding that recommendations from the Arts and Culture Plan are coming before Council in June 2023 and may identify the need for additional dedicated space to serve the arts community, staff are recommending a review of the recommendations and implementation plans from that report prior to making a final recommendation on the long-term usage of this space.

3.0 Financial Implications:

The chart below illustrates the current operating expenses and forecasted expenditures for each of the facilities, in comparison to current revenues (if any), and potential revenues, should the Town decide to lease the building, and potential disposal revenue, should the Town decide to dispose of it.

Facility	Annual Operating Expenses	Forecasted Capital Expenditures	Current Annual Revenues	Property Disposal Revenue	Potential Lease Revenue
Sundial Sales Pavilion	\$15,500	N/A	\$0 (vacant)	\$1,355,656	\$12-15/ft ² (Office type uses) \$57,000-\$71,000/year
Hartrick House	\$47,800	N/A	\$35,200	\$1,425,000	Estimated \$39,708-\$49,000/year based on rental rate of \$12-15/ ft ²

**Estimate only, to be valuated/confirmed prior to issuance of Request for Expressions of Interest.*

Rental income generated through the lease agreements would be deposited into the associated business unit for each facility, to offset maintenance costs.

4.0 Communication Issues:

Following Council's approval and direction, Economic Development & Tourism will collaborate with the appropriate departments to develop an ongoing multi-faceted communications plan to expand marketing and promotion of our Facility Booking Program to the community. Supporting communications activities may include, but are not limited to: updated facility rental information displayed prominently on ajax.ca, a robust social media campaign utilizing both Economic Development & Tourism channels and Corporate channels (primarily Facebook, Twitter, Instagram), informational videos on facility features, targeted communications to specific user groups and usage of non-digital communication channels such as the Town's "Community Page" within the Ajax News Advertiser and Corporate mobile signs.

5.0 Relationship to the Strategic Plan:

There are no Strategic Initiatives associated.

6.0 Conclusion:

The three facilities identified through this report can be further utilized to support our growing community. With marketing and promotional investment, each facility can play a crucial role in providing much needed space within Ajax, whether that use is community-based or business/not-for-profit based, while increasing non-tax revenue opportunities to the Town.

Attachments:

ATT-1: Framework to Evaluate Businesses/Not-for-Profit Lease Proposals

Prepared by:

Samuel Twumasi – Manager of Economic Development & Tourism

Submitted by:

Geoff Romanowski, MCIP, RRP, CPT – Director of Planning & Development Services

Approved by:

Shane Baker – Chief Administrative Officer

ATT-1

Framework to Evaluate Business/Not-for-Profit Lease Proposals

1. Demonstrated ties to Ajax

- Is business/not-for-profit currently located in Ajax?

2. Product/Service

- Is the product/service in line with Ajax's key/emerging sectors?
 - Advanced Manufacturing
 - Healthcare
 - Business Services
 - Food and Beverage Processing
 - Tourism
 - Agri-Business

3. Space Requirements

- Are space requirements (size/configuration) in line with the subject facility?
- Are required leasehold improvements less than \$10,000?
- Is the proposed use compatible with surrounding uses?

4. Growth/Scalability

- Has the business/not-for-profit demonstrated a clear plan to grow/scale within 2-3 years?

5. Financials

- Has the business/not-for-profit provided financial documents that demonstrate sustainability and ability to cover monthly rents?

Town of Ajax Report



Report To: General Government Committee
Prepared By: Derek Hannan, Manager of Bylaw Services
Report #: LIS-2023-09
Subject: Updates to Noise By-law
Ward(s): All
Date of Meeting: May 8, 2023
Reference: N/A

Recommendation:

That the proposed updated Noise By-law (ATT-1) be brought forward to the May 15, 2023 meeting of Council for approval.

Background:

Section 129 of the *Municipal Act*, 2001, S.O. 2001, c 25, as amended, authorizes a Municipality to pass a by-law to prohibit and regulate noise. The Town has a Noise By-law which regulates unusual noises that disturb the inhabitants of the Town of Ajax; it was last updated in 2017.

Earlier this year, Durham Region Police Service (DRPS) approached staff with a request to add language to the Noise By-law that would assist them in addressing noise issues, and also discussed the requested changes with several members of Council who were supportive of same. In particular, the new language is intended to assist DRPS in addressing situations where a noise violation is resulting in economic gain or advantage for the offender.

Discussion:

The additional language that DRPS has requested will provide a more efficient enforcement mechanism for the police when addressing noise issues that arise from sources where the offender is gaining an economic advantage, such that a low fine under the Noise By-law does not act as a significant enough deterrent for the offender to comply with the By-law. For example, this could include bars and clubs, for-profit outdoor festivals, or short-term rentals marketed toward large parties. Town staff are supportive of the requested changes and are encouraged that the police have indicated their willingness to support enforcement of the provisions within the Town's Noise By-law.

The updated language can be found in Section 6.2 through 6.6 of the proposed new By-law (ATT-1). There have been no other substantive changes to the by-law other than those described herein.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications directly related to approval of this report. Pursuant to Sec. 434 of the *Municipal Act*, the fines imposed for the contravention of by-laws of any lower-tier municipality, where prosecuted by the police force of the upper-tier municipality, belong to the upper-tier municipality.

Communication Issues:

Town staff will work with DRPS to ensure that the changes to the Noise By-law described herein are appropriately communicated closer to the time that they are set to come into effect.

Relationship to the Strategic Plan:

The measures outlined in this report support various priorities in the strategic plan including “improve well-being and quality of life” and “foster a safe and welcoming community.”

Conclusion:

The Noise By-law updates requested by DRPS and proposed herein are supported by Town staff and will ensure that the Town and DRPS have the necessary tools available to adequately manage noise issues within the Town of Ajax.

Attachments:

ATT-1: Proposed Bylaw XX-2023 – Noise By-law

Submitted by:

Derek Hannan – Manager of By-law Services

Prepared by:

Nicole Cooper – Director, Legislative and Information Services

Approved by:

Shane Baker – Chief Administrative Officer

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF AJAX

BY-LAW NUMBER XX-2023

A By-law to prohibit and regulate noise

WHEREAS the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c 25, as amended, authorizes a Municipality to pass a by-law to prohibit and regulate noise;

NOW THEREFORE, the Council of The Corporation of the Town of Ajax enacts as follows:

1. SHORT TITLE

1.1 This By-law may be cited as the Noise By-law.

2. DEFINITIONS

2.1 In this By-law:

- (a) “construction” includes any earth moving, land clearing, excavating, construction, demolition, alteration, repair to any property, including a building, and shall include the delivery or movement of any equipment or materials intended for use in construction.
- (b) “Council” means council of the Town.
- (c) “Manager” means the Manager of By-law Services or their designate.
- (d) “noise” means sound or vibration that is of such volume, level or nature that it is unusual and likely to disturb the inhabitants of the Town.
- (e) “Officer” means a Municipal Law Enforcement Officer appointed by the Town or a Police Officer in the Province of Ontario.
- (f) “person” includes a corporation.
- (g) “residential renovation” includes any construction by a property owner on their own property, and shall not include any construction by a person hired by the property owner.
- (h) “Town” means The Corporation of the Town of Ajax.
- (i) “waste” means any discarded or unwanted material including, but not limited to, garbage, recyclable material, debris, compostable material, excrement, ashes, packing material, cans, bottles, mechanical equipment, cardboard, grass clippings, tree branches, or leaves.
- (j) “waste container” means a receptacle manufactured for the containment of waste that is capable of being emptied by a fork lift truck or a packer truck or a similar vehicle.

3. GENERAL PROVISIONS

- 3.1 No person shall cause or permit the emission of any noise if the noise is audible at the point of reception.
- 3.2 No person shall cause or permit noise from any construction on Statutory Holidays or between the hours of 8:00 p.m. one day to 7:00 a.m. the following day, Monday to Friday, and 7:00 p.m. on Friday to 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, and 5:00 p.m. on Saturday to 7:00 a.m. on Monday.
- 3.3 No person shall cause or permit noise for any residential renovation between the hours of 9:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. Monday to Saturday, and between 8:00 p.m. Saturday to 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, and 8:00 p.m. on Sunday and 7:00 a.m. on Monday.
- 3.4 No person shall empty or collect or permit to be emptied or collected any waste from any waste container from any property adjacent to any residentially zoned area, in accordance with the Town’s Zoning By-law, between 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. of the following day.

4. GENERAL EXEMPTIONS

4.1 This By-law shall not apply to a person who causes or permits the emission of noise in connection with any of the activities listed in Schedule "A".

5. EXEMPTION REQUESTS

5.1 Any person may request an exemption to permit construction during the periods of time prohibited in Section 3.2. All such requests shall be made in writing to the Manager and shall:

- (a) Identify and describe the construction activity that the applicant wishes to have exempted;
- (b) Set out the time (s) and location(s) for which the exemption is being sought;
- (c) State the name, address and telephone numbers of the applicant; and,
- (d) Set out the reasons why an exemption should be granted.

5.2 The Manager may grant or refuse to grant any exemption request, and may impose any conditions as he or she determines to be appropriate.

6. PENALTY AND ENFORCEMENT

6.1 Every person who contravenes any provision of this bylaw is guilty of an offence and upon conviction is liable to a fine as provided for by the Provincial Offences Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter P.33, as amended.

6.2 Pursuant to the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25 the maximum fines prescribed for any person who fails to comply with this by-law or who interferes with or obstructs any person in the exercise of a power or the performance of a duty conferred by this by-law, is liable on conviction:

- (a) to a fine of not more than \$100,000.
- (b) in the case of a continuing offence, the minimum fine of each day or part thereof shall be a minimum of \$500 and a maximum of \$10,000. The total of the daily fines for a continuing offence shall not be limited to \$100,000.
- (c) in addition to any other fines under this section, a special fine may be imposed if the commission of the offence resulted in economic gain or advantage. The maximum amount of a special fine may exceed \$100,000.

6.3 A person is guilty of a separate offence on each day that an offence under section 6.1 occurs or continues.

6.4 Despite the maximum fines set out in section 6.2, the court that convicts a person of an offence may increase a fine imposed on the person by an amount equal to the financial benefit that was acquired by or that accrued to the person because of the commission of the offence.

6.5 If the owner or occupier of premises at which a nuisance party is held is present at the nuisance party, then the owner or occupier is presumed, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, to be hosting or organizing the nuisance party.

6.6 If this by-law is contravened and a conviction entered, the court in which the conviction has been entered and any court of competent jurisdiction thereafter may, in addition to any other remedy and to any penalty that is imposed, make an order prohibiting the continuation or repetition of the offence by the person convicted.

6.7 Nothing in this By-law prevents any individual from privately initiating a charge for an alleged offence.

6.8 A person is guilty of an offence if the person:

- (a) hinders or obstructs, or attempts to hinder or obstruct, an Officer, or any person in the exercise of a power or the performance of a duty under this By-law;
- (b) makes a false or intentionally misleading recital or fact, statement or representation or produces any falsified or fictitious agreement or document; or

(c) fails to perform a duty imposed within this By-law or who performs an act prohibited herein.

6.09 If a court of competent jurisdiction should declare any section or part of a section of this By-law to be invalid, such a section or part of a section shall not be construed as having persuaded or influenced Council to pass the remainder of this By-law and it is hereby declared that the remainder of the By-law shall be valid and shall remain in force.

7. REPEAL

7.1 This By-law shall come into force and By-law Number 38-2017 shall be repealed on the date that the set fines are approved pursuant to the Provincial Offences Act.

7.2 Between the passing of this By-law and the date of this By-law coming into force, By-law 38-2017 shall apply, and will continue to apply to any enforcement proceedings which had been initiated prior to this By-law coming into force and then only until such enforcement proceedings have been concluded.

Read a first and second time this
Fifteenth day of May, 2023.

Read a third time and passed this
Fifteenth of May, 2023.

Mayor

D-Clerk

DRAFT

SCHEDULE "A"

TO BY-LAW NUMBER # XX-2023

EXEMPTED ACTIVITIES

1. Any event undertaken by the Town or any special event, provided the necessary approvals have been obtained from the Town.
2. Any emergency work undertaken for the immediate health, safety or welfare of the inhabitants of the Town or for the preservation, protection or restoration of property.
3. Any emergency work being carried out by the Town, The Regional Municipality of Durham or an electrical, gas, cable or telephone utility company.
4. Any sound originated from or caused by, the operation of farm equipment or machinery for cultivating, seeding, crop maintenance or harvesting on any lands designated as an agricultural use.
5. Necessary municipal operations carried out in the interest of public necessity and convenience, including but not limited to, snow clearing and street cleaning, undertaken by or on behalf of the Town.
6. Any snow removal which is essential for the effective operation of a business, residential condominium or school.

DRAFT

Town of Ajax Report



Report To: General Government Committee
Prepared By: Derek Hannan, Manager of Bylaw Services
Report #: LIS-2023-10
Subject: **Updates to Public Nuisance and Safety By-law**
Ward(s): All
Date of Meeting: May 8, 2023
Reference: N/A

Recommendation:

That the proposed updated Public Nuisance and Safety By-law (ATT-1) be brought forward to the May 15, 2023 meeting of Council for approval.

Background:

The *Municipal Act*, 2001, S.O. 2001, c 25, as amended, provides that a municipality may prohibit and regulate with respect to public nuisances, including matters that, in the opinion of Council, are or could become or cause public nuisances.

Earlier this year, Durham Region Police Service (DRPS) approached staff with a request to add language to the Town's Public Nuisance and Safety By-law to assist them in addressing growing public nuisance issues, and also discussed the requested changes with several members of Council who were supportive of same. The Town's existing Public Nuisance and Safety By-law, last updated in 2022, has served the Town well and provided the tools necessary to enforce many or most nuisance issues that arise within the Town, with criminal matters such as trespassing, public intoxication, or assault being handled by DRPS. However, DRPS has requested that the Town include additional language within its By-law to provide police with a more efficient and less cumbersome pathway to address these types of nuisance issues as they become increasingly problematic in the Ajax community.

Discussion:

The additional language that DRPS has requested deals with matters like public urination, defecation and spitting, public intoxication, fighting, destruction of private or public property, and similar nuisance behaviors. While many such behaviors are addressed under the Criminal Code, including them as prohibited activities within the Town's Public Nuisance and Safety By-law provides DRPS with additional options for enforcement that may be more effective and less cumbersome than pursuing such matters criminally. DRPS have indicated to Town staff their understanding that Municipal By-law Enforcement Officers are not well-positioned to enforce many of these new provisions; it should be understood that their presence in Ajax's by-law is primarily for the purposes of enforcement by DRPS, and not necessarily Ajax By-law Enforcement.

The updated language can be found in Section 4.6 and 4.7 of the proposed new By-law (ATT-1), and related penalty provisions. There have been no other substantive changes to the by-law other than those described herein.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications directly related to approval of this report. Pursuant to Sec. 434 of the *Municipal Act*, the fines imposed for the contravention of by-laws of any lower-tier municipality, where prosecuted by the police force of the upper-tier municipality, belong to the upper-tier municipality.

Communication Issues:

Town staff will work with DRPS to ensure that the changes to the Public Nuisance and Safety By-law described herein are appropriately communicated closer to the time that they are set to come into effect.

Relationship to the Strategic Plan:

The measures outlined in this report support various priorities in the strategic plan including “improve well-being and quality of life” and “foster a safe and welcoming community.”

Conclusion:

The Public Nuisance and Safety By-law updates requested by DRPS and proposed herein are supported by Town staff and will ensure that DRPS has more available tools available to adequately manage nuisance behaviors within the Town of Ajax

Attachments:

ATT-1: Proposed Bylaw XX-2023 – Public Nuisance and Safety By-law

Submitted by:

Derek Hannan – Manager of By-law Services

Prepared by:

Nicole Cooper – Director, Legislative and Information Services

Approved by:

Shane Baker – Chief Administrative Officer

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF AJAX

BY-LAW NUMBER XX-2023

Being a by-law to eliminate public safety concerns and minimize public nuisances.

WHEREAS pursuant to the Municipal Act, S. O. 2001, c. 25, as amended, a municipality may prohibit and regulate with respect to public nuisances, including matters that, in the opinion of Council, are or could become or cause public nuisances;

AND WHEREAS a municipality may regulate matters not specifically provided for by the Municipal Act for purposes related to health, safety and the well-being of the inhabitants of the Municipality;

AND WHEREAS a municipality may pass a by-law with respect to highways and boulevards within the municipality's jurisdiction;

NOW THEREFORE THE COUNCIL OF THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF AJAX ENACTS AS FOLLOWS

1. SHORT TITLE

1.1 This By-law may be cited as the "Public Nuisance and Safety By-law."

2. DEFINITIONS

2.1 In this By-law:

- (a) "advertising sign" means any object used to attract public attention to any goods, services, facilities or events and includes signs, flags, banners, balloons, pennants, lights and posters;
- (b) "bordering" means abutting, parallel to, or adjacent to property or a reserve;
- (c) "boulevard" means the area of a highway between the edge of pavement or curb of the roadway and the adjacent property line of the highway;
- (d) "Council" means the elected members of Council for the Corporation of the Town of Ajax;
- (e) "expense" means the cost of carrying out the work to be done and an administrative charge as outlined in the Town of Ajax Fees and Charges By-law;
- (f) "highway" includes a common or public highway, street, avenue, parkway, driveway, square, place, bridge, viaduct, or trestle, any part of which is intended for or used by the general public for the passage of vehicles and/or people and includes the boulevard and the area between the lateral property lines thereof;
- (g) "occupier" means any person who is in control of any property;
- (h) "Officer" means a Municipal Law Enforcement Officer appointed by the Council of the Town or any Police Officer in the Province of Ontario;
- (i) "owner" includes the person or persons registered as the owner of a subject property in the most recent municipal tax records and/or on the deed in accordance with the records of the land registry office;
- (j) "pedestrian crossing" means any portion of a roadway at an intersection or elsewhere, distinctly indicated for pedestrian crossing by signs and pavement markings and shall include attended and unattended crossings;
- (k) "pedestrian walkway" means a Town owned path for the use of pedestrians;
- (l) "person" means a natural individual, and their heirs, executors, administrators or other legal representatives, a corporation, partnership or other form of business association or a receiver or mortgagee in possession;
- (m) "property" means land, with or without improvements so affixed to the land;

- (n) “public place” includes any place where the public has access as of right by invitation, expressed or implied or on private property that is exposed to public view;
- (o) “reserve” means a portion of land located between the property line of a private property and the lateral limits of a highway, which is held as a buffer and owned by the Town or the Regional Municipality of Durham;
- (p) “roadway” means a portion of a highway improved for use for vehicular traffic;
- (q) “sidewalk” means the portion of the highway intended for pedestrian use;
- (r) “sight line” means a clear line of vision between conflicting motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians that allows sufficient time for safe maneuvers to be made without significantly affecting the conflicting traffic;
- (s) “tow truck” means a vehicle equipped to hoist and pull any motor vehicle to another location or to recover a motor vehicle that is no longer on a drivable surface;
- (t) “Town” means The Corporation of the Town of Ajax;
- (u) “windrow” means snow left behind by snow removal apparatus which obstructs access to a pedestrian crossing;

3. TOW TRUCKS

- 3.1 No person shall use, or permit to be used, any land, building or structure, on any residentially zoned property, for the parking or storage of more than one tow truck.

4. ROADWAYS, BOULEVARDS, AND PEDESTIAN WALKWAYS

- 4.1 Every owner or occupier of property shall maintain every boulevard abutting the property in a clean, tidy and well-kept condition and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, shall:
 - (a) Remove any accumulations of discarded material;
 - (b) Keep grass or weeds in excess of 15 cm. in height cut or trimmed; and
 - (c) Keep landscaping from encroaching over a boulevard, roadway, gravel shoulder, sidewalk, or pedestrian walkway so as to not interfere with a sight line or safe passage.
- 4.2 No person shall injure, damage, interfere with or encumber any tree, shrub, plant, bush or hedge on any highway or Municipal property.
- 4.3 No person shall leave any basketball net, hockey net, skateboard ramp, or any other play structure on any highway or pedestrian walkway, or utilize any basketball net, hockey net, skate board ramp or other play structure in such a manner as to interfere with or obstruct safe passage on a highway.
- 4.4 No person shall rake, blow or place leaves on any highway except in an approved yard waste bag pursuant to the Municipal collection policies or any regulating authority and/or By-law regulating to curbside collection.
- 4.5 No person shall mark, deface, wax or damage any curb, sidewalk, or part of a highway or pedestrian walkway.
- 4.6** No person shall cause, permit or allow the following nuisance activities:
 - (a) urination, defecation, spitting in a public place;
 - (b) vomiting by reason of being intoxicated in a public place;

- (c) being intoxicated in a public place;
- (d) fighting in a public place;
- (e) remaining in a public place after being directed to leave by an officer;
- (f) destruction of private or public property;
- (g) littering on public or private property;
- (h) carry liquor in a public place without the benefit of a AGCO licence;
- (i) create a disturbance by yelling, swearing;
- (j) solicitation in a manner that obstructs traffic or causes a disturbance; and
- (k) activity that is disorderly or obnoxious.

4.7 No person shall continue a nuisance activity after having been directed to discontinue the activity by an Officer.

4.8 If a person or owner fails to comply with a provision between 4.1 to 4.5, the Town may, with its servants or agents from time to time, and in a reasonable manner, enter upon property and affect such compliance at the expense of the defaulting person, and shall have the right to recover the expense by action or by adding the expense to the tax roll and collecting them in the same manner as taxes.

5. CLEARING OF SNOW ON PRIVATE PROPERTY AND MUNICIPAL SIDEWALKS

5.1 Every owner or occupier of property shall remove snow or ice, including a windrow, from any sidewalk and from any fire hydrant on or bordering that property, no later than 24 hours after the accumulation of snow or ice.

5.2 The Town may, without notice, remove snow or ice, including a windrow, from any sidewalk and from any fire hydrant bordering that property, if the owner or occupier fails to do so within the aforementioned 24 hours, and the expense of doing so shall be recovered from the owner by action or by adding the expense to the tax rolls and collecting it in the same manner as taxes.

5.3 In accordance with Section 5.2, the cost of snow and/or ice removal shall be the fee stated in the most recent Fees and Charges By-law. This cost will be based on the total length of the property boarding the sidewalk and will be based on measurements taken from the Town's Geographic Information System. (G.I.S.)

5.4 No person shall shovel, plow or blow snow from any property onto or across a roadway, a sidewalk, a pedestrian walkway or another property, without authorization.

5.5 Every owner or occupier of property, not including an individual private residence, shall remove snow or ice from the walkways, pathways, driveways, lanes, parking areas, and from any fire hydrant on that property no later than 24 hours after the accumulation of snow or ice.

5.6 If a person fails to comply with section 5.5, the Town may, with its servants or agents from time to time, and in a reasonable manner, enter upon property and affect such compliance at the expense of the defaulting person, and shall have the right to recover the expense costs by adding it to the tax roll and collecting it in the same manner as taxes.

6. IDLING PROHIBITIONS

6.1 No person shall cause or permit a vehicle to idle for more than 2 consecutive minutes.

6.2 Section 6.1 does not apply to:

- (a) Police, Fire, Ambulance, Municipal or armoured vehicles while engaged in operational activities, including training activities;
- (b) Vehicles assisting in an emergency activity;

- (c) Mobile workshops while they are in the course of being used for their basic function;
- (d) Vehicles where idling is required as part of a repair process or to repair a vehicle for services.
- (e) Vehicles that remain motionless because of emergency, traffic or weather conditions or mechanical difficulties over which the driver has no control;
- (f) Transit vehicles while at a layover or stopover location, except where the idling is substantially for the convenience of the operator of the vehicle;
- (g) Vehicles when the ambient outside temperature is more than 30°C or less than minus 10°C and idling of the vehicle is necessary to the operation of air conditioning or heating equipment; or,
- (h) Vehicles transporting a person where a medical doctor certifies in writing for medical reasons, the person requires the temperature or humidity to be maintained within a certain range and idling the vehicle is necessary to achieve that temperature or humidity level.

7. DISCHARGING OF WATER

- 7.1 No owner shall permit or allow the discharging of any water, from swimming pools, hot tubs, wading pools or ornamental ponds to drain or migrate onto adjacent property.
- 7.2 No owner shall permit or allow any sump pump to be discharged directly onto any neighbouring property.

8. NUISANCE FEEDING OF ANIMALS

- 8.1 No person shall throw or place, or permit to be thrown or placed, any type of food, for the purposes of feeding any birds, wildlife, or animals found to be running at large.
- 8.2 Section 8.1 of this By-law shall not apply to bird feeders that are suspended off the ground, dispense commercially available bird food such as seeds and nectars.
- 8.3 No person shall be permitted to have more than 3 bird feeders located on any property.
- 8.4 Every owner of a bird feeder shall:
 - (a) keep the bird feeder clean by regularly disinfecting with a mild bleach solution; and
 - (b) maintain the ground underneath the bird feeder by regularly raking the ground thoroughly to remove grain and bird droppings.

9. ADVERTISING SIGNS

- 9.1 No person carrying, or causing or permitting to be carried, an advertising sign on any:
 - (a) approach within 1 metre of the curb or the roadway,
 - (b) interfere with pedestrians or vehicular traffic,
 - (c) throw the sign into the air or to another person, or
 - (d) approach within 5 metres of an intersecting highway or a driveway.

10. PENALTY AND ENFORCEMENT

- 10.1 Every person who contravenes any provision of this bylaw is guilty of an offence and upon conviction is liable to a fine as provided for by the Provincial Offences Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter P.33, as amended.

- 10.2** Pursuant to the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25 the maximum fines prescribed for any person who fails to comply with this by-law or who interferes with or obstructs any person in the exercise of a power or the performance of a duty conferred by this by-law, is liable on conviction:

- (a) to a fine of not more than \$100,000.
- (b) in the case of a continuing offence, the minimum fine of each day or part thereof shall be a minimum of \$500 and a maximum of \$10,000. The total of the daily fines for a continuing offence shall not be limited to \$100,000.
- (c) in addition to any other fines under this section, a special fine may be imposed if the commission of the offence resulted in economic gain or advantage. The maximum amount of a special fine may exceed \$100,000.

10.3 An officer may make an order to discontinue to any and all persons to cease a nuisance activity and require all persons not residing on the premise to leave the premises where the activity is occurring. This shall include the ability to require any or all persons to leave a public place.

10.4 An order under this section may be given verbally or in writing and may be served personally on the person to whom it is directed.

10.5 A person is guilty of a separate offence on each day that an offence under section 10.1 occurs or continues.

10.6 Despite the maximum fines set out in section 10.2, the court that convicts a person of an offence may increase a fine imposed on the person by an amount equal to the financial benefit that was acquired by or that accrued to the person because of the commission of the offence.

10.7 If the owner or occupier of premises at which a nuisance party is held is present at the nuisance party, then the owner or occupier is presumed, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, to be hosting or organizing the nuisance party.

10.8 A person is guilty of an offence if the person:

- (a) hinders or obstructs, or attempts to hinder or obstruct, an Officer, or any person in the exercise of a power or the performance of a duty under this By-law;
- (b) makes a false or intentionally misleading recital or fact, statement or representation or produces any falsified or fictitious agreement or document; or
- (c) fails to perform a duty imposed within this By-law or who performs an act prohibited herein.

10.9 If this by-law is contravened and a conviction entered, the court in which the conviction has been entered and any court of competent jurisdiction thereafter may, in addition to any other remedy and to any penalty that is imposed, make an order prohibiting the continuation or repetition of the offence by the person convicted.

10.10 If a court of competent jurisdiction should declare any section or part of a section of this By-law to be invalid, such a section or part of a section shall not be construed as having persuaded or influenced Council to pass the remainder of this By-law and it is hereby declared that the remainder of the By-law shall be valid and shall remain in force.

11. REPEAL

11.1 This By-law shall come into force and By-law Number 24-2022 and Number 37-2022, shall be repealed on the date that the set fines are approved pursuant to the Provincial Offences Act.

11.2 After the date of the passing of this By-law, By-law Number 24-2022 and Number 37-2022, shall apply only to those enforcement proceedings which had been initiated prior to the date this By-law is enacted, and then only until such enforcement proceedings have been concluded.

Read a first and second time this
Fifteenth day of May, 2023.

Read a third time and passed this
Fifteenth of May, 2023.

Mayor

D-Clerk

DRAFT

Town of Ajax Report



Report To: General Government Committee
Prepared By: Rob Gamble
Report #: OES-2023-15
Subject: **Snow Removal Program for Seniors and Qualified Residents**
Ward(s): All
Date of Meeting: May 8, 2023
Reference: Connecting our Community
3.3 Senior's Snow Clearing Program Update

Recommendations:

1. That staff be authorized to modify the current Snow Removal Program for Seniors and Qualified Residents to only include the clearing of windrows and municipal sidewalks.
2. That staff be authorized to recruit the required staffing and procure the required equipment to enable the service modifications in Recommendation 1, as detailed in this report.
3. That new staffing costs be managed through the operating budget management policy, and included as new seasonal Part time staff in the 2024 operating budget;

Background:

The Town of Ajax provides a range of services within its winter control operations including a long-standing Snow Removal Program for Seniors and Qualified Residents.

Currently to qualify for this program, residents must be:

- 65 years of age or older with no able-bodied persons under the age of 65 residing at their address; or
- Unable to perform snow removal due to a physical disability as indicated by a doctor's note.

Each September, departments complete a user fee review to balance the services being delivered with the corresponding user fees. These fees, which include the Snow Removal Program for Seniors and Qualified Residents, are subsequently presented to Council for approval.

A summary of the existing Snow Removal Program for Seniors and Qualified Residents in Ajax is described in detail below:

What is the current service provided by the Town?

Residents who apply and qualify for the Snow Removal Program for Seniors and Qualified Residents are charged a fee of \$190.41 (including HST) for a Service Level 1 and \$35.71 (including HST) for a Service Level 2.

The service they receive is detailed as follows:

SERVICE LEVEL 1

- The removal of snow from the driveway area.
- The removal of snow from any municipal sidewalk.
- The removal of any windrow at the end of the driveway.
- The removal of snow on the path leading from the driveway to the front door.

SERVICE LEVEL 2

- The removal of snow from any municipal sidewalk.
- The removal of any windrow at the end of the driveway.

When does the service get initiated?

The service is initiated once more than 5cm (2 inches) of snow has accumulated and after the Town's plows have completed the plowing of roads. This is typically 24 hours after the snow has stopped falling.

Who delivers the service?

This service is currently administered by 6 part-time staff who form three (3) crews of two who deliver the service at any one time. Each crew is equipped with a truck, plow, snow blower and shovels. It generally takes 72 hours (three 12-hour shifts) to complete the service delivery for this program and requires each crew to visit 133 locations.

The concern is that the program in its current form is not sustainable to deliver service to meet customer expectations and will be unable to keep up with the forecasted growth of the program over the coming years.

Snow removal applicant numbers for the past five years:

- 2018-2019: 340
- 2019-2020: 360
- 2020-2021: 331
- 2021-2022: 380
- 2022-2023: 402
- 2023-2024: 420 (Estimated)

The expected number of residents who will sign-up for this program for 2023-2024 season is estimated to be around 420, requiring each crew to visit 140 homes over a three-day span (three 12-hour shifts).

Discussion:

It is common for municipalities to deliver a snow removal program to seniors and qualified residents, and Ajax is no exception when it comes to the delivery of this service. However, the Town of Ajax's service level exceeds that of which is delivered elsewhere throughout the GTA.

The chart below details the seniors snow removal service levels offered by surrounding municipalities.

Municipal Senior Snow Removal Program Comparison – (Fall 2022)

Municipality	Service	Activation	Fee
Ajax	Service 1 - Windrow, driveway, sidewalk, path to door Service 2 – Windrow, sidewalk	24 hours after 5cm of accumulation	\$190.41 \$35.71
Whitby	Windrow, sidewalk	Windrow – 24 hours after 10cm of accumulation Sidewalk – 36 hours after 10cm of accumulation	Free
Oshawa	Windrow, sidewalk	Windrow – at 20cm Sidewalk – at 2.5cm	Free
Clarington	Windrow, sidewalk	Windrow – at 15cm Sidewalk – at 7.5cm	\$96.27
Pickering	Apron (12x12), sidewalk, path to door	24 hours after 5cm of accumulation	\$72.00 - \$109.00
Richmond Hill	Windrow Clearing Program (all residents)	Within 13 hours after plows have passed	Free
Vaughan	Windrow Clearing Program (all residents)	Within 4 hours after plows have passed	Free
Markham	Windrow Clearing Program (60+)	7.5cm of accumulation	Free
Whitchurch-Stouffville	Windrow Clearing Program (65+)	Within 12 hours after plows done	Free
Oakville	Windrow Clearing Program (65+)	Within 36 hours after snowfall ends	\$110.18
Burlington	Windrow Clearing Program	Within 36 hours after snowfall ends	Free
Milton	Windrow Clearing Program (65+)	Within 24 hours after snowfall ends	\$63.00
Halton Hills	None: Promotes Links to Care organizations		
Aurora	None: Promotes Snow Angels		
Newmarket	None: Sidewalk Clearing Program		
East Gwillimbury	None: Sidewalk Clearing Program		

The program is currently delivered by 6 part time staff (3 crews of two), and each snow event takes three days to complete based on the 402 residents that registered this past season. This program is not sustainable as it is currently constructed as the number of registered residents, combined with service level expectations, continue to increase.

To retain the current service and complete the required work within a 24-hour period once the service has been initiated, additional resources will be required. At a minimum, an additional 12 part-time staff (giving us 9 crews of two) with 6 additional plow trucks and blowers would be required to deliver the service in a single twelve-hour shift. This does not address the increasing demand of registered residents that is forecast to rise by an additional 20 houses per year at a minimum. The cost to deliver this service would be an additional \$123,354.72 per season for staffing and an additional \$600,720.00 for vehicles and equipment. To recover these costs, the program fee would need to be increased from \$190.41 to \$648.98.

The current level of service carries a significant amount of risk, as a large percentage of maintenance occurs on private property. This concern has been shared by the Durham Insurance Pool. The Town has had multiple claims for property damage to private property over the years.

Staff are recommending the discontinuation of Service Level 1 and retaining service level 2, which is in line with our GTA counterparts. A single service level that includes the removal of the windrow and municipal sidewalk for registered residents aged over 65 and qualified residents will bring our service level in line with surrounding municipalities. Based on 420 homes, two additional crews would be needed (84 homes per crew) to complete the modified

service within a 12hr shift, ensuring the needs of the Ajax Seniors community are being met within 24 hours. The proposed program would then look as follows:

To qualify, residents must be:

- 65 and older with no able-bodied persons under the age of 65 residing at their address; or
- Unable to perform snow removal due to a physical disability as indicated by a doctor's note.

The service level delivery would include:

- The removal of snow from the windrow.
- The removal of snow from any municipal sidewalk.

The service would be initiated once more than 5cm (2 inches) of snow has accumulated and after the Town's plows have completed the plowing of roads. This is typically 24 hours after the snow has stopped falling.

Financial Implications:

To move the Snow Removal Program for Seniors and Qualified Residents to a service level delivery of windrows and municipal sidewalks, the following implications would apply.

Part Time Staffing

Approximately \$41,118.24 for 4 part time staff, gaining an additional 2 crews.

Vehicles and Equipment

Approximately \$200,000.00 for vehicles (2 trucks with plow)

Approximately \$2,400.00 for blowers (2 Single Stage blowers)

Communication Issues:

A detailed Communication Plan will be developed to respond to any changes that may come about with respect to the Snow Removal Program for Seniors and Qualified Residents.

Relationship to the Strategic Plan:

Connecting our Community

3.3 Senior's Snow Clearing Program Update

Conclusion:

As the Environmental Service Department delivers snow removal services to over 400 seniors or qualified residents, it has become clear that the program in its current form is not sustainable to deliver service levels that meet expectations and will be unable to keep up with the forecasted growth of the program over the coming years.

Therefore, it is the staff's recommendation that this service be modified to include the clearing of windrows and municipal sidewalks for residents aged over 65 and qualified residents. Based on 420 homes, two additional crews are required to be added (84 homes per crew) to complete the modified service level to within a 24-hour period (one twelve-hour shift).

Attachments: N/A

Prepared by:

Robert Gamble – Acting Supervisor Special Events & Senior Snow
Tim Field – Manager of Environmental Services

Submitted by:

Dave Meredith – Director of Operations & Environmental Services

Approved by:

Shane Baker – Chief Administrative Officer

Town of Ajax Report



Report To: General Government Committee
Prepared By: Tim Field
Report #: OES-2023-02
Subject: **Urban Forest Study Update – Technical Report**
Ward(s): All
Date of Meeting: May 8, 2023
Reference: Capital Account 1014011

Recommendation:

That Council endorse the Urban Forest Study Update – Technical Report prepared by the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, dated March 24th, 2023.

Background:

The Town’s urban forest plays a significant role in the quality-of-life experienced by Ajax residents.

Urban forests can strongly influence the physical/biological environment and mitigate many impacts on urban development. Urban forests can be viewed as a “living technology” - a key component of the urban infrastructure that helps to maintain a healthy environment by providing the following benefits:

- Moderating climate;
- Conserving energy;
- Improving air quality;
- Controlling water runoff;
- Lowering noise levels;
- Recreational and educational opportunities;
- Complementing our urban lifestyle with elements of nature;
- Improving overall aesthetics.

In 2009, Ajax retained the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) to undertake an Urban Forest Study. The technical report examined the distribution of canopy cover by:

- Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) land use type;
- Urban heat mapping and planting prioritization;
- Size and species composition;
- Structural value;

- Forest function.

Since that time the Town has faced several events impacting the urban forest including:

- 2013 ice storm
- Emerald ash borer
- Urban development
- 2022 May weather event

In 2022, again Ajax retained the TRCA to undertake the Ajax Urban Forest Study. The technical report examines the distribution of canopy cover and explores changes since the last assessment completed in 2009, the potential future state of the forest, and urban heat mapping and planting prioritization.

Urban Heat Island and Planting Prioritization

The urban forest can decrease local temperatures through shading and the release of water vapor in evapotranspiration blocking the sun and lowering the air temperature. This is important as urban areas are already warmer than surrounding rural lands due to the urban heat island effect. Developed areas have higher temperatures than surrounding rural lands because of increased impervious surfaces and buildings that absorb and retain heat. Urban heat is being further exacerbated by climate change leading to higher energy bills for air conditioning and heat related health problems. Predictably, urban heat in Ajax is highest in low vegetation *Residential* and *Commercial – Industrial* land uses, and lowest in areas of high vegetation such as the Greenbelt lands north of the municipality. Future planting should prioritize those areas with low vegetation.

Size and Species Composition

Ajax's forest is young, homogeneous, and 68 percent of trees are in good or excellent condition. Approximately, 64 percent of all trees are less than 15.2 cm in diameter at breast height (DBH).

The top three species that make up 40 percent of the tree population are:

1. Eastern white cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*)
2. European buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*)
3. Sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*)

Structural Value

The urban forest has an estimated structural value (both private and public lands) of \$363 million. This value does not include the ecological or societal value of the forest, but rather it represents an estimate of tree replacement costs. This value is based on the Council of Tree and Landscape Appraisers (CTLA) Trunk Formula method (Nowak, 2020). This formula method considers species, DBH, condition, and location.

This report provides an updated canopy cover estimate from 2009. The previously reported 18.4% canopy cover has been updated to 22.1%. This change is due to an increase from 1,000

to 4,300 sample points in the canopy cover assessment. Adding more points increased the accuracy of the 2009 value and decreased the reported standard error to below 1%.

Canopy cover in Ajax in 2022 was 24 percent, an increase of 2 percent since 2009 due to natural growth of the canopy, particularly of small residential trees planted in newer developments. Excluding agricultural areas, 35 percent (2,050 ha) of the Town's land area could theoretically support additional canopy.

Forest Function

Trees in Ajax:

- Sequester approximately 3,018 tonnes of carbon per year, with an associated annual value of \$570,000 and store 117,275 tonnes of carbon, valued at \$22.1 million;
- Remove 47 tonnes of air pollution annually; the benefit of this ecosystem service is valued at \$798,348 annually;
- Mitigates 230,593 m³/year of stormwater runoff with an economic value of \$536,062 per year;
- Reduce the annual energy consumption of residential homes and low-rise apartments by approximately 59,567 million British thermal units (MBTU) for natural gas use and 2,046 megawatt-hours (MWH), with an associated annual financial savings of approximately \$501,703 annually.

Discussion:

The purpose of this report is to recognize the recommendations made by the Technical Working Group, recognizing changes since the last assessment completed in 2009. The purpose is also to recognize the potential future state of the urban forest and the urban heat mapping and planting prioritization. There are 30 recommendations in total, which include:

- Setting an official canopy cover target of 30% by 2053;
- Creating a five year naturalization and restoration plan;
- Continuing to educate private landowners through the Leaf program on the importance to plant trees;
- Continuing to develop educational programs to private landowners and the public on the importance of species diversity, maintenance and best practices, the urban forest benefits that Ajax's urban forest provides;
- Considering enacting a Town-wide tree cutting by-law to regulate the destruction or injury of trees;
- Continuing to assess the urban forest structure, function, and distribution every 10 years through an Urban Forest Study;
- Bolster individual tree planting in parks and open space, by developing a diverse planting plan, recognizing shade opportunities as climate change benefits and heat island impacts
- Diversification of the Town's tree population.

These recommendations and others identified in the plan will be considered and implemented to reach the canopy cover target of 30% by 2053.

Financial Implications:

Funds for the implementation of the recommendations will be identified through the Town’s Operating and Capital Budget processes.

Communication Issues:

Results of the 2022 Urban Forest Study will be posted on the Town of Ajax website and the Town will continue to promote the importance of tree planting and preservation.

Relationship to the Strategic Plan:

Modernizing Our Community 1.3
Urban Forest Study
Naturalization and Restoration Plan

Conclusion:

That Council receive the Urban Forest Study Update – Technical Report for information and endorse the recommendations identified.

Attachments:

ATT-1: Urban Forest Study Technical Report 2022

Prepared by:

Tim Field – Manager of Environmental Services

Submitted by:

Dave Meredith – Director of Operations and Environmental Services

Approved by:

Shane Baker – Chief Administrative Officer



Ajax Urban Forest Study: Technical Report

March 24th, 2023

Acknowledgements

This report was prepared by Tracy Timmins, Krish Selvakumar, and Joanna Klees van Bommel of the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority. Appreciation and thanks are extended to the following members of the Technical Working Group:

Michelle Sawka, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority
Jackie De Santis, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority
Noah Gaetz, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority
Tim Field, Township of Ajax
Craig Blencowe, Township of Ajax

Thank you to the staff at the USDA Forest Service, Northern Research Station for their technical services, guidance, and expertise.

Erika Teach, The Davey Tree Expert Company
Alexis Ellis, The Davey Tree Expert Company

Special thanks to Jackie De Santis and Krish Selvakumar for contributions to the development of field protocols and analysis methods and supporting field data collection, to Lucas Udvarnoky for preparing the land cover assessment and Aidin Akbari for developing the GIS maps and layers used for the urban heat mapping. Further thanks to Tim Field and Craig Blencowe for ongoing guidance and assistance throughout.

Funding for this project has been generously provided by:

The Town of Ajax

Reference: Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, 2022. Ajax Urban Forest Study: Technical Report

Executive Summary

The Town of Ajax (Ajax) is committed to assessing the distribution, structure, and function of Ajax's urban forest every 10 years through an urban forest study. An urban forest study employs a combination of remote sensing, GIS tools, and plot-based surveys to characterize the forest and examine factors that may impact the forest.

The Town of Ajax retained Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) to undertake the Ajax Urban Forest Study. This technical report examines the distribution of canopy cover by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) land use type, available planting opportunities, size and species composition, the structural value of the forest, and forest function. Additionally, the report explores change since the last assessment completed in 2009, the potential future state of the forest, and urban heat mapping and planting prioritization.

Ajax's urban forest has an estimated structural value¹ of \$363 million. Trees in Ajax sequester approximately 3,018 tonnes of carbon per year, with an associated annual value of \$570,000, and store 117,275 tonnes of carbon, valued at \$22.1 million. Ajax's urban forest removes 47 tonnes of air pollution annually; the benefit of this ecosystem service is valued at \$798,348 per year. Ajax's urban forest also mitigates 230,593 m³/yr of stormwater runoff with an economic value of \$536,062 per year. Additionally, in Ajax the urban forest reduces the annual energy consumption of residential homes and low-rise apartments by approximately 59,567 million British thermal units (MBTU) for natural gas use and 2,046 megawatt-hours (MWH) for electricity, with an associated annual financial savings of approximately \$501,703.

Canopy cover in Ajax is 24 percent, an increase of 2 percent since 2009 due to natural growth of the canopy, particularly of small residential trees planted in newer developments. Excluding agricultural areas, 35 percent (2,050 ha) of the Town's land area could theoretically support additional canopy.

Ajax's urban forest is young, homogeneous, and 68 percent of trees are in good or excellent condition. Approximately 64 percent of all trees are less than 15.2 cm in diameter at breast height (DBH). The top three species, eastern white cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*), European buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*), and sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*), make up 40 percent of the tree population.

¹ The i-Tree Eco Suite has renamed 'Structural valuation' to 'Replacement valuation' within the model and outputs. Within this report, the term structural valuation will be used throughout to retain consistency with the previous Urban Forest Study. Refer to i-Tree's change log of how the software has changed since 2012 for more detail https://www.itreetools.org/documents/186/iTree_suite_change_log.pdf

Summary of Results

Through regular monitoring, the information collected as part of the study can be used to track progress towards established goals, measure the effectiveness of efforts to maintain a healthy urban forest, and guide future management decisions.

Tree Cover and Leaf Area

Ajax's 1,190,800 ($\pm 190,528$) trees equates to 24 percent canopy cover. This is an estimated decrease of 174,960 trees, from 1,365,760 ($\pm 228,063$) trees in 2009. It should be noted that this current reported number does account for trees missed by the decrease in the minimum DBH threshold for measuring trees in forested areas, from 2.5 cm to 5 cm². However, there is still a decrease in tree number likely due to increased tree mortality from urban stressors and more notably the impact of emerald ash borer (EAB, *Agrilus planipennis*) on ash populations.

Canopy cover has seen a 2 percent increase, primarily due to the natural growth of canopy, particularly of small residential trees planted in newer developments. Thus, natural growth has outpaced losses from extensive and intensive urbanization. However, tree planting requirements and restoration plans are still needed as Ajax continues to urbanize to ensure that canopy growth persists despite land use change and infrastructure projects.

Leaf area, the total surface area of one side of all tree leaves in Ajax, is approximately 7,156 hectares (ha) across a municipal area of 6,709 ha. Average tree density in Ajax is 134.4 trees/ha, which is slightly below the average of the Greater Toronto Area. Excluding agricultural areas, an additional 35 percent (2,050 ha) of the Town's land area could support additional canopy.

Seventy percent ($\pm 14\%$) of Ajax's tree population occurs on public lands (such as municipal parks, rights-of-way (ROWs), and protected areas, including conservation authority lands), and 30 percent ($\pm 7\%$) of trees are privately owned. Therefore, protecting natural spaces and working with private landowners is an essential component of maintaining and enhancing the urban forest.

² Note, in the 2009 report, approximately 45% of trees in Ajax fell within the 2.5-7.6 cm (DBH) size class, the most in any class (Figure 12). Additionally, raw data suggests a large portion of this class is made up of trees below 5 cm in DBH across natural/forested areas which are underrepresented in the i-tree assessment.

Land Cover

Land Cover Assessment

Tree – Shrub cover represents 24 percent of Ajax (1,634 ha), a 2 percent increase from 2009, and with the addition of *Grass – Herbaceous* (30%), just over half of the municipality is green cover. Impervious surfaces, including roads, buildings, and other paved surfaces, represent 29 percent of the municipal area. This is an increase of 4.4 percent from 2009 as the Town continues to urbanize, further supported by a corresponding decrease in *Soil – Bare Ground* and *Agriculture* cover classes which are often converted to other land uses.

MPAC Cover Distribution

Figure i summarizes the proportion of area of each land use type within Ajax, using the most recent MPAC data from 2016. The *Residential Low* category (i.e., low density residential) occupies the greatest proportion of area in Ajax at 24.1 percent, followed by rights-of-way (ROWs, 15.4%) and *Agriculture* (14.5%).

Improved Land Cover Assessment:

This report provides an updated canopy cover estimate for 2009. The previously reported 18.4% canopy cover has been updated to 22.1%. This change is due to an increase from 1,000 to 4,300 sample points in the canopy cover assessment. Adding more points increased the accuracy of the 2009 value and decreased the reported standard error to below 1%.

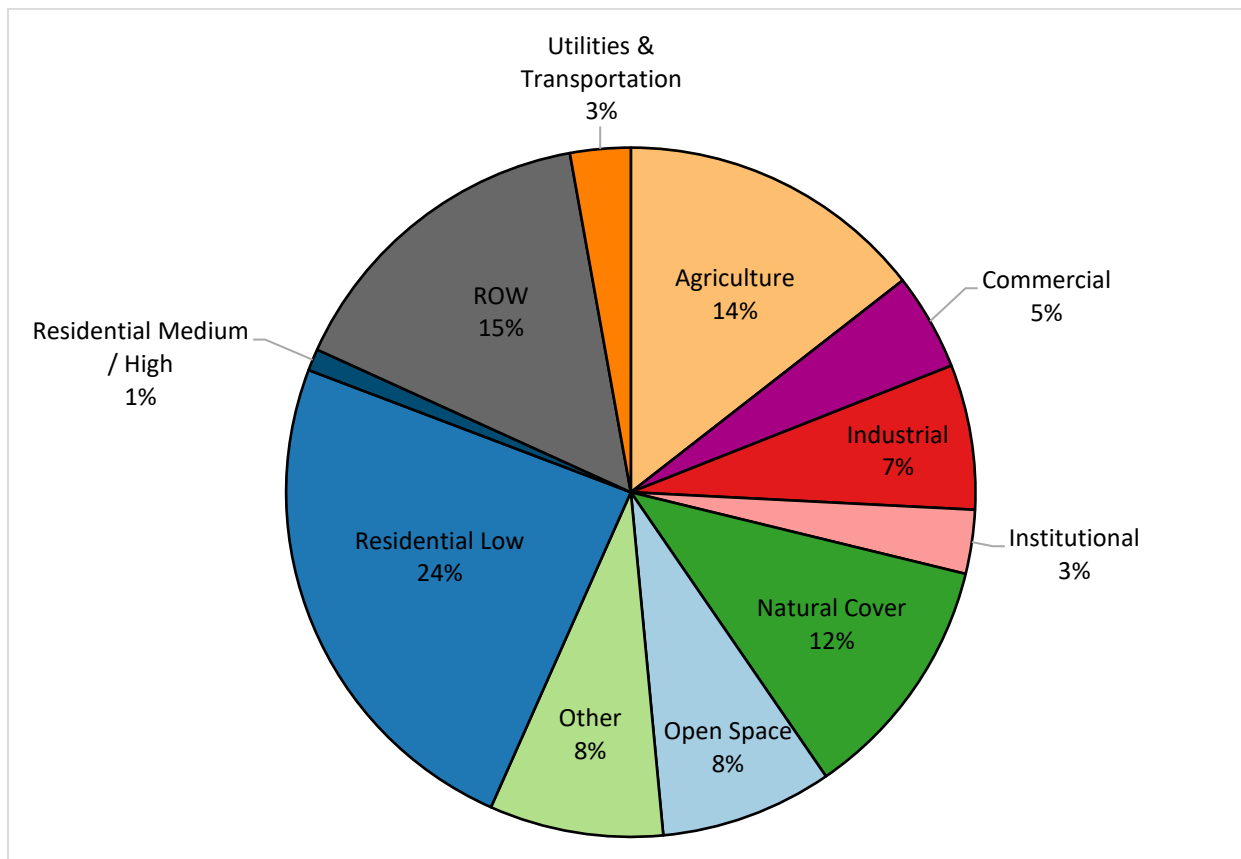


Figure i: Approximate MPAC land use distribution in Ajax, 2016

Species Composition

Between 2009 and 2022 there was a shift in the composition of the most common tree species in terms of population and leaf area (Table i and ii).

Table i: Top three most abundant tree species in 2009 and 2022 in terms of tree population

2009		2022	
Species	Percent of Population (%)	Species	Percent of Population (%)
Eastern white cedar (<i>Thuja occidentalis</i>)	20.2	Eastern white cedar (<i>Thuja occidentalis</i>)	22.1
Sugar maple (<i>Acer saccharum</i>)	11.4	European buckthorn (<i>Rhamnus cathartica</i>)	9.5
European buckthorn (<i>Rhamnus cathartica</i>)	9.2	Sugar maple (<i>Acer saccharum</i>)	7.7

The top three most abundant tree species made up 39.3 percent of the total population in 2022 and 40.8 percent in 2009. Ajax has made progress towards a diverse urban forest through the decline in the dominance of the most common species, but the tree population in Ajax is still quite homogeneous.

With respect to total leaf area, the dominant tree species in Ajax in 2022 and 2009 are shown in Table ii. Leaf area is measured as the one-sided surface area of tree leaves. The dominant species in terms of total leaf area have changed since 2009, with eastern hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) dropping out of the top three. Sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*), eastern white cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*), and Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*) are now the three most prevalent species in terms of the contribution to leaf area. While sugar maple still represents the largest proportion of leaf area in Ajax, it has decreased from 22.6 percent in 2009 to 9.4 percent in 2022. This may have implications for the health and succession of natural areas because of its importance in Ajax’s Great Lakes-St. Lawrence and Deciduous Forest systems. Additionally, the appearance of eastern white cedar in the top three species for total leaf area is a concern as this species is at the southern edge of its native range and highly vulnerable to climate change.

Table ii: Top three species in 2009 and 2022 as a proportion of leaf area

2009		2022	
Species	Percent of Leaf Area (%)	Species	Percent of Leaf Area (%)
Sugar maple (<i>Acer saccharum</i>)	22.6	Sugar maple (<i>Acer saccharum</i>)	9.4
Norway maple (<i>Acer platanoides</i>)	8.6	Eastern white cedar (<i>Thuja occidentalis</i>)	8.5
Eastern hemlock (<i>Tsuga canadensis</i>)	5.7	Norway maple (<i>Acer platanoides</i>)	7.5

Tree Size

Approximately, 64 percent of all Ajax trees have a diameter at breast height (DBH) smaller than 15.2 cm, while the proportion of larger trees is low with less than 13 percent of the tree population with a DBH of 30.6 cm or greater. Across most MPAC land use categories the trend is similar, with the two smallest diameter classes containing most trees, while very few trees are found in the larger diameter classes (only 4.8% >45.7 cm DBH). However, in *Commercial – Industrial* and *Residential* areas, the second two size classes spanning from 7.6 to 30.5 cm have the most trees. Since most of the trees in Ajax are young, they have the potential to add significant future canopy cover. However, active planting should continue, and trees of all sizes require protection to ensure that there are younger trees present to replace older trees as they die. Older and larger trees provide significantly more ecosystem service benefits than smaller trees and take decades to replace with new plantings.

Condition

All trees measured in the field were assigned a condition rating based on the proportion of dieback in the canopy. Most trees in Ajax are in good condition with approximately 68 percent of trees in Ajax estimated to be in either excellent or good condition. However, the percent of trees in poor, critical, dying, or dead condition has increased from 14 percent in 2009 to 21 percent in 2022. As shown in Figure ii below, the *Other – Institutional* (24.5%) land use category has the greatest proportion of dying and dead trees, followed by the *Open Space – Natural Cover* (11.8%). The high percent of poor condition trees on *Other – Institutional* lands is concerning. Ash (*Fraxinus* spp.) represents the majority of these trees, but other species are struggling as well. American elm (*Ulmus americana*), staghorn sumac (*Rhus typhina*), and crack willow (*Salix fragilis*) all represent a high proportion of the poor condition trees in this land use. On *Open Space – Natural Cover*, the high percentage of poor condition trees reflects the unhealthy ash populations (*Fraxinus* spp.) on some sites as well but is also indicative of different management strategies. In natural areas, it is beneficial to leave some dead and dying trees standing because they provide additional habitat and resources, and do not pose a risk to public safety, whereas in residential areas and rights-of-way (ROWS), it is important to remove dead or dying trees which can fall and potentially cause damage to infrastructure and/or injure people.

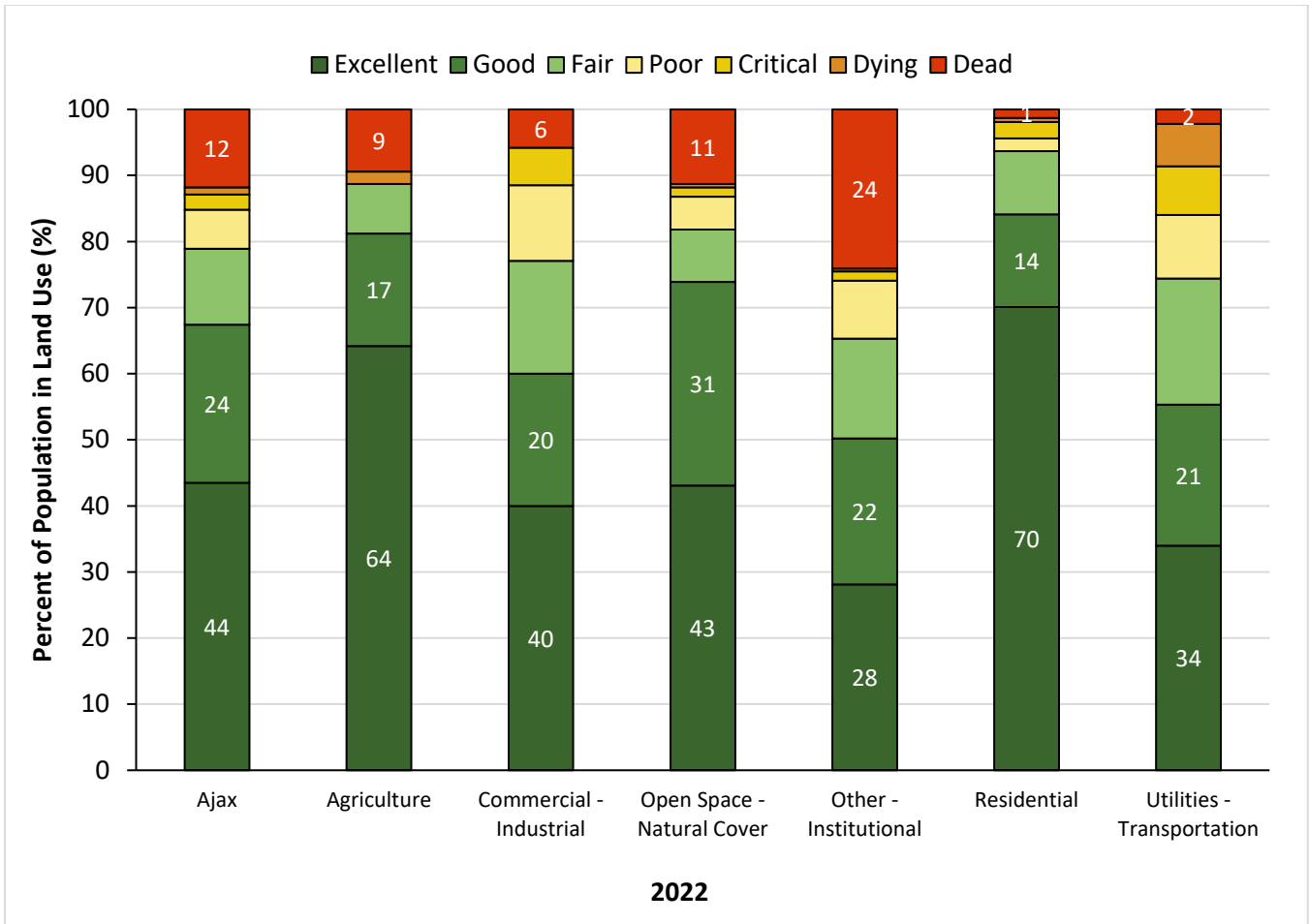


Figure ii: The proportion of trees in each condition category across Ajax MPAC land uses

Structural Value of Trees

The estimated structural value of all trees (both public and private) in Ajax in 2022 is approximately \$363 million. This value does not include the ecological or societal value of the forest, but rather represents an estimate of tree replacement costs. This value is based on the Council of Tree and Landscape Appraisers (CTLA) Trunk Formula method (Nowak, 2020). This formula method considers species, DBH, condition, and location.

Ecosystem Service Benefits

In addition to estimating the structural value of the urban forest, the Urban Forest Study also assesses the ecosystem service benefits provided by the urban forest.

Air Pollution Removal

The urban forest can improve local air quality by absorbing and intercepting airborne pollutants. Ajax's urban forest removes 47.2 tonnes of air pollution annually; the benefit of this ecosystem service is valued at approximately \$798,300 per year. The urban forest removes the following pollutants:

- Ozone: 40.4 tonnes
- Particulate matter (2.5 microns): 1.9 tonnes
- Nitrogen dioxide: 4 tonnes
- Sulfur dioxide: 0.4 tonne
- Carbon monoxide: 0.6 tonne

Hydrological Benefits

The urban forest helps to mitigate stormwater runoff by capturing rainwater, evapotranspiration, and facilitating the infiltration of water into the soil. Using 2019 rainfall data from Oshawa Executive Airport, it was determined that Ajax's urban forest prevented 230,593 m³ of water from entering the hydrological system in 2019. This service has an associated value of approximately \$536,000 per year.

Residential Energy Savings

Trees have a moderating effect on building temperatures by cooling the air through shade and the release of water vapor during evapotranspiration and retaining heat through wind speed reductions. Therefore, trees can reduce the demand for both heating and air conditioning depending on the season. In Ajax, the urban forest reduces the annual energy consumption of residential homes and low-rise apartments by approximately 59,567 million British thermal units (MBTU) for natural gas use and 2,046 megawatt-hours (MWH) for electricity, with an associated annual financial savings of approximately \$501,700.

Carbon Storage and Sequestration

As a tree grows, it removes carbon dioxide from the atmosphere; this process is referred to as *carbon sequestration*, which is expressed as an annual rate of removal. Carbon is then stored in the woody biomass of the tree; this can be expressed as total *carbon storage*. When a tree dies, much of the stored carbon is released back to the atmosphere through decomposition. Trees in Ajax sequester approximately 3,018 tonnes of carbon per year, with an associated annual value of \$570,000, and store 117,275 tonnes of carbon, valued at \$22.1 million. The 2022 annual gross carbon sequestration has decreased slightly from the 2009 rate of 3,548 tonnes of carbon per year, but there has been an increase in overall storage from 105,626 tonnes stored. This is in line with the decrease in overall trees but increased maturity of Ajax's urban forest. Sugar maple stores the greatest volume of carbon, and eastern white cedar sequesters the largest amount of carbon annually.

Other Benefits

Ajax's urban forest provides numerous other services, many of which are difficult to quantify. It produces 3,906 tonnes of oxygen per year and reduces the UV index in residential areas by 42.3 percent in the shade and 18.7 percent overall, thereby reducing exposure to harmful UV rays and the risk of developing skin cancer. Additionally, Ajax's urban forest contributes to reducing the impacts of the urban heat island effect by lowering land surface temperatures (LST) via tree shading and evapotranspiration. Beyond reducing energy costs of cooling, this functions to decrease the risk of heat related illness or death.

Urban Heat Mapping and Planting Prioritization

The urban forest can decrease local temperatures through shading that blocks direct sunlight and the release of water vapor in evapotranspiration which lowers the air temperature. This is important as urban areas are already warmer than surrounding rural lands due to the urban heat island effect, whereby more developed areas have higher temperatures than surrounding rural lands because of increased impervious surfaces and buildings that absorb and retain heat. Urban heat is being further exacerbated by climate change and leading to higher energy bills for air conditioning and heat related health problems. Predictably, urban heat in Ajax is highest in low vegetation *Residential* and *Commercial – Industrial* land uses, and lowest in areas of high vegetation such as the Greenbelt lands along the top of the municipality. Future planting should prioritize those areas with low vegetation.

Summary of Recommendations

The following recommendations were developed based on the results of this report, the current municipal context (i.e. existing programs, plans, policies, etc.), and the capacity and priorities of the Town of Ajax. The recommendations below have been developed in alignment with Ajax’s existing planning and management documents, including the Town of Ajax Urban Forest Management Plan (2010), the Town of Ajax Green Standard (2022), the Town of Ajax Corporate Asset Management Plan (2017), the Ajax Recreation & Parks Master Plan (2021) and the Ajax Climate Risk & Resiliency Plan (2019). Some recommendations are included in multiple sections as the recommended actions are cross-applicable. These are indicated with an asterisk (*).

Land Cover Assessment

Recommendation 1: As listed in the Official Plan, continue to implement the tree canopy compensation policy (2.1.4) in efforts to manage changes to land use following new developments. Where applicable, develop policy to incorporate monetary incentives for green space additions in new developments.

Recommendation 2: As outlined in the Official Plan (2.1.3) and the Ajax Green Standard, continue to encourage and incentivize the integration of green roof additions in the form of traditional green roof planters and small urban agricultural spaces where possible. Consider emphasizing the impact of incorporating cool roofing recommendations in tandem with green roof additions to improve energy savings and reduce urban heat island impacts.

Existing and Possible Urban Forest Distribution

Recommendation 3: Set an official canopy cover target and proposed timeframe for achieving it. Based on common practice, consider a target of at least 30 percent canopy cover.

- Assess progress towards the canopy cover target every 5 years by conducting the canopy cover assessment component of the Urban Forest Study.

Recommendation 4*: Engage and potentially incentivize commercial and industrial landowners to undertake tree planting and educate those landowners about maintenance best practices.

Recommendation 5: Finalize partnership with LEAF to implement a subsidized tree planting program to assist homeowners with the replacement of dead, dying, hazardous, and/or invasive species.

Recommendation 6: The Town of Ajax should continue to develop and implement a 5-year Naturalization and Restoration Plan.

Recommendation 7: In line with naturalization recommendations from the Recreation & Parks Master Plan, continue to bolster natural plantings where appropriate, as opposed to standalone or individual plantings in open and natural park spaces.

Tree Species Effects

Recommendation 8*: In line with Ajax's 2010 Urban Forest Management Plan, the Town should strive to establish a diverse tree population in intensively managed urban areas, in which no species represents more than 10 percent of the tree population, no genus represents more than 15 percent of the tree population, and no family represents more than 30 percent of the tree population, both municipal-wide and at the neighborhood level.

Recommendation 9: Investigate updating and applying the Pest Vulnerability Matrix (PVM) for species selection in municipal tree and shrub planting.

Recommendation 10: Consider development of an education campaign focused on educating private landowners about the importance of species diversity for a resilient urban forest, particularly in the context of climate change.

Recommendation 11: Utilize native planting and appropriate non-native, non-invasive stock in both intensively and extensively managed areas. Increase genetic diversity of tree populations by using the guidance provided by the Ontario Tree Seed Transfer Policy³. The policy is intended to help managers source seed based on the projected changes in climate to increase the likelihood of producing trees well-adapted to current and future conditions.

Recommendation 12: Continue to educate and incentivize private landowners through the LEAF program to plant a greater diversity of native, resilient species to increase the functional diversity in Ajax. Encourage private landowners to plant alternatives to eastern white cedar given its high vulnerability to climate change.

Tree Size Effects

Recommendation 13: Evaluate and develop the strategic steps required to increase the proportion of large, mature trees in the urban forest.

³ Partnerships and resources from the Forest Gene Conservation Association and/or the National Tree Seed Centre can be leveraged to support seed sourcing and species selection.

Recommendation 14*: As outlined in the Official Plan and Ajax Green Standard, encourage uptake of tree preservation requirements listed in municipal guidelines and recommendations to incorporate sustainable streetscape and subdivision design standards to support green space establishment.

Recommendation 15: As outlined in the Official Plan, consider enacting a Town-wide tree cutting by-law to regulate the destruction or injury of trees.

Tree Health Effects

See Recommendation 4.

Effect on Air Quality

Recommendation 16: Select and plant long lived, low maintenance, and low VOC emitting tree species.

Recommendation 17: Bolster evergreen tree population across the municipality to improve year-round pollution removal services.

Recommendation 18: Engage in strategic tree planting in high emission zones within the Town of Ajax jurisdiction.

Recommendation 19*: Consider developing an education campaign and community stewardship program focused on educating the public about the ecosystem benefits that Ajax's urban forest provides.

Effect on Stormwater Runoff

See Recommendation 14.

See Recommendation 19.

Recommendation 20: Continue to advocate for the application of subsurface (Silva) cells and other enhanced rooting environment techniques for street trees.

Recommendation 21: Explore the opportunity to utilize the Sustainable Technology Evaluation Program Treatment Train Tool to evaluate and quantify the stormwater benefits of planting trees.

Effect on Residential Energy Bills

See Recommendation 19.

Recommendation 22*: Assess the Town's current recommended planting list, in the Town of Ajax 'Tree Atlas', and shift recommendations, based on planting plans, to native and appropriate non-native, non-invasive species based on the following parameters:

- Selecting species based on their potential to provide energy savings
- Selecting species with a higher capacity for carbon storage and sequestration
- Selecting species with higher tolerances and lower vulnerability to climate change impacts

Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

See Recommendation 22.

Recommendation 23: Continue to follow both Ajax and Durham Regions' climate mitigation and adaptation plans by planting trees to increase carbon sequestration and reduce impacts from the urban heat island effect via shading and evapotranspiration.

Urban Heat Mapping and Planting Priorities

Recommendation 24: Develop a tree planting plan targeting Priority 1 areas, considering species that are at low risk for climate change as determined by Ajax's climate vulnerability study in the Climate Risk & Resiliency Plan (2019), and placed when relevant to maximize reductions in residential energy bills.

- Refer to the Planting Priority Areas (Figure 23)

Historical Change

See Recommendation 8*.

Recommendation 25: Reassess urban tree care and maintenance practices. Predictors associated with high street tree mortality to be considered are the following: selecting hardy species tolerant of harsher urban conditions, direct tree care/stewardship, and assessing local traffic and building conditions.

Recommendation 26: Monitor stand level dynamics and patterns to select Carolinian species, where fit, for restoration of natural forest stands within the Town's Naturalization and Restoration Plan.

Recommendation 27: Continue assessing urban forest structure, function, and distribution every 10 years through an Urban Forest Study.

Trajectory and Future Projections

See Recommendation 22*.

Recommendation 28: Develop a post-tree planting maintenance, management, and monitoring strategy and program to ensure tree survivorship and mitigate common stressors in the urban environment.

- It is recommended that management, monitoring, and maintenance begin directly after tree planting. Monitoring of municipal plantings should be undertaken for at least five years following planting (year 1, 3 and 5). Some stressors to mitigate include soil compaction, salt pollution, mechanical injuries, and drought related stress.

Urban Forestry and Asset Management

Recommendation 29: Continue to integrate green infrastructure into asset management planning.

Recommendation 30: Continue to encourage uptake of green space additions in development planning processes as outlined in the Official Plan and Ajax Green Standard.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In Ajax, the urban forest is fundamental to social, economic, public, and environmental health, and the resilience of the town. All the trees, shrubs, and woodlands located on public and private property make up the municipality's urban forest and provide vital services to the community. A healthy urban forest cleans the air, reduces stormwater run-off, moderates extreme heat, sequesters carbon, provides habitat for local wildlife, and makes a community more attractive and livable. The value of these services increases exponentially as healthy trees grow and thrive.

Trees and woodlands are adaptable to change, but in urban areas they often require special planning, management, and stewardship to ensure they are protected, maintained, replaced, and integrated properly into the built environment. Ajax has been proactive in the management of their forest assets and is continuing to make strides through this second Urban Forest Study, following the initial analysis in 2009. However, the capacity of Ajax's urban forest to support a healthy and resilient community is under threat. Stressors such as climate change impacts, urban development pressures, difficult growing conditions, altered soils, and invasive species continue to challenge the health of the urban forest. If the urban forest is to continue to provide consistent services, Ajax and its partners must address these challenges in a cost-effective, coordinated way. This requires a comprehensive understanding of forest distribution, structure, and function.

1.1 Purpose

This Urban Forest Study is a resource for use by municipal staff to help track and evaluate progress towards achieving the many goals and objectives set out in Ajax's Urban Forest Management Plan.

The first town-wide analysis of Ajax's urban forest was conducted through a collaboration between Ajax and TRCA. Data was collected in 2008 and the results were published in the *Town of Ajax Urban Forest Study* (TRCA, 2009). The 2009 study forms a baseline against which change can be assessed. The 2022 Urban Forest Study is also an opportunity to analyze issues that were emerging in 2009 and have become more crucial to assess in the intervening years. Specifically, this study will include more detailed information on land cover via the landcover assessment, urban heat, and planting priorities for Ajax's urban forest.

1.2 Objectives

The objectives of the 2022 Urban Forest Study are to:

- Assess land cover distribution and provide a canopy cover target recommendation for Ajax;
- Quantify the current species composition, size, and condition of Ajax's urban forest;
- Quantify ecosystem services and benefits provided by the urban forest;
- Assess the change in distribution and structure since the 2009 Urban Forest Study;
- Evaluate Ajax's land cover and urban heat distribution; and
- Conduct an i-Tree Eco Forecast assessment to estimate tree planting needed to maintain existing canopy cover and to meet the recommended canopy cover goals.

2.0 CONTEXT

2.1 Demographic and Ecological Context

The Town of Ajax is a lower-tier municipality within the Regional Municipality of Durham. The population growth in Ajax has slowed in the past five years, only increasing by 5.8 percent between 2016 and 2021 compared to a 9.2 percent increase between 2011 and 2016, and a 21.6 percent increase from 2006 to 2011 (Statistics Canada, 2021). However, the current growth rate of population change is equal to the provincial average of 5.8 percent and higher than the national average of 5.2 percent. Despite the slowing population growth, intensification and infill development has continued across the municipality. Based on the 2021 census, the total population in Ajax is 126,666 and the population density is approximately 1,901 people per square kilometre (Statistics Canada, 2021). The population is expected to increase to 137,670 by 2031 (Town of Ajax, 2022).

Ajax is located on the border of Plant Hardiness Zones 6a and 6b according to the Natural Resources Canada Plant Hardiness Zone Map. Ajax is situated in ecodistrict 6E-13, at the transition point between the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence and Deciduous Forest Regions. This ecoregion is characterized by sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*), American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), oak (*Quercus* spp.), hickory (*Carya* spp.), and black walnut (*Juglans nigra*). Moist sites are characterized by elm (*Ulmus* spp.), eastern cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*), ash (*Fraxinus* spp.), and silver maple (*Acer saccharinum*). This ecoregion is marked by humid, warm to hot summers and mild, snowy winters. Mean annual precipitation ranges from 750 to 900 mm and is evenly distributed throughout the year. The region is underlain by carbonate-rich, Palaeozoic bedrock and is dominated by a wide variety of deep glacial deposits. Ajax contains portions of the Duffins and Carruthers Creek watersheds, including the mouths of both creeks as they drain into Lake Ontario. The lands along these creeks as well as Greenwood Conservation Area and other properties north of Taunton Rd. are part of Ontario's Greenbelt.

Prior to European settlement Ajax and most of southern Ontario was covered by forests and wetlands. Agriculture, urbanization, and industrial activity have led to the loss of pre-European settlement natural cover in the region, as well as the degradation of the remaining natural systems due to changes to local hydrology and soil quality. Concurrent with the loss of natural cover has been the loss of valuable ecosystem services, including water management and climate regulation. Today, the most pressing challenges facing the natural systems in Ajax are urban development and the effects of climate change. Urban intensification and infill development threaten the retention of trees and reduces the space available for future trees in urban areas. The effects of climate change are already being felt in Ajax and are expected to threaten the health and sustainability of the natural environment. Recognizing these challenges, Ajax is taking proactive steps to protect and enhance the Town's natural systems and mitigate and adapt to climate change.

2.2 Policy, Planning, and Management Context

The provincial planning policies that guide growth and development heavily influence the retention and enhancement of the urban forest. The following provincial legislation impacts the capacity for municipalities to protect and increase the urban forest.

Ontario *Planning Act*, 1990

- The province provides an overarching framework to guide land use planning and development through the *Planning Act*, passed in 1990. The legislation sets out rules for land use planning in Ontario, providing the basis for natural resource management, Provincial Policy Statements, the preparation of municipal Official Plans, and the control of land use through zoning by-laws.

Provincial Policy Statement, 2020

- Under Section 3 of the *Planning Act*, the province can issue directions for municipalities in the form of the Provincial Policy Statement. The current Provincial Policy Statement came into effect in 2020 and supports the provincial goals to increase housing and protect the environment, while also reducing barriers and costs for development.

***Municipal Act*, 2001**

- The *Municipal Act*, 2001 empowers municipalities to be accountable for their own jurisdiction and provides the power to pass and adopt by-laws.

The subsequent list provides an overview of the municipal policies, programs, and plans that are currently applied in the governance or management of the urban forest in Ajax.

Ajax Official Plan (2000, Updated 2022)

- The Official Plan guides the Town's long-term land use planning, development, and growth and was updated and approved by Council on June 20th, 2022, in compliance with provincial requirements. The Plan recognizes the important role of trees in improving air quality, reducing the urban heat island effect, reducing energy use (Sections 2.1.3 and 2.1.4), and managing stormwater (Section 4.2.7). The Plan promotes tree planting and retention practices during land development, supports public engagement, and includes policies related to managing the urban forest and conducting urban forest studies (Sections 2.1.4, 2.5.2.1, 2.5.2.7, 2.6.2.1, 3.2.3.10, 4.2.7, 5.0 (o, u)).

Town of Ajax Urban Forest Management Plan 2011-2015 (2010)

- The Ajax Urban Forest Management Plan describes how the municipality will manage its urban forest effectively and ensure the Town's growing population is able to benefit from the services provided by the urban forest. The Plan notes that American Forests recommends a minimum canopy cover of 40 percent, but does not formalize this as a target for Ajax (Section 7.2.1).

Ajax Tree Protection By-Laws (2006)

- Ajax has tree protection by-laws, enforced by Municipal Law Enforcement Officers, to prohibit the damage and destruction of trees on park, Greenbelt, or Environmental Protection land (By-law No. 137-2006), and on boulevards (By-law No. 138-2006). The boulevard tree protection by-law protects a 2 metre radius around trees with a diameter at breast height (DBH) of 40 cm or less, and 3 metres around trees with a DBH greater than 40 cm.

Ajax – A Journey to Sustainability: Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (2013)

- Ajax’s Integrated Community Sustainability Plan establishes goals, directions, and actions up to 2055 to balance the environmental, socio-cultural, and economic pillars of sustainability for the Town. The urban forest is an important part of this plan, with the percentage of tree canopy cover mentioned as one of the top progress indicators for air quality (Section 4), and condition of the forest as an indicator for increased natural assets and habitat (Section 13). Further tree planting is recommended to reduce air pollution, energy bills, and expand the urban forest.

Town of Ajax Green Standard (2022)

- The Ajax Green Standard (AGS) provides guidance for evaluating development applications through the lens of sustainability and climate change mitigation and adaptation. The AGS includes best practices for tree planting and maintenance along streets and in residential areas to increase the quantity of trees planted while improving the condition and survival rate of newly planted trees.

Town of Ajax Site Plan Review Manual (2011)

- Ajax’s Site Plan Review Manual includes the requirement for a Tree Preservation Plan for site plans on land that has existing trees in compliance with the Town and Region of Durham’s tree by-laws (3.5.3). Additionally, the Manual describes Ajax’s Tree Replacement Program, where at the discretion of the Town, deciduous trees with a minimum caliper of 150 mm or coniferous trees over 4.5 metres that are being removed or expected to die within five years are replaced. To determine the number and size of replacement trees, the following formula is used: “if one 250 mm caliper tree is to be removed, the replacement shall be 5-50 mm caliper trees, 2-125 mm caliper trees or 1-250 mm caliper tree” (3.5.4).

Town of Ajax Corporate Asset Management Plan (2017)

- *Ontario Regulation 588/17 Asset Management Planning for Municipal Infrastructure (O.Reg.588/17)* directs municipalities to include green infrastructure assets in asset management plans by July 2024. Ajax has incorporated green infrastructure including the urban forest into their corporate asset management planning. This enables Ajax to maximize the investment in trees by planning for their long-term growth and management.

Ajax Climate Risk & Resiliency Plan (2019)

- Ajax’s Climate Risk & Resiliency Plan exists to provide Town Council and staff with a strategic planning framework to address current and future climate change risks. The Plan contains information about a NASA study conducted in Ajax that modelled tree canopy and surface temperatures to identify areas with a higher social vulnerability to help guide future planting efforts. The Plan also acknowledges the valuable role green infrastructure, particularly the urban forest, plays in adapting to and mitigating climate change.

Ajax Recreation & Parks Master Plan (2021)

- Ajax’s new Recreation & Parks Master Plan is designed to guide investments and priorities from 2021-2031. The Plan recognizes the importance of incorporating the urban forest in current and future parklands, noting the benefits of trees that include reducing the impact of urban heat islands, sequestering carbon, and improving air quality and stormwater retention. The Plan also discusses the increasing popularity of naturalization, whereby portions of parks are left in or restored to their natural state. This can include tree plantings that mimic natural forests.

Durham Regional Official Plan (1993, Updated 2022)

- The Durham Regional Official Plan provides planning direction for all of Durham Region. This plan requires that all local municipalities protect and manage their woodlands (Section 2.2.3, 2.3.19) and encourages the development of connected and functional Greenlands Systems in local area municipal official plans (Section 2.3.2). The Plan establishes a woodland cover target of at least 30 percent for the region (Section 2.3.19). Durham Region has updated the Official Plan to provide direction for managing growth and development over the coming decades and to align with revised Provincial Plans.

Towards Resilience: Durham Community Climate Adaptation Plan (2016)

- The Durham Community Climate Adaptation Plan proposes 18 programs to respond to climate change impacts in the region and was approved in principle by Durham Regional Council on behalf of the Durham community in 2016. The Plan acknowledges the role the urban forest has in reducing large floods (Section F4), the urban heat island effect (Section HH3), and climate change as a whole (Section NE1). The Plan also notes the importance of tree planting planning that considers the risks trees can create for electrical outages (Section E2).

Durham Woodland Conservation and Management By-Law (2020)

- The Region of Durham has a by-law to prohibit or regulate the destruction or injury of trees in woodlands, enforced by by-law enforcement officers. The Region updated their tree by-law to conform to Provincial Plans and the Durham Regional Official Plan. The new by-law’s (No. 30-2020) goals are to conserve and improve existing woodlands and expand protections against tree injury and destruction from “Sensitive Natural Areas” to all woodlands. This by-law defines woodlands as any area of land that is not a cultivated orchard, plantation, or nursery with more than 1,000 trees per hectare, 750 trees over 5 cm DBH per hectare, 500 trees over 12 cm DBH per hectare, or 250 trees over 20 cm DBH per hectare.

Currently, there are no federal policies or laws in place dedicated to Canada’s urban forests. However, there are relevant national programs and plans which recognize the importance of urban forests, including:

A Healthy Environment and Healthy Economy, Canada’s Strengthened Climate Plan (2020)

- A Healthy Environment and a Healthy Economy is the updated federal climate change plan that includes nature-based climate solutions as one of five pillars of action. Nature-based solutions include: the 2 billion trees program; enhancing carbon sequestration by enhancing wetlands, peatlands, and agricultural lands; and establishing a Natural Climate Solutions for Agriculture Fund.

Canadian Urban Forest Strategy (2019 – 2024)

- The Canadian Urban Forest Strategy was developed in partnership by the Canadian Urban Forest Network, Tree Canada, and municipal, provincial, and federal representatives. In recognition of increasing urbanization and resulting pressures on Canada’s urban forest, the Strategy was developed to support the protection and enhancement of sustainable, biodiverse, healthy urban forests across the country.

Canada’s National Adaptation Strategy (2022)

Canada’s new National Adaptation Strategy for climate change includes the percentage of tree canopy cover in urban areas as an indicator of progress towards adaptation due to tree’s ability to reduce the impact of extremes in temperature and precipitation through mitigating the urban heat island effect and stormwater retention.

2.3 Study Background

The first analysis of Ajax's urban forest was conducted in 2009. TRCA and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service completed an i-Tree Eco analysis (formerly known as UFORE) using land use mapping in conjunction with field data collected at sample plots across Ajax to determine the species composition, condition, size class distribution, and measures of ecological services and value. This information informed the development of recommendations, many of which have been implemented or carried forward in further planning documents by the Town.

The 2022 Urban Forest Study is intended to assess the change in the urban forest over the last decade by surveying a pool of the same plots as those considered in 2009, following the i-Tree Eco protocol. Since 2009, additional assessments have been incorporated to better understand biotic factors pertinent to urban forest change. Additional assessments included in this iteration of the Forest Studies evaluated Ajax's land cover, urban heat, and planting priorities. The analysis and recommendations presented in this report have been aligned with the guidance of Ajax's existing and new policies and frameworks.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study utilized several complementary approaches, datasets, and analysis tools:

- 1) i-Tree Eco and Forecast
- 2) Quantitative analysis of land cover
- 3) Assessment of historical change in forest structure, composition, and function
- 4) Urban heat and planting prioritization spatial analysis

Each analysis tool is examined in more detail in the following sections. Taken together, these analyses provided a broad understanding of Ajax's urban forest. While the i-Tree Eco and the land cover analyses each represent stand-alone assessments capable of supporting a forest management plan, experience from the 2009 Ajax Urban Forest Study demonstrated the value of combining both approaches. By incorporating data collected in the field, the i-Tree Eco analysis allowed the quantification of critical attributes such as tree species and tree height, as well as ecosystem services such as carbon storage and sequestration. In contrast, the land cover analysis relied on the point-based mapping of land cover based on Google aerial imagery. This allowed a detailed and accurate assessment of the quantity and distribution of land cover by class across Ajax. I-Tree Forecast allowed an estimate of future canopy cover and ecosystem services given current planting plans, while additional data collected on land cover and urban heat provided the basis for obtaining a more detailed understanding of the existing extent and planting priorities for the urban forest in Ajax.

3.1 i-Tree Eco

i-Tree Eco, a software application, model, and protocol, was chosen as the primary tool for the Ajax Urban Forest Study. I-Tree Eco is an adaptation of the Urban Forest Effects (UFORE) model, which was developed by the U.S. Forest Service Northern Research Station (NRS), the USDA State and Private Forestry's Urban and Community Forestry Program and Northeastern Area, the Davey Tree Expert Company, and SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry. UFORE was used for the 2009 Ajax Urban Forest Study. UFORE and i-Tree Eco have been used in many other municipalities in the Greater Toronto Area over the past 15 years. The built-in i-Tree Eco models are continually improved upon by its developers. Version 6.0.24 was used for this assessment.

3.1.1 Study Design

The study area boundary was defined by the municipal boundary of Ajax. Two-hundred-and-twenty randomly generated plot centres created for the 2009 Ajax Urban Forest Study were resampled for the 2022 study. Although increasing the number of plots would have led to lower variances and increased certainty in the results, it would have also increased the cost of the data collection. Thus, the number of plots surveyed provided an acceptable level of standard error when weighed against the time and financial costs associated with additional field data collection. As a general rule, 200 plots in a stratified random sample across a municipality will yield a standard error of approximately 12 percent (USDA, 2021). In the past, large cities such as New York and Baltimore have used 200 sample plots and have obtained accurate results with acceptable levels of standard error. In accordance with standard i-Tree Eco protocols, plots were circular and had an area of 0.0404 hectares.

i-Tree Eco was used to statistically extrapolate data upwards to estimate totals and standard errors for the entire study area for tree population, leaf area, species composition, size distribution, and condition, as well as carbon storage and sequestration, avoided runoff, air pollution removal, and building energy savings. I-Tree Eco was also used to provide a structural value for the forest using a simplified Council of Tree and Landscape Appraisers (CTLA) Trunk Formula method (Nowak, 2020) and a valuation for ecosystem service benefits.

3.1.2 Study Area Stratification

The study area was stratified into smaller units according to land use types (e.g. residential, commercial and industrial, etc.) to better understand variations in the structure

of the forest. The randomly distributed plots were post-stratified according to the MPAC land use category in which they fell. The post-stratification approach was selected for the 2009 Ajax Urban Forest Study to enable the monitoring and assessment of change over time at the same plots, as well as the ability to report on trends within land use categories. Using this approach, permanent sample plots are not dependent on a static land use distribution.

For this study, plots were stratified into six land use categories based on 2016 MPAC land use data acquired for the canopy cover assessment. The MPAC land use categories were last updated in 2016 and the next iteration was scheduled for completion in 2020 but delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Given that land use changes are likely to occur within each four-year period, MPAC codes were screened visually by TRCA and the Ajax GIS team, and improvements and corrections were made, including the filling of “gaps” or parcels with an unspecified land use. It is likely that errors still exist in the dataset.

i-Tree Eco developers recommend that strata are set up to have a minimum of 15 to 20 plots within each stratum to ensure a reasonable accuracy. Unfortunately, there were insufficient plots in the land use categories,

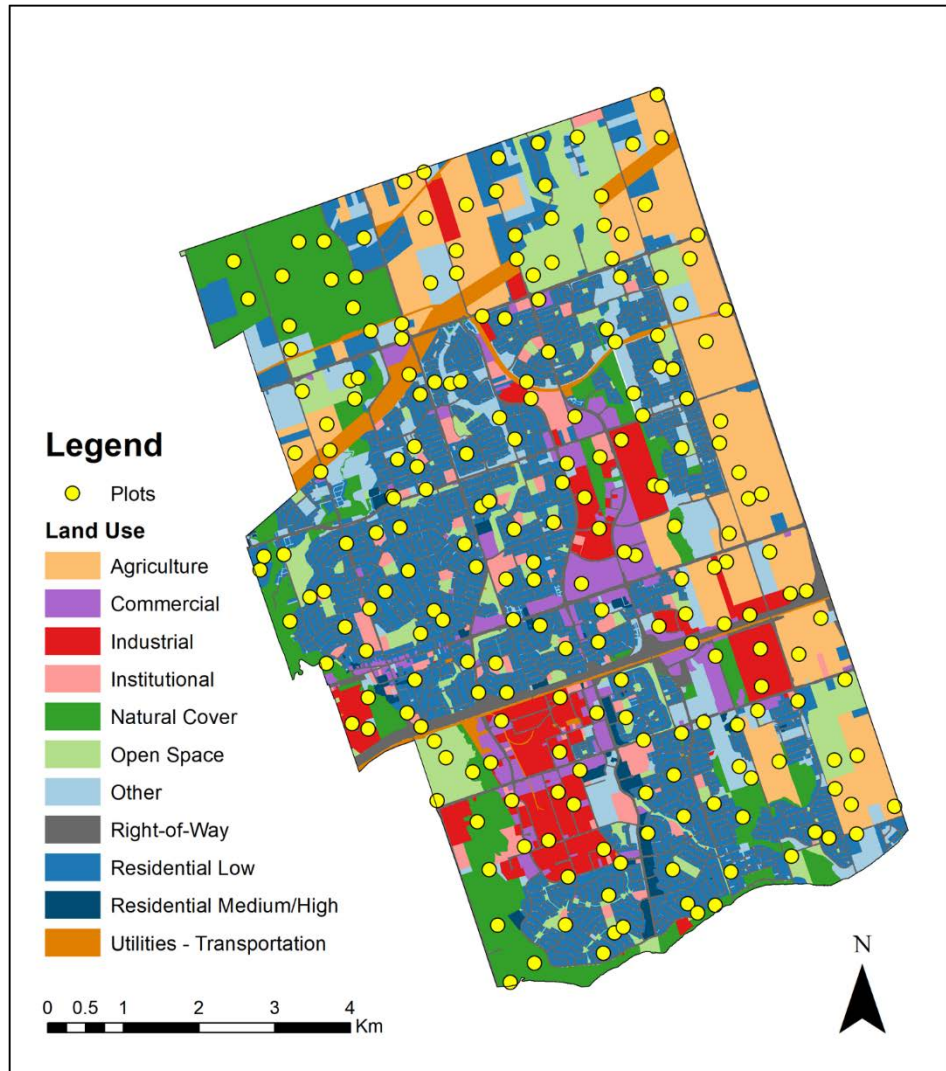


Figure 1: Distribution of MPAC land use types and plots across Ajax

Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, Open Space, Other⁴, Residential Medium / Residential High, and Utilities, and Transportation. Consequently, the aforementioned categories were grouped into broader categories with other similar land use types based on similarities in vegetation cover and management needs to create a total of six land use categories or strata as shown in Table 1. Table 19 contains a detailed description of the land use types. Figure 1 shows the distribution of land use types and plots across Ajax. *Utilities – Transportation* includes plots that fall predominantly on ROWs.

Table 1: Land use categories used for i-Tree Eco stratification

Stratum	Area (ha)	No. of Plots
Agriculture	979.67	30
Commercial – Industrial	886.33	25
Open Space – Natural Cover	779.93	35
Other – Institutional	1,224.99	43
Residential	1,670.33	56
Utilities – Transportation ⁵	1,279.96	31
TOTAL	6,821.21	220

3.1.3 Landowner Contact

Permission to access plots located on private property was obtained primarily through written communication. Prior to entry, all property owners received a request for access form in addition to a letter outlining the scope and duration of the study. In the case of businesses, telephone numbers and email addresses that could be found online were used to contact owners. If it was not possible to contact an owner or no response was given, field staff requested permission to access the property in person. In those cases where permission was not granted, access was restricted due to physical barriers, or the site was deemed unsafe, the plot was not assessed.

⁴ *Other* is comprised predominately of vacant residential land, but also includes non-buildable land such as stormwater management ponds and recreational sports complexes. Much of this land is now incorporated into ⁴ Ajax’s parks and open space greenway system and these changes have not necessarily been reflected yet in the MPAC data, which was last updated in 2016.

⁵ *Utilities - Transportation* also includes ROWs.

3.1.4 Field Data Collection

Field data collection was conducted by a two-member field crew⁶ during the summer leaf-on season of 2022. Plot centres were found by using a combination of handheld GPS units, and high-resolution aerial orthoimagery on a mobile device that showed the location of plot centre and plot boundaries for each plot. At each plot, field staff recorded the distance and direction from plot centre to permanent reference objects, where possible, so that plots could be relocated for future re-measurement. Once the plot centre had been located, detailed vegetation information was recorded in accordance with the i-Tree Eco field manual specifications. The following general plot data were recorded in the i-Tree Eco web interface via a mobile device for each plot:

- percent tree cover
- percent shrub cover
- land use
- percent of plot within the land use
- percent ground cover
 - building
 - cement
 - tar-blacktop/asphalt
 - soil
 - rock
 - duff/mulch
 - herbaceous (exclusive of grass and shrubs)
 - maintained grass
 - wild/unmaintained grass
 - water

For each tree with the centre of its stem in the plot and a minimum diameter at breast height (DBH) of 2.5 cm, except in forested areas⁷, where the DBH minimum was increased to 5 cm, the following information was recorded:

- species
- number of stems
- diameter at breast height

⁶ TRCA hired field assistants and crew leads with a combination of educational and work experience in forestry, arboriculture, and/or environmental science to undertake the inventory.

⁷ Forested areas were defined as areas surrounded by at least 10 percent canopy cover. Land was considered forested if it was not subject to use(s) preventing normal tree regeneration and succession, such as regular mowing, intensive grazing, or recreation activities. In some cases, areas with less than 10 percent canopy cover could qualify as a Forest area if trees were harvested, died, or were otherwise removed but the land was expected to naturally regenerate to at least 10 percent cover.

- tree height
- live tree height
- height to base of live crown
- crown width in east-west direction
- crown width in north-south direction
- percent canopy missing⁸
- percent dieback⁹
- distance and direction (clockwise degrees from True North) from the building (for trees ≥ 6.1m in height and located within 18.3m of a residential building)

Given access constraints, it was possible to collect data at a total of 197 out of the original 220 plots. Prior to visiting plots in the field, plots were inspected using current orthoimagery and Google Street View. Those which fell 98 to 100 percent on impervious surfaces or agricultural fields and had no trees, were assessed using orthoimagery and Google Street View. The remainder were visited in the field as summarized in Table 2. Table 3 summarizes the number of plots with complete i-Tree Eco data per stratum.

Table 2: Data collected for plots

Description	Plots Completed
Field visits	156
Orthophoto/Google Street View	41
Total plots	197

Table 3: Number of plots completed per stratum

Stratum	Number of Plots with Complete i-Tree Eco data	Total Number of Plots
Agriculture	27	30
Commercial – Industrial	22	25
Open Space – Natural Cover	34	35
Other – Institutional	37	43
Residential	46	56
Utilities – Transportation	31	31
Total	197	220

Research conducted by i-Tree Eco developers indicated that 200 plots (of 0.0404 ha each) in a stratified random sample will have a standard error of approximately 12 percent for the municipality and around 13 percent for

⁸ Percent canopy missing is the percent of the crown volume that is missing foliage. It is assessed within the measured live crown width and height and requires imagining a typical crown outline that is full of live foliage.

⁹ Percent dieback is the percent of the crown that is composed of dead branches.

180 plots (USDA, 2021). The relationship between the number of plots and standard error is non-linear, with the biggest gains in accuracy obtained in the first 80 to 90 plots. Therefore, 197 plots and plots per stratum that had complete data to run the i-Tree Eco model was deemed sufficient.

3.1.5 Weather and Pollution Data and i-Tree Eco Parameters

Weather and Pollution Data

Weather and pollution datasets are integrated into i-Tree Eco for use in modelling. It is not possible for the user to directly upload their own data into the application. Hourly precipitation data is utilized to calculate avoided runoff and improve the accuracy of estimating the removal of PM_{2.5} by trees and shrubs. Weather data also impacts the calculation for emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Oshawa Executive Airport meteorological station is the closest weather station to Ajax and provides weather data from 2010 to 2020.

For use in Ajax’s Urban Forest Study, hourly 2019 pollution concentrations of sulphur dioxide (SO₂), and carbon monoxide (CO) were obtained from the Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks’ Toronto West station, and ozone (O₃), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and PM_{2.5} data were obtained from their Newmarket station for the same year. This data was submitted to i-Tree Eco for inclusion into the i-Tree Eco platform in December 2021. More recent pollution data were not used as i-Tree Eco did not have the required radiosonde data.

i-Tree Eco parameters

The i-Tree Eco model requires the user to select a variety of parameters to support model runs. Parameters used for the 2022 Ajax Urban Forest Study are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4: i-Tree Eco parameters

Variable/Parameter/Dataset	Value/Source	Comments
Weather	2019 Oshawa Executive Airport	Closest station and corresponds to date of air pollution data.
Air pollution	2019 Newmarket and Toronto West data / Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks, Ontario	Most recent and closest station data
Census Subdivision and Population Size	Study area type = urban Population (2021) = 126,666 Population Density = 1,900.6	From Statistics Canada (2021)
Electricity in Can\$ (CAD)/kWh	\$0.1216 / Ontario Energy Board	This is used to calculate the cooling benefit of trees due to less air conditioner use. While air-conditioners may be used most in the day during peak hours, many people

continue to use air-conditioners at night¹⁰. In addition, many people turn their air-conditioners off when they are not at home, which is more likely during the day. Therefore, an average electricity price was used as shown below.

Ontario (oeb.ca – 2021-11-30) rates for electricity:

Time of Use Costs:

- Off-peak: 8.2 c/kWh
- Mid-peak: 11.3 c/kWh
- On-peak: 17.0 c/kWh
- Average: 12.16 c/kWh

<p>Heating in Can\$ (CAD)/therm¹¹</p>	<p>\$0.439 / Ontario Energy Board</p>	<p>Natural gas rates & prices in Ontario (oeb.ca – 2021-11-30)</p> <p>Union Gas Ltd (South): 17.1480 c/m³ Enbridge Gas Distribution: 13.2868 c/m³ EPCOR Natural Gas Ltd: 16.0543 c/m³</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Average cost = 15.4964 c/m³ <p>Convert to a cents per cubic foot by dividing by 35.3147:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Average: 0.439 c/ft³ <p>Multiply the above by 100 to obtain a therm (100 cubic feet)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Average: 43.9 c/therm
<p>Carbon in Can\$/metric ton</p>	<p>\$188.77 / From other local studies updated to 2021 values</p>	<p>Value used for York Region Ecosystem Services Quantification and Valuation project. It was based on the Credit Valley Business Case for Natural Assets¹² for the</p>

¹⁰ According to archived research from [Statistics Canada](#), 48 percent of people with an air-conditioner in Ontario kept their air-conditioner on when away from home in 2009. Only 29 percent of Canadian households with an air-conditioner turned it off while sleeping.

¹¹ One therm is a non-SI unit of heat energy. It is the amount of energy in 100 cubic feet of gas.

¹² CVC’s estimates were based on the Technical Update to Environment and Climate Change Canada’s Social Cost of Greenhouse Gas Estimates, published by Environment and Climate Change Canada (2016), which in turn updates and slightly adjusts the Social Cost of Carbon developed by the U.S. Interagency Working Group on Social Cost of Carbon.

year 2020 inflated to 2021 using the Bank of Canada inflation rate.

Avoided Runoff in Can\$ (CAD)/m ³	\$2.325 / Default i-Tree Eco value	Default value from i-Tree Eco. It uses the U.S. national average dollar value to estimate value of avoided runoff. This value is based on 16 research studies on costs of stormwater control and treatment (Nowak, 2020)
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Value of Air Pollution Removal

The default values in i-Tree Eco were used to estimate the value of air pollution removal services (there is no option to update these values). The associated economic value of the health benefits from the removal of pollutants NO₂, SO₂, O₃, and PM_{2.5} is based on U.S. median externality values from the U.S. EPA’s Environmental Benefits Mapping and Analysis Program (BenMAP) model (Nowak, 2020). Based on BenMAP, various standardized health impacts and dollar values (value/person/pollutant) were calculated in i-Tree Eco. The standardized values were calculated using local pollution and population data. These values are multiplied by the corresponding local population total and pollution concentration change as a result of trees and other vegetation in the study area to determine health impacts and associated dollar values. For international estimates, regression equations (Nowak et al. 2014) based on population density are employed to estimate a dollar value per ton of pollution removal (Table 5).

Table 5: Value per tonne of air pollutant removed

Pollutant	Unit value
Carbon monoxide (CO)	\$ 1,490 / tonne
Nitrogen dioxide (NO ₂)	\$ 1,132 / tonne
Sulphur dioxide (SO ₂)	\$ 412/ tonne
Ozone (O ₃)	\$ 7,581 / tonne
Particulate matter <2.5 microns (PM _{2.5})	\$ 263,261 / tonne

3.1.6 Data Analysis

The i-Tree Eco model used standardized field, air pollution-concentration, and meteorological data for Ajax to quantify urban forest structure and function. Five model components were utilized in this analysis:

- 1) Urban Forest Structure:** quantifies urban forest structure (e.g., species composition, tree density, tree health, leaf area, and leaf and tree biomass) based on field data.
- 2) Biogenic Emissions:** quantifies 1) hourly urban forest volatile organic compound (VOC) emissions (isoprene, monoterpenes, and other VOC emissions that contribute to ozone (O₃) formation) based on field and meteorological data, and 2) O₃ and carbon monoxide (CO) formation based on VOC emissions.
- 3) Carbon Storage and Annual Sequestration:** calculates total stored carbon, and gross and net carbon sequestered annually by the urban forest based on field data.

- 4) **Air Pollution Removal:** quantifies the hourly dry deposition of ozone(O₃), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), carbon monoxide (CO), and particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) by the urban forest and associated percent improvement in air quality throughout a year. Pollution removal is calculated based on local pollution and meteorological data.
- 5) **Building Energy Effects:** estimates the effects of trees on building energy use as a result of heating and cooling.

3.2 Land Cover Assessment

3.2.1 Background

i-Tree Canopy, one tool of the suite offered by i-Tree, is a web browser application that can be utilized to determine area covered by various user defined surfaces. This application generates random points across the user defined study area using 2019 Google Earth imagery (the latest imagery set integrated into i-Tree Canopy at the time of the analysis). The number of points sampled across the boundary is up to the user’s discretion and is based on the study site size and the acceptable degree of standard error. Once determined, users are then tasked with visiting each procedurally generated point and assigning land cover classifications. Land cover classes are flexible to user requirements, from simple class designations (i.e., Tree, No Tree) to diverse classes that can be edited. For each land cover class designated, the tool will generate the percent coverage as the number of sample points in that class, p , divided by the total number of sample points classified, n , along with the corresponding range of standard error, SE . Post-analysis, these percentages and standard errors per-cover-class are tabulated and reported.

As part of this assessment, a change analysis was incorporated applying a paired-point analysis¹³ of the points sampled using 2019 imagery to 2009. The results are reported through the i-Tree change calculator; a tool developed to assist users in calculating statistical change in cover classes using this paired-point analysis.

3.2.2 Collection and Analysis Methods

In the 2022 study, the sample size of points surveyed was increased from 1,000 to 4,300, to enhance overall reliability and reduce the sample size related errors. Regarding land cover classes, the default ‘Basic Land Cover’ classes were used, and an additional *Agriculture* class was added to account for agricultural lands across the municipality Table 6. Once the assessment was completed, statistical estimates of area within each land cover class were then calculated as a percent with an associated standard error.

¹³ Paired point analysis = each point is measured at the exact same location in each year considered

Table 6: Land cover classes utilized to classify i-Tree Canopy sample points surveyed across Ajax

Land Cover Class	Description
Tree – Shrub	Woody vegetation with a distinct canopy, often distinguished by a shadow. Includes trees and tall shrubs, ~ 1.5 m high or more. Non-woody vegetation > 1.5 m does not fall into this category.
Grass – Herbaceous	Includes lawns, roadside greenery, lower shrubs, and wild herbaceous cover (including marshy, swampy areas that are not regularly flooded).
Soil – Bare ground	Dirt and gravel roads (including gravel on either side of the highway), construction sites, areas where the grass has died and revealed the ground, garden beds, playgrounds with bare ground. This includes astroturf surfaces.
Water	Creeks, lakes, and regularly flooded wetlands.
Impervious Buildings	Any type of building: residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural infrastructure.
Impervious Roads	Paved roads and highways.
Impervious Other	Sidewalks, driveways, parking lots, airport tarmac, patios, pools, and railways (on railway, between railway, or up to 1 m on either side).
Agriculture	Agricultural croplands that have crops present (some herbaceous cover), or that are ploughed/without distinguishable growth. Pasture lands (more uneven texture, not ploughed) can be classified as herbaceous.

With respect to the change assessment, each of the 4,300 points were reclassified based on 2009 Google Earth imagery and run in the model to understand changes in land cover between 2009 and 2022. To do so, sample points were exported from the i-Tree Canopy application and uploaded to Google Earth where 2009 aerial imagery was used to assign land cover class attributions. It should be noted that points that fell on areas of the 2009 imagery that were of a low resolution or missing information were classified for the change assessment used the closest year with clear imagery. Once completed, the results were then reported through the i-Tree change calculator by net change, annual change, and whether the change was found to be statistically significant between 2009 and 2022. Statistical changes were estimated using the McNemar test and standard errors were calculated using standard binomial statistical methods.

3.3 i-Tree Forecast

i-Tree Forecast is a computer model incorporated into the i-Tree Eco application. It was utilized in this study to estimate future canopy cover based on the current state of the forest and Ajax's tree planting plans, provided by Ajax. The objective of the i-Tree Eco Forecast analysis was to determine if, given the Town's current planting plans and various other planting scenarios, the Town's canopy cover could reach 30 percent, in line with the similar goal for woodland cover set by Durham region. If the canopy cover target was not projected to be reached or maintained based on the outputs of the i-Tree Forecast model, simulations would be run to determine how many more trees would need to be planted to ensure that the canopy cover target were reached.

i-Tree Forecast simulates future forest structure using current forest structure data from i-Tree Eco as an input. I-Tree Forecast simulates the state of the urban forest each year within the simulation period using three components:

- 1) Tree growth: the projected growth of tree diameter, crown size, and leaf area for each tree recorded. Tree growth or annual increase in DBH is based on the number of frost-free days, crown light exposure, dieback, growth rate classification and median height at maturity.
- 2) Tree mortality: the projected annual mortality based on default or user-defined annual mortality rates for trees of various condition scores. Tree mortality rates are adjusted for tree size/maturity by i-Tree Eco.
- 3) Tree establishment: the projected number of trees added each year based on user inputs. Users must enter the stem diameter of newly established trees and annual planting rates.

i-Tree Forecast also allows the user to choose to simulate extreme events such as insect or disease outbreaks and storm events.

3.3.1 Simulation Scenarios

Simulations were run for a 30-year forecast period from 2023 to 2053. Simulations included diseases and pests that are currently impacting the forest. Storm events were excluded due to uncertainty in tree mortality rates following different types of storms, the geographical extent of damage, and the frequency of storms. The effects of climate change were incorporated by increasing the growing season length which would impact the annual growth rate of trees.

Currently, the length of the frost-free season is 163 days (climateatlas.ca). According to Historical and Future Climate Trends in nearby regions (Fausto et al. 2015), the length of the growing season is expected to increase by approximately 30 days by the 2050s. Since only one value can be entered in into i-Tree Eco, an average value of 178 was used.

At this time, the most commonly observed pests and diseases impacting Ajax are emerald ash borer (EAB, *Agrilus planipennis*), *Lymantria dispar dispar* (spongy moth), and beech bark disease (*Neonectria faginata*). EAB is nearing the end of its worst impacts and the spongy moth population is collapsing. I-Tree Eco Forecast only applies mortality rates to tree species impacted by these pests.

Only pests that are known to occur in Ajax were considered in the i-Tree Eco model. Oak wilt (*Bretziella fagacearum*) has yet to cross into Canada and hemlock woolly adelgid (*Adelges tsugae*) was found in the Niagara

Peninsula, among others but eradicated. The Asian long-horned beetle (*Anoplophora glabripennis*) was last found in Ontario in 2013 and eradicated. There is greater uncertainty as to when the other pests may arrive and establish themselves, for how long and what impact they will have, hence, they were excluded. These pests and diseases should be considered in future iterations of the Urban Forest Study.

Four planting scenarios were considered in forecast projections to better understand the role of plantings on tree cover and numbers across Ajax. The planting scenarios are as follows:

- Thirty-year planting plan
 - Based on average current rate of planting from 2014-2022, where available data was most complete. Assumes constant rate of planting across forecast period.
- Fifteen-year planting plan (halved-duration scenario)
 - Based on average current rate of planting from 2014-2022. Assumed constant rate of planting over forecast period.
- Naturalization and Restoration Plan
 - Based on estimated tree planting numbers to be finalized as part of the Naturalization and Restoration Plan
- No planting plans
 - No planting inputs.

Table 20. summarizes the parameters used to set up i-Tree Forecast.

3.4 Urban Heat Mapping and Planting Priorities

3.4.1. Background

The urban forest can decrease local temperatures through shading and the release of water vapor in evapotranspiration. This is important as urban areas are warmer than surrounding rural lands due to the urban heat island effect, which is being exacerbated by climate change and leading to higher energy bills for air conditioning and heat related health problems. Urban heat mapping is used to calculate land surface temperatures using thermal data from satellite images. These results can then be compared to maps of vegetation to identify if canopy cover is successfully cooling forested areas compared to less or unvegetated areas and identify target locations for future planting.

Ajax previously worked with NASA to develop layers for surface temperature and forest cover in 2016 to define areas of social vulnerability (Town of Ajax, 2019). However, they only considered canopy cover, instead of a vegetative index that can show differences in productivity which influences shading and evapotranspiration, as well as illustrate the effects of other vegetation types. This new analysis also provides a more recent map of urban heat across Ajax.

3.4.2. Spatial Analysis Methods

The planting priorities analysis for the Town of Ajax was carried out at the Dissemination Block (DB) level. A DB is the smallest geographic area for which population and dwelling counts are published in Canada. It is an area bounded on all sides by roads and/or boundaries of standard geographic areas (Statistics Canada, 2022). The analysis was conducted based on two spatial datasets: land surface temperature (LST) and Enhanced Vegetation Index (EVI). Both layers were produced based on a satellite image obtained from the Landsat 8 mission on June 16, 2020, taken at 4:00 pm. Using imagery taken mid-afternoon close to the summer solstice is a good proxy for the distribution of heat throughout the summer. Landsat 8 failures in Band 10 needed to calculate temperature caused data to be missing across 2021 and 2022. Therefore, the closest possible date with a complete data set was chosen.

LST refers to how hot the surface of the ground would feel to the touch in a particular location. It is not equal to air temperature, as it is measured by calculating the radiant energy that exits the Earth's surface at a given location (NASA, 2022). Nevertheless, because the heat energy rising off Earth's surface contributes to a warmer air temperature (and vice versa), the LST is widely used as one of contributing factors to urban heat islands in cities (e.g., Kumar et al., 2021). LST has a strong negative correlation with the health and density of vegetation, particularly during warmer months of the year (Guha et al., 2020; Sun & Kafatos, 2007). The health and density of vegetation is represented by EVI. This is a measure of vegetation greenness similar to Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI), but more accurate as it corrects for some atmospheric conditions and canopy background noise and is thus more sensitive in areas with dense vegetation (USGS, 2022). EVI values range from -1 to 1, with higher EVI values representing the presence of denser and healthier vegetation, and lower EVI values indicating sparsely populated vegetation.

Following the methods from USGS¹⁴, the Landsat image was analyzed in ArcMap to determine the LST across Ajax. The resulting values from this calculation were in Kelvin units, thus 273.15 was subtracted to convert the results to degrees Celsius. Mean LST values were calculated for each DB. These values were then classified into Low, Medium, and High LST groups using the geometric interval classification method. This type of classification was developed to visualize data that is not distributed normally.

To compare surface temperatures with forest cover and other vegetated areas, EVI was also calculated following USGS's¹⁵ method. Using the same geometric interval classification method, the EVI values were first grouped into three classes: Low, Medium, and High. Each class was then assigned a class ID (Low = 1, Medium = 2, High = 3). The most frequent class in each DB was then selected as a proxy for vegetation density in that DB.

Planting priorities were determined by overlaying the classified spatial layers from LST and EVI calculations. Since DBs with High EVI values already have a high density of vegetation, these areas were excluded from the

¹⁴ USGS Landsat Data Products calculations: <https://www.usgs.gov/landsat-missions/using-usgs-landsat-level-1-data-product>

¹⁵ USGS Landsat Enhanced Vegetation Index formula: <https://www.usgs.gov/landsat-missions/landsat-enhanced-vegetation-index#:~:text=EVI%20is%20similar%20to%20Normalized,in%20areas%20with%20dense%20vegetation.>

planting priority analysis. In the remaining categories, High LST was considered more important to correct for though additional planting than Low EVI. Accordingly, DBs with High LST values were categorized as top planting priorities. For DBs with same LST values, planting priority was given to those with the lower EVI. Therefore, there were six priority groups considered in the analysis, with every combination of the remaining classes of LST (High, Medium, and Low) and EVI (Medium and Low).

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Land Cover Distribution

4.1.1 Current Land Cover Assessment

The 2022 i-Tree Canopy land cover analysis found that approximately 1,634 ha or 24 percent of Ajax’s municipal area is covered by *Tree – Shrub*¹⁶ (termed canopy cover) and 30 percent is covered by *Grass – Herbaceous* cover, the most prevalent land use, meaning that green cover in Ajax represents 54 percent of the municipal area. Remaining natural cover, composed of *Agriculture* and *Soil – Bare Ground* cover an additional 14 percent of the municipal area. While impervious surfaces, which include *Roads*, *Buildings*, and *Other* paved surfaces, represent approximately 29 percent of the municipal area (Figure 3).

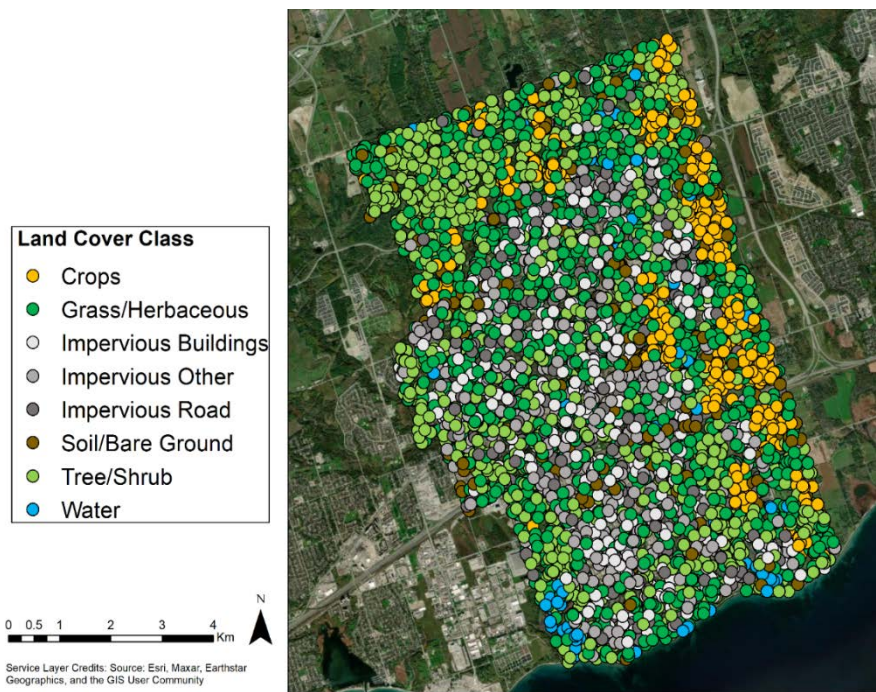


Figure 2: Distribution of land cover classes across Ajax

¹⁶ Tall shrubs are not distinguishable from trees due to their height. They are approximately 2 meters or taller.

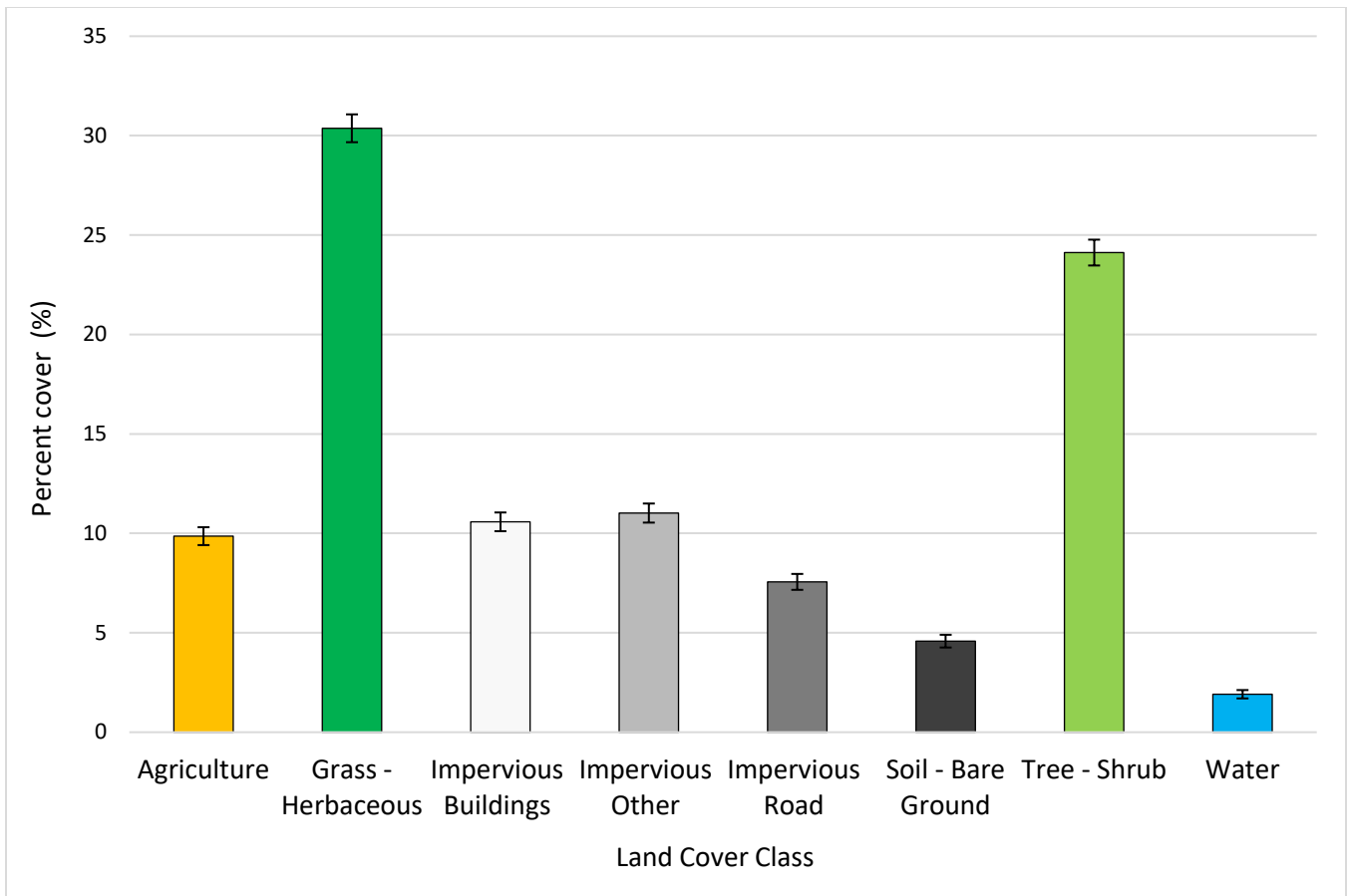


Figure 3: Land cover percentage by class across Ajax

A detailed breakdown by land cover type is conveyed in Table 7.

Table 7: Land cover coverage (in % and km²) for the Town of Ajax with standard error for 2019 (n = 4300).

Land cover class	Points	% Cover ± SE	Area (km ²) ± SE
Agriculture	424	9.86 ± 0.45	6.68 ± 0.31
Grass – Herbaceous	1306	30.37 ± 0.70	20.58 ± 0.48
Impervious Buildings	455	10.58 ± 0.47	7.17 ± 0.32
Impervious Other	474	11.02 ± 0.48	7.47 ± 0.32
Impervious Road	325	7.56 ± 0.4	5.12 ± 0.27
Soil – Bare Ground	197	4.58 ± 0.32	3.1 ± 0.22
Tree – Shrub	1037	24.12 ± 0.65	16.34 ± 0.44
Water	82	1.91 ± 0.21	1.29 ± 0.14
Total	4300	100	67.6

4.1.2 Land Cover Change Assessment

Overall, the change assessment, based on the paired-point analysis contrasting 2009 and 2019 imagery, revealed statistically significant change across six of eight land cover classes Table 8. Most notably, canopy cover has increased in Ajax. In 2009, when canopy cover was first measured, it was reported to be 18 percent. Since the 2009 report, our land cover assessment has improved overall accuracy by increasing the number of points sampled from 1,000 to 4,300. This improved assessment revealed a canopy cover of 22 percent cover in 2009, which has since increased by approximately 2 percent to 24 percent in 2019 (the latest imagery included in i-Tree Canopy). Based on a visual inspection, canopy cover increased from the natural growth of trees, particularly in natural areas and newer residential neighbourhoods. This natural growth outpaced losses from construction and development. However, it should be noted that the current land cover assessment includes 2019 satellite imagery which has improved overall resolution and accuracy, and can therefore detect more small, individual trees, which may have been underestimated for the 2009 assessment.

Other significant changes include statistically significant increases across all impervious classes which now total 29.2 percent in 2019 compared to 24.8 percent in 2009. *Soil – Bare Ground* and *Agriculture* classes saw statistically significant decreases as well, from a combined cover of 19.9 percent in 2009 to 14.5 percent in 2019 Table 8.

Table 8: Percent change by land cover class between 2009 and 2019 across Ajax (n = 4300).

Land Cover Class	2009		2019		Net Change	Statistically Significant Change
	%	SE	%	SE	%	
Grass – Herbaceous	31.1	0.7	30.4	0.7	-0.8	NO
Tree – Shrub	22.1	0.6	24.1	0.7	2.0	YES
Impervious Buildings	9.1	0.4	10.6	0.5	1.4	YES
Impervious Road	6.6	0.4	7.6	0.4	0.9	YES
Impervious Other	9.1	0.4	11.0	0.5	1.9	YES
Soil – Bare Ground	7.5	0.4	4.6	0.3	-2.9	YES
Water	2.0	0.2	1.9	0.2	-0.1	NO
Agriculture	12.4	0.5	9.9	0.5	-2.6	YES

With respect to plantable space, a total of 44.9 percent (3,036 ha) of the Town’s municipal area, in contrast to 51 percent in 2009, could theoretically support future canopy as possible vegetated canopy (see Figure 4). It is worth noting that 9.9 percent (986 ha) of this cover is agricultural lands and likely won’t contribute to realistic plantable space given active crops. Additionally, these quantities do not consider that some agricultural and bare soil surfaces may already be approved for development.

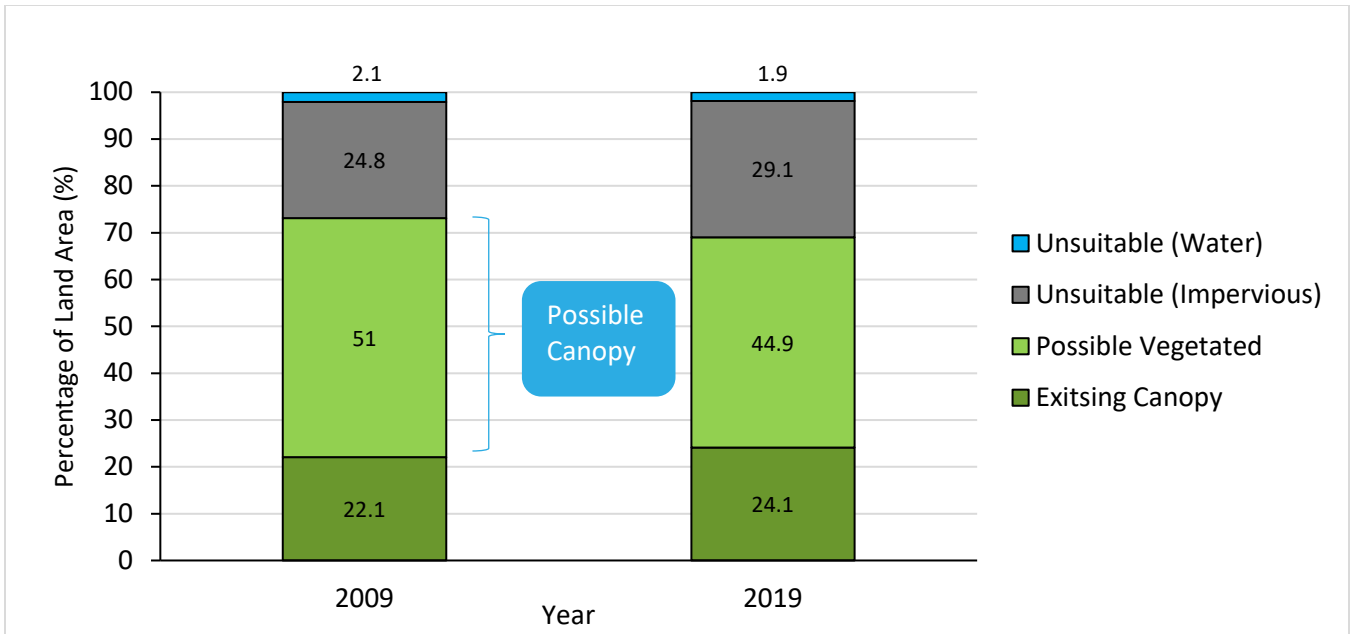


Figure 4: Land cover metrics for Ajax in 2009 and 2019

4.1.3 MPAC Land Use Distribution

Land cover metrics were also calculated for each MPAC land use type. As noted in Section 3.1, land use changes have occurred since 2016 (the date of land use designation by MPAC); while efforts were made to improve upon the land use layer, results summarized by land use should be viewed as approximate totals. Figure 5 summarizes the proportion of area of each land use type within Ajax. The *Residential Low* category (i.e., low density residential) occupies the greatest proportion of area in Ajax at 24.1 percent, followed by rights-of-way (ROWs, 15.4%) and *Agriculture* (14.5%).

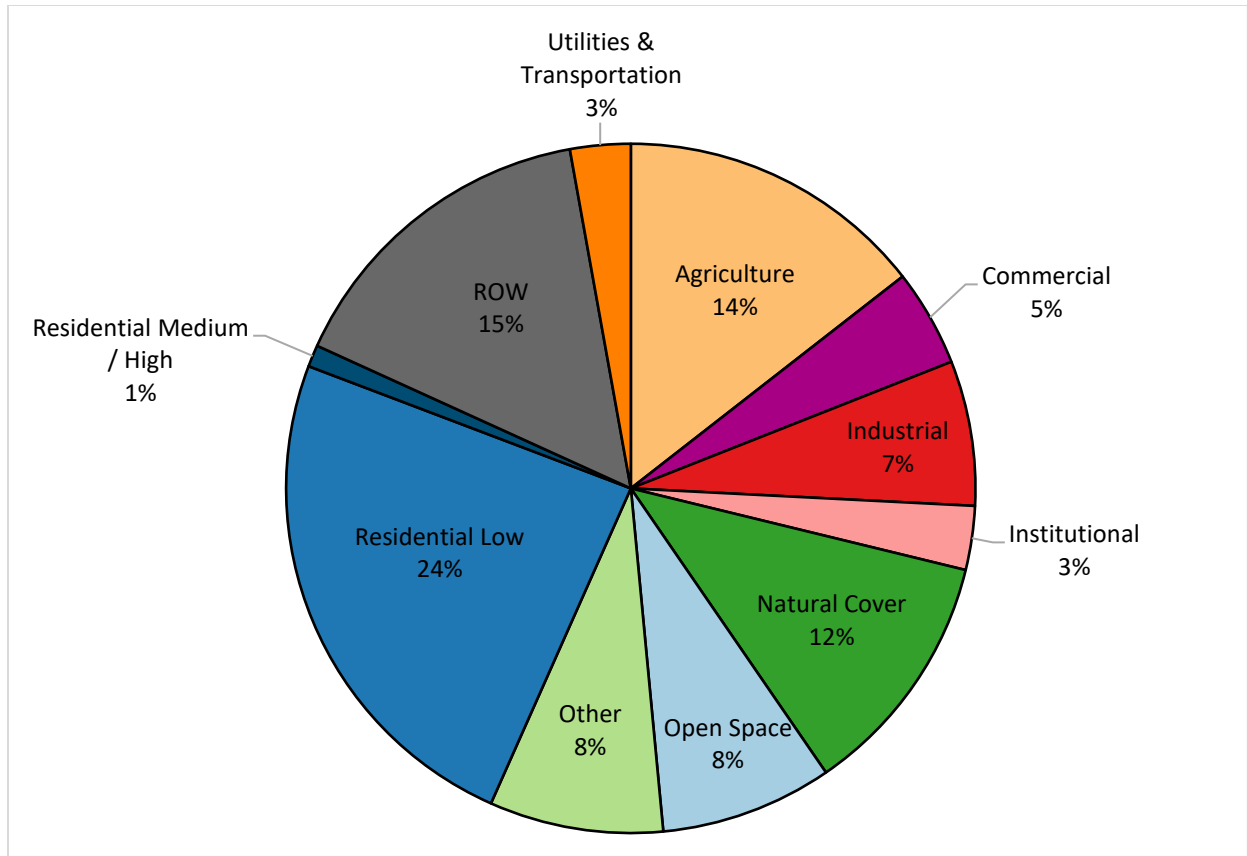


Figure 5: Approximate MPAC land use distribution in Ajax, 2016

The distribution of canopy cover varies across the MPAC land uses in Ajax. Table 9 provides a break down of how much each land use category contributes to overall land cover.

Table 9: Land cover metrics by MPAC land use categories

MPAC Land Use	Contribution to Total Land Cover (%)	Land Cover (hectares)
Residential Low	24.1	1632.9
ROW	15.4	1041.0
Agriculture	14.5	979.2
Natural Cover	11.6	786.4
Other	8.2	552.2
Open Space	8.1	546.9
Industrial	6.8	460.3
Commercial	4.6	308.1
Institutional	3.0	203.0
Utilities & Transportation	2.8	191.9
Residential Medium / High	1.0	69.3
Ajax	100.0	6771.1¹⁷

4.2 Forest Structure

4.2.1 Structure

The i-Tree Eco model determined that there are approximately 916,640 ($\pm 137,871$) trees in Ajax, compared to 1,365,760 ($\pm 228,063$)¹⁸ trees in 2009 (refer to footnote for more info). While this is quite a large decline, it is largely explained by the increase in the minimum threshold for measuring a tree in forested plots from 2.5 cm in 2009 to 5 cm in 2022 for the sake of efficiency and the higher standard error reported in the previous study. The tree number reported across this report, of 1,190,800 ($\pm 190,528$), more accurately represents the current tree number across Ajax by accounting for this emerging tree growth population which represented a large portion of the previous forest studies population. However, there has also been a decrease in the number of trees. Southern Ontario has been widely impacted by emerald ash borer (EAB, *Agilus planipennis*), decimating ash (*Fraxinus* spp.) populations. Additionally, Ajax’s current human population growth rate is higher than the national average and was almost four times higher than the current growth rate between 2006 and 2011.

¹⁷ Note, the total area of MPAC land use categories varies from that used for leaf area due to differences in how MPAC delineates land parcels.

¹⁸ Note, in the 2009 report, approximately 45% of trees in Ajax fell within the 2.5-7.6 cm (DBH) size class, the most in any class (Figure 12). Additionally, raw data suggests a large portion of this class is made up of trees below 5 cm in DBH across natural/forested areas which are underrepresented in the i-tree assessment.

Therefore, development to accommodate the Town’s growing population may have led to the removal of trees in the past 13 years as well as the increase in prevalence of urban stressors.

The average tree density in Ajax is 134.4 trees/ha (compared to 202.5 trees/ha in 2009), which is a bit below average for the Greater Toronto Area¹⁹. The *Open Space – Natural Cover* land use stratum has the highest tree density at 467 trees/ha, followed by *Other – Institutional* (190 trees/ha) and *Residential* (85 trees/ha) (Figure 6); the *Other* land use is a mixed category comprised largely of lands zoned as vacant residential land, recreational/non-commercial sports complexes, and common land (as of 2016 and therefore may be out of date).

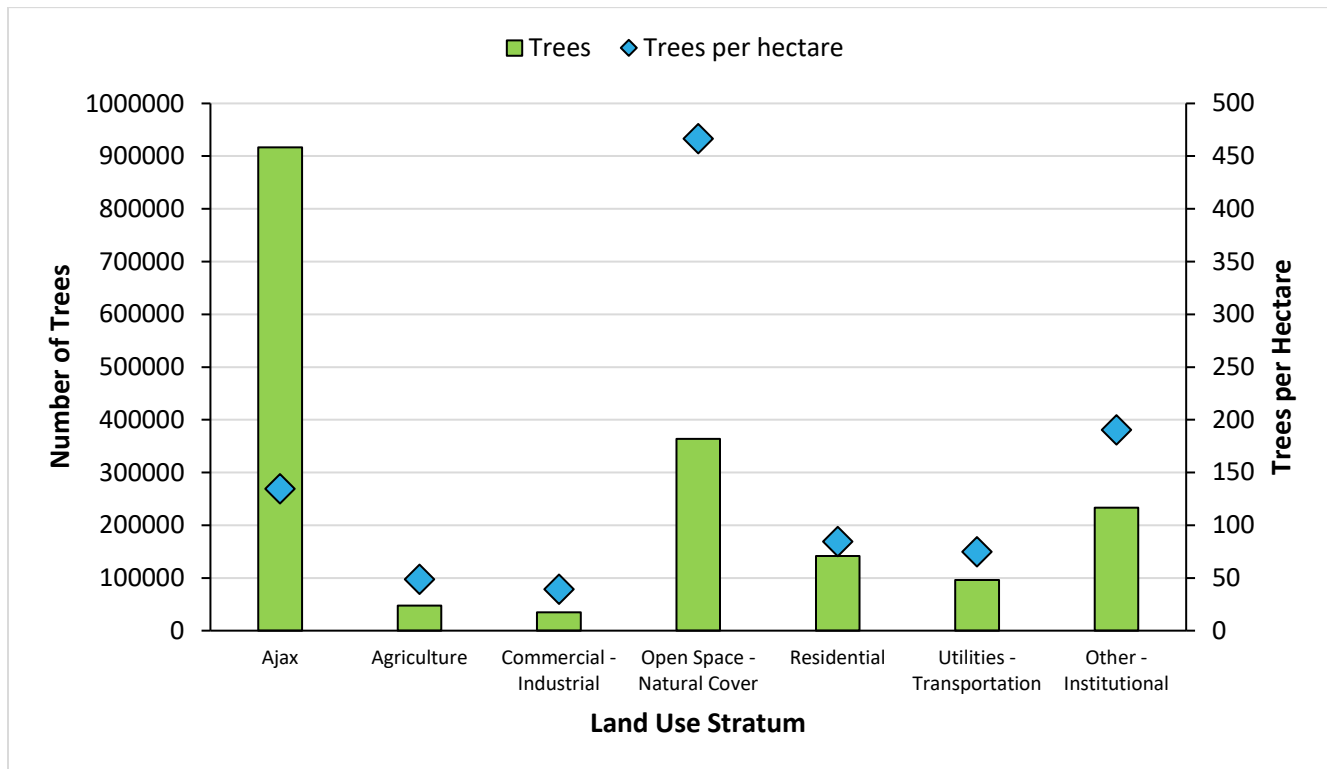


Figure 6: Total number of trees and tree density (trees per hectare) summarized by land use stratum in Ajax (2022)

Leaf area in Ajax is approximately 7,156 hectares (± 878 ha) across a municipal area of 6,709 ha compared to 8,560 hectares (standard error unreported) in 2009. Therefore, the mean leaf area density (of trees) in Ajax is approximately 10,491 m²/ha in comparison to 12,701 m²/ha in 2009. This can also be expressed as 1.07 m² of leaf area for every 1.0 m² of land area (± 0.2 m²/m²). Leaf area density varies widely between land uses and is

¹⁹ Tree densities (/ha) from recent i-Tree Eco studies in the Greater Toronto Area: Aurora (2014): 395; Bolton (2011): 185; Brampton (2011): 134; Caledon East (2011): 633; East Gwillimbury (2017): 136; Georgina (2017): 181; Markham (2012): 148; Markham (2022): 155; Mississauga (2011): 71; King (2017): 175; Newmarket (2016): 77; Pickering (2012): 354; Richmond Hill (2012): 251; Richmond Hill (2022): 291; Whitchurch-Stouffville (2017): 119; Toronto (2018): 162; Vaughan (2012): 183.

concentrated in the *Open Space – Natural Cover* stratum (Figure 7); this land use represents 16 percent of the total area in Ajax. Leaf area density is lowest in the *Agriculture* land use stratum.

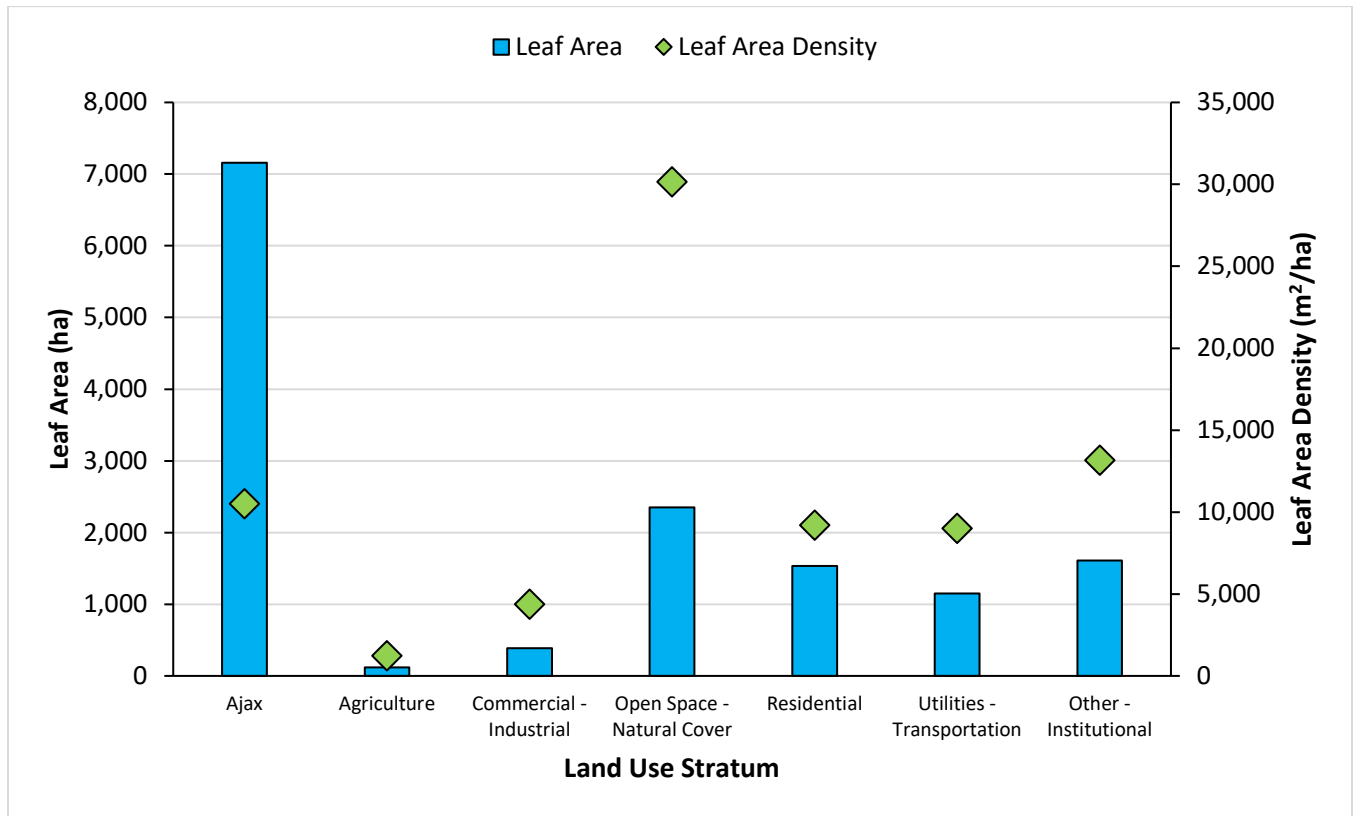


Figure 7: Leaf area (ha) and leaf area density (m²/ha) by land use stratum in Ajax (2022)

Table 10: i-Tree Eco derived summary of structural metrics per stratum

Land Use Stratum	Number of Trees	Trees per Hectare	Leaf Area (ha)	Leaf Area Density (ha/m²)
Agriculture	47,518	48.5	119.6	1,221.1
Commercial – Industrial	34,842	39.3	387.6	4,372.8
Open Space – Natural cover	363,895	466.6	2,351.0	30,143.8
Residential	141,329	84.6	1,535.8	9,194.7
Utilities – Transportation	95,902	74.9	1,151.1	8,993.3
Other – Institutional	233,154	190.3	1,611.3	13,153.4
Ajax	916,640	134.4	7,156.4	10,491.3

Public and Private Trees

Seventy percent ($\pm 14\%$) of the tree population occur on public lands, such as municipal parks, rights-of-way (ROWs), protected areas, and conservation authority lands and thirty percent ($\pm 7\%$) of trees are privately owned. The *Open Space – Natural Cover* land use stratum has the greatest proportion of public trees at 48.2 percent of all public trees and 84.9 trees in that stratum fall under public lands.

4.2.2 Composition

Species composition can be expressed either as a percent of total leaf area²⁰ or as a percent of the total number of trees. When the latter measure is used, species that maintain a smaller growth form and that grow in high densities, such as European buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*), tend to dominate total species composition. In contrast, composition expressed as a percent of total leaf area captures the relative contribution made by each species to the canopy layer as well as to the provision of ecosystem services (as ecosystem services are generally a function of leaf area).

Whether species composition is expressed as percent of the total number of trees or percent of leaf area alters which species appear the most abundant. As shown in Figure 8, the top three most abundant species by number of trees are eastern white cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*, 22.1%), European buckthorn (9.5%), and sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*, 7.7%), while the most abundant species in terms of leaf area, shown in Figure 9, are sugar maple (9.4%), eastern white cedar (8.5%), and Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*, 7.5%).

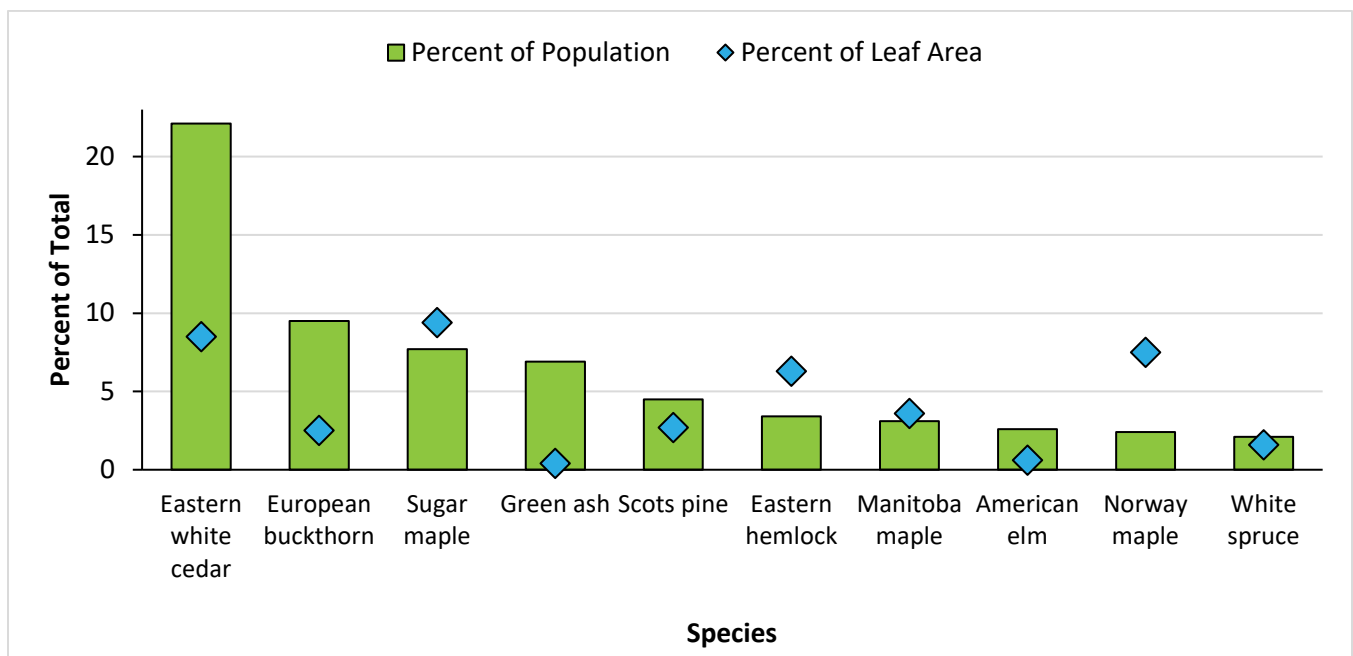


Figure 8: Top ten most abundant tree species by percent of trees

²⁰ Leaf area is defined as the total surface area (one-sided) of tree leaves. It is not equivalent to canopy cover which is the area of ground covered by canopy as viewed from directly above.

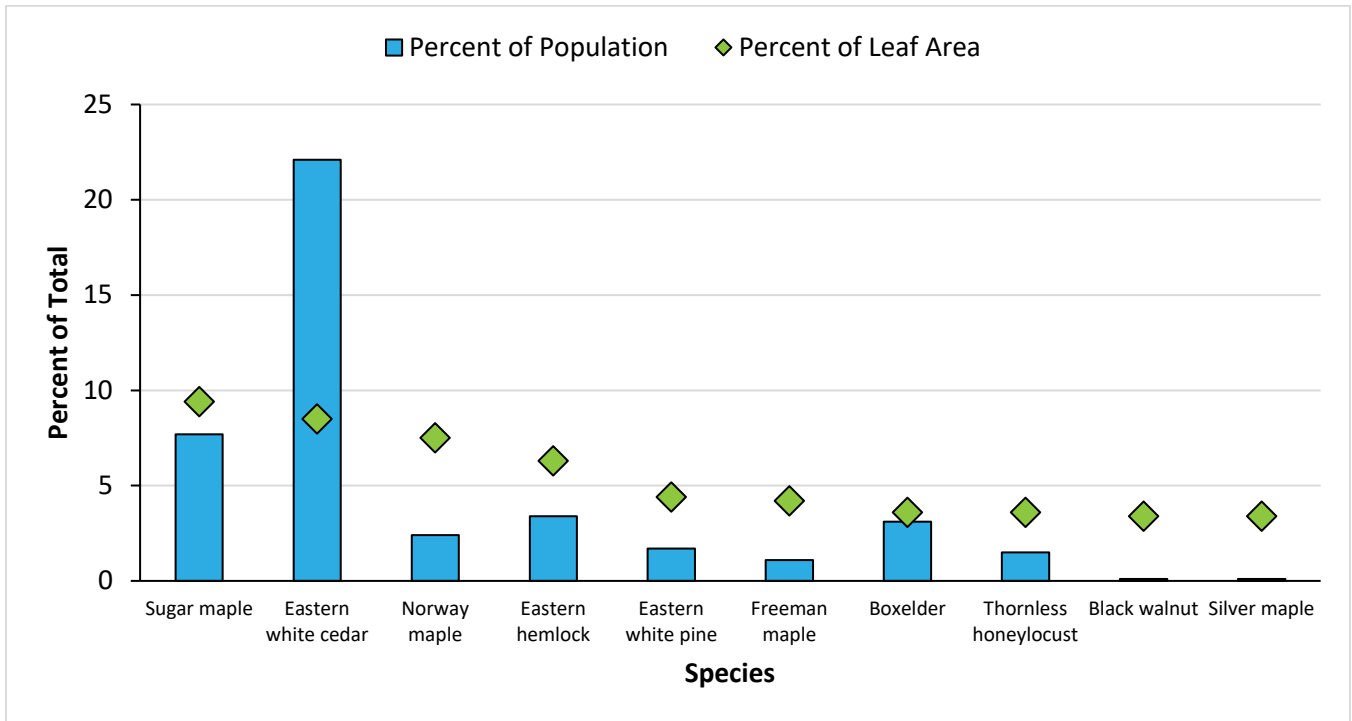


Figure 9: Top ten most abundant tree species by leaf area

In addition to dominance at the species level, several genera and sub-families dominate Ajax’s urban forest (Figure 10). Cedars and junipers (*Cupressoidae* sub-family, 22.6%, predominantly eastern white cedar), maple (*Acer spp.*, 16.5%), buckthorn (9.5%, comprised only of European buckthorn), ash (*Fraxinus spp.*, 9.2%), pine (*Pinus spp.*, 8.6%), spruce (*Picea spp.*, 2.7%) and poplar (*Populus spp.*, 2.7%) were the most common subfamily and genera in the municipality in terms of tree population.

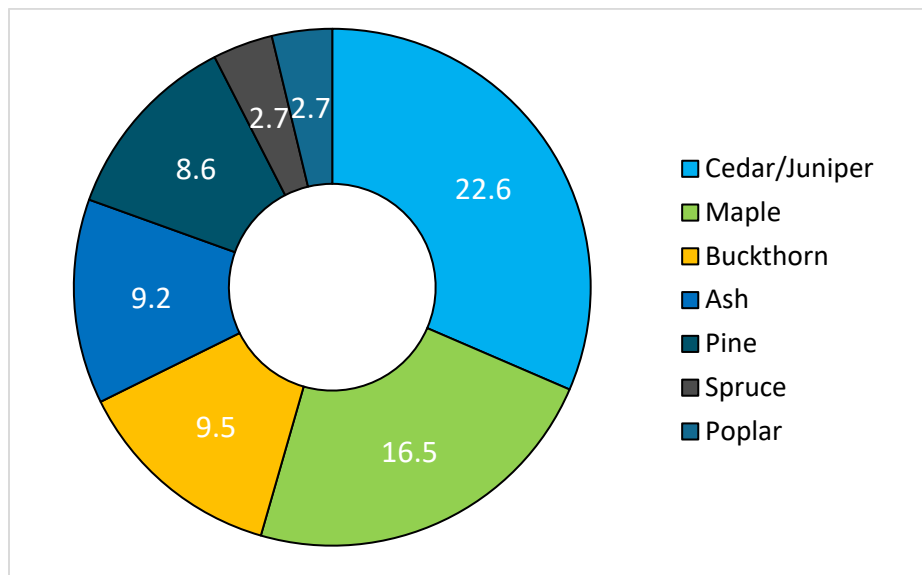


Figure 10: Most dominant tree genera and sub-families in terms of percent (%) of tree population

Table 11: Dominant tree species by percent of total leaf area and percent of total stems within land use stratum in Ajax.

Land use	Percent of Total Leaf Area		Percent of Total Trees	
	Common Name	Percent	Common Name	Percent
Agriculture*	European buckthorn	40	European buckthorn	51
	Eastern white cedar	24.5	Eastern white cedar	21
	Eastern white pine	18	American elm	7.5
Commercial – Industrial*			Honey Locust	14
			Little-leaf linden	11
	Little-leaf linden	21	American beech	4
	Austrian pine	12	White spruce	4
	Honey locust	11	Austrian pine	4
			European buckthorn	4
			Nannyberry	4
Open space – Natural cover	Eastern white cedar	15	Eastern white cedar	35
	Eastern hemlock	13	Scots pine**	11
	Scots pine	6	Eastern hemlock	8
Residential	Norway maple	25	Eastern white cedar	29
	Little-leaf linden	11	Manitoba maple	10
	Black walnut	11	Norway maple	9
Utilities – Transportation	Norway maple	20	European buckthorn	31
	Sugar maple	16	Eastern white cedar	8.5
	Honey locust	13	Norway maple	7.5
Other – Institutional	Sugar maple	27	Sugar maple	23.5
	Silver maple	8.5	Green ash	16.5
	Honey Locust	8	American elm	8

* Estimates for Agriculture and Commercial – Industrial are associated with a very high standard error relative to population size due to the small number of trees sampled in these categories.

**Scots pine number is relatively high due to Scots pine plantations

A total of 82 tree species were identified across all plots in Ajax, compared to 93 in the previous study. It is possible that there has been a decrease in species richness due to increased native planting or the change in the minimum threshold for measuring a tree in forested plots from 2.5 cm in 2009 to 5 cm in 2022 removed a few smaller shrub species from the total count.

Species dominance also varies by land use as summarized in Table 11. Species richness is highest in the *Open Space – Natural Cover* land use stratum (46 species); this comparatively large number of species found can likely be attributed to the large and dense natural pockets found within Ajax which fosters a diverse population. However, it should be noted that the *Residential* land use stratum had the second highest species richness at 35 species which can likely be attributed to the high number of exotic horticultural species commonly found in residential gardens. It follows that in the context of forest studies that include urban areas, high species richness should not necessarily be viewed as an indication of ecosystem health. Rather, it may simply indicate an abundance of exotic species. Thus, urban forests often have a species richness that is higher than surrounding rural landscapes. In Ajax, 68 percent of the tree species identified were native to Ontario.

Composition Change

Since 2009, there have been changes in the dominant species and/or their relative abundance. Figure 11 shows the top five most abundant species in terms of number of trees and percent of leaf area in 2009 and 2022. The new appearance of Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) in the top five species in terms of population size in 2022 may be due to increased planting of Scots pine. Most Scots pine (76%) have a DBH of less than 15.2 cm and occur predominantly in *Open Space – Natural Cover* (98%). Also noteworthy is the loss of invasive Manitoba maple (*Acer negundo*) from the top five species by leaf area and the introduction of eastern white pine (*Pinus strobus*).

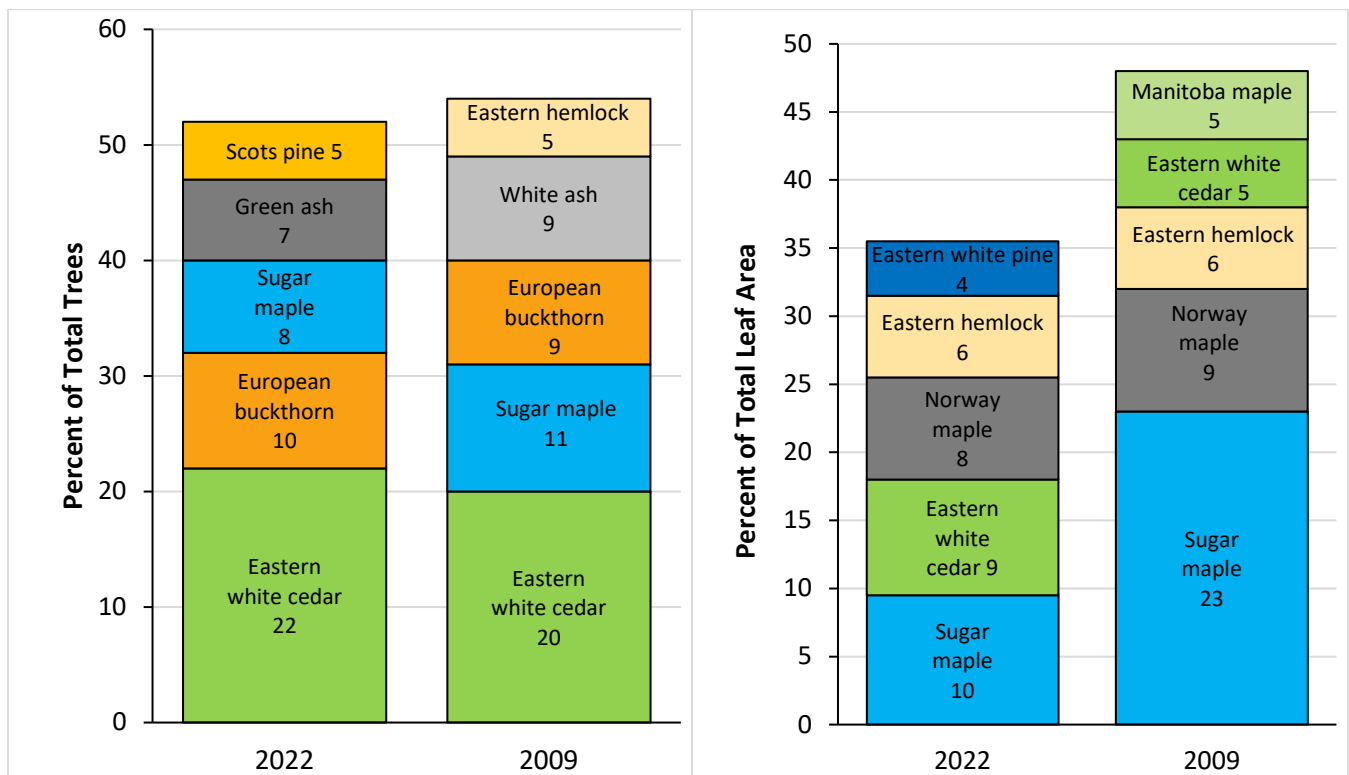


Figure 11: Top five dominant species by population size (left) and leaf area (right) in 2009 and 2022

Since 2009, ash trees have decreased in population from 149,554 (standard error unreported) to 82,131 ($\pm 46,451$) in 2022, and as a percent of the population from 11 percent to 9 percent. Given the large standard error in the 2022 population estimate, it cannot be ruled out that much of this apparent decline is from chance. However, the reduction is likely due to the impact of EAB over the past 13 years. The average condition of ash trees in 2022 is very poor. Green (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*), black (*Fraxinus nigra*), and white (*Fraxinus americana*) ash have average condition ratings of 14 percent, 19 percent, and 38 percent, respectively, where condition is the inverse of percent dieback (100 percent subtract percent dieback). Ash of unrecorded species had an average condition of 0 percent, with all specimens observed dead. Fifty-three percent of white, 80 percent of black, and 81 percent of green ash were recorded as dead. Green ash trees were mostly found in the *Other – Institutional* (61% of the population) land use stratum, followed by *Open Space – Natural Cover* (27%).

In 2022, sugar maple makes up a smaller proportion of total leaf area than 2009. While the average condition of sugar maple in 2022 is fair (average value of 81%, equivalent to 19% dieback on average), population estimates

from 2022 and 2009 indicate a decline in the number of trees from approximately 155,697 to 70,789 ($\pm 39,329$). The potential cause at this stage is unclear.

4.2.3 Size Distribution

All trees measured were grouped into size classes based on diameter at breast height (DBH) and diameter classes increased in 7.6 cm increments. Approximately 64 percent of all trees are less than 15.2 cm DBH (Figure 12), a six percent decrease from a reported 70 percent in the previous study. While a portion of this is likely reflected by trees shifting to larger size classes, this also reflects a change in protocol, in which the minimum DBH of forested areas was increased from 2.5 cm in 2009 to 5 cm in 2022. Lastly, the proportion of large trees has increased from the previous study. In 2022, just below 13 percent of the tree population has a DBH of 30.6 cm or greater compared to 7.5 percent in 2009.

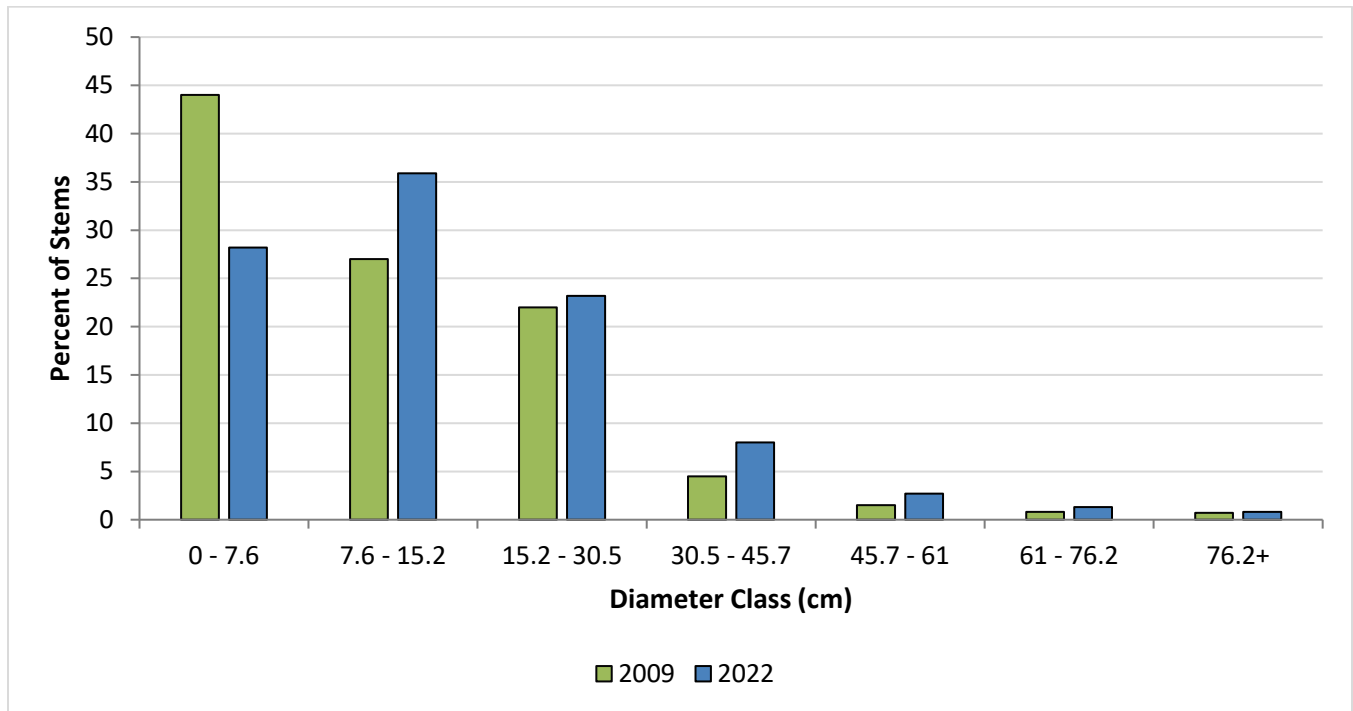


Figure 12: Diameter class distribution of trees in Ajax in 2009 and 2022

Figure 13 presents the diameter class distribution by land use for 2022 and 2009. Across most land use strata, the trend is similar, with the two smallest diameter classes containing the majority of trees, while very few trees are found in the larger (>45.7 cm) diameter classes (4.8%). However, in 2022 the most trees in the *Commercial – Industrial* and *Residential*, fell in the second two size classes spanning from 7.6 to 30.5 cm (Figure 13– top). The largest proportion of large trees were recorded on *Utilities – Transportation* lands, with 5.3 percent in the third largest size class (45.7 cm to 61 cm) and 2.1 percent of trees in both the second largest and largest size categories (61 cm to 76.2 cm, >76.2 cm DBH, respectively). Notably, 2.1 percent of trees in the *Other – Institutional* were in the second largest size class, and 3.8 percent of trees in the *Residential* stratum were in the third largest size class.

It is important to note that some land use strata were grouped differently for the 2009 assessment. The *Institutional* land use was grouped with *Utilities & Transportation* for the 2009 report. The size class distribution

for the *Utilities-Transportation-Institutional* category from the 2009 assessment was not reported, therefore is omitted from Figure 13 and cannot be compared to the 2022 findings. Additionally, the *Other – Institutional* stratum in 2022 is also not exactly comparable to 2009's *Other* category. However, it is still possible to observe general patterns over time. Since 2009, there has been an increase in the number of trees in the second smallest size class (7.7 cm to 15.2 cm), and a decrease in the population within the smallest size class. Furthermore, there has been an increase in the proportion of trees in the 30.5 cm to 45.7 cm size class across most strata since 2009. The increase in the second smallest size is particularly positive, likely driven by the growth of young tree plantings across strata from 2009 and prior. Additionally, this may indicate decreased urban mortality rates however there is insufficient information to determine whether this is the case. There has been a decline in some of the larger size classes, particularly in the second largest size class (61 cm to 76.2 cm) for *Residential* and *Commercial – Industrial*, declining from 4 and 5 percent to 2.9 and 1.9 percent, respectively, without an associated increase in the largest size class. This is potentially due to the impacts of EAB and/or extreme weather events that have occurred between 2009 and 2022.

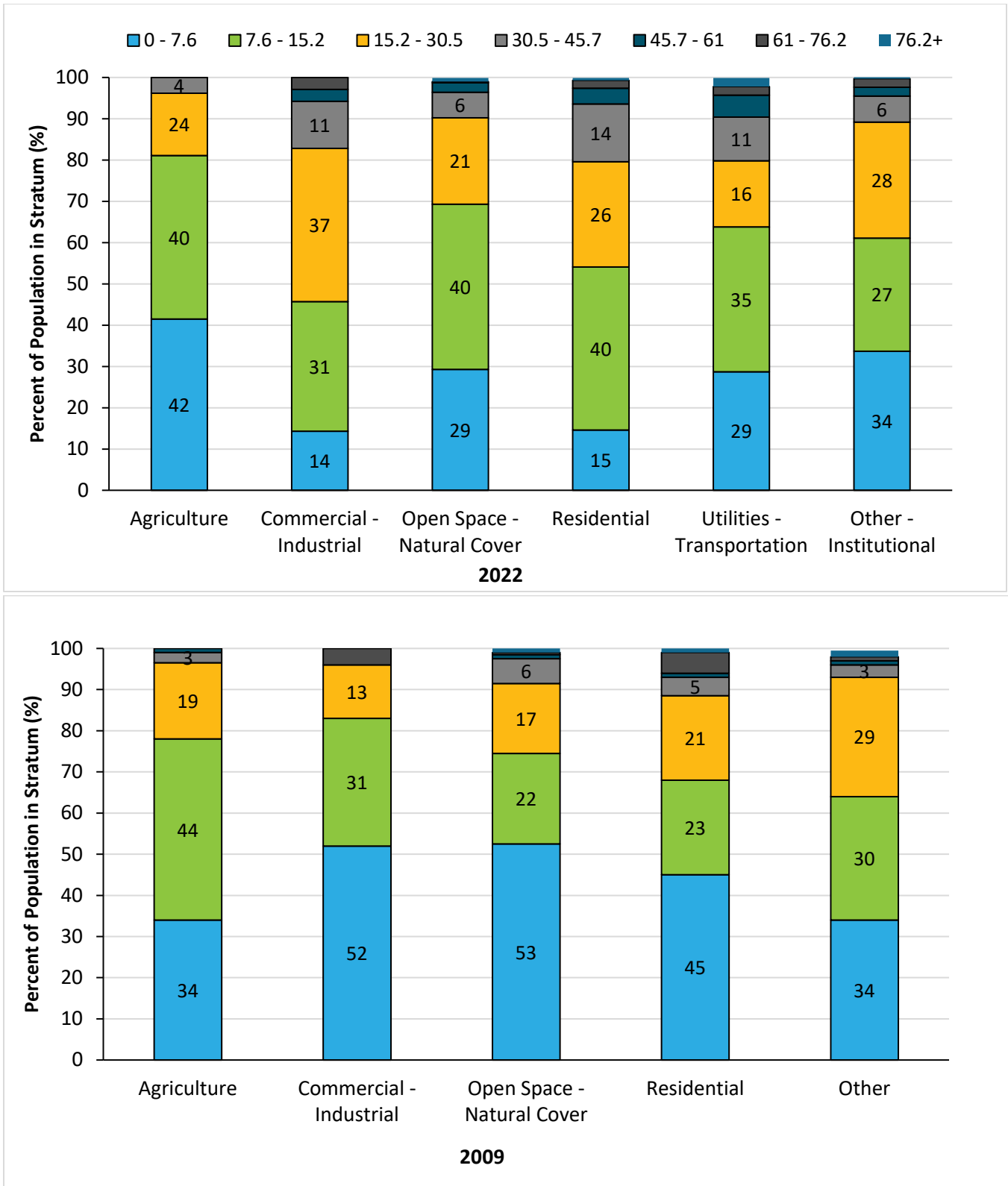


Figure 13: Diameter class distribution of trees by land use stratum in Ajax in 2022 (top) and in 2009 (bottom)

4.2.4 Condition

All trees measured were assigned a condition rating in the field based on the proportion of dieback in the crown. The crown condition ratings range from excellent (<1% dieback) to dead (100% dieback):

Excellent: <1% dieback

Good: 1-10% dieback

Fair: 11-25% dieback

Poor: 26-50% dieback

Critical: 51-75% dieback

Dying: 76-99% dieback

Dead: 100% dieback – no leaves/all branches dead

Basic condition ratings do not incorporate stem defects and root damage. Approximately 67 percent of trees in Ajax are estimated to be in either excellent or good condition (Figure 14 – top). In contrast, 76 percent of trees were rated as excellent or good condition in 2009 (Figure 14– bottom). This change may not be a real change since these estimates rely on the judgement of the observer. If trees in fair condition are considered, the percent of trees in excellent to fair condition is 79 percent in 2022 versus 86 percent in 2009, and a better alignment is observed. However, it does indicate that since 2009, the percent of trees in poor, critical, dying, and dead condition has increased from 14 percent to 21 percent.

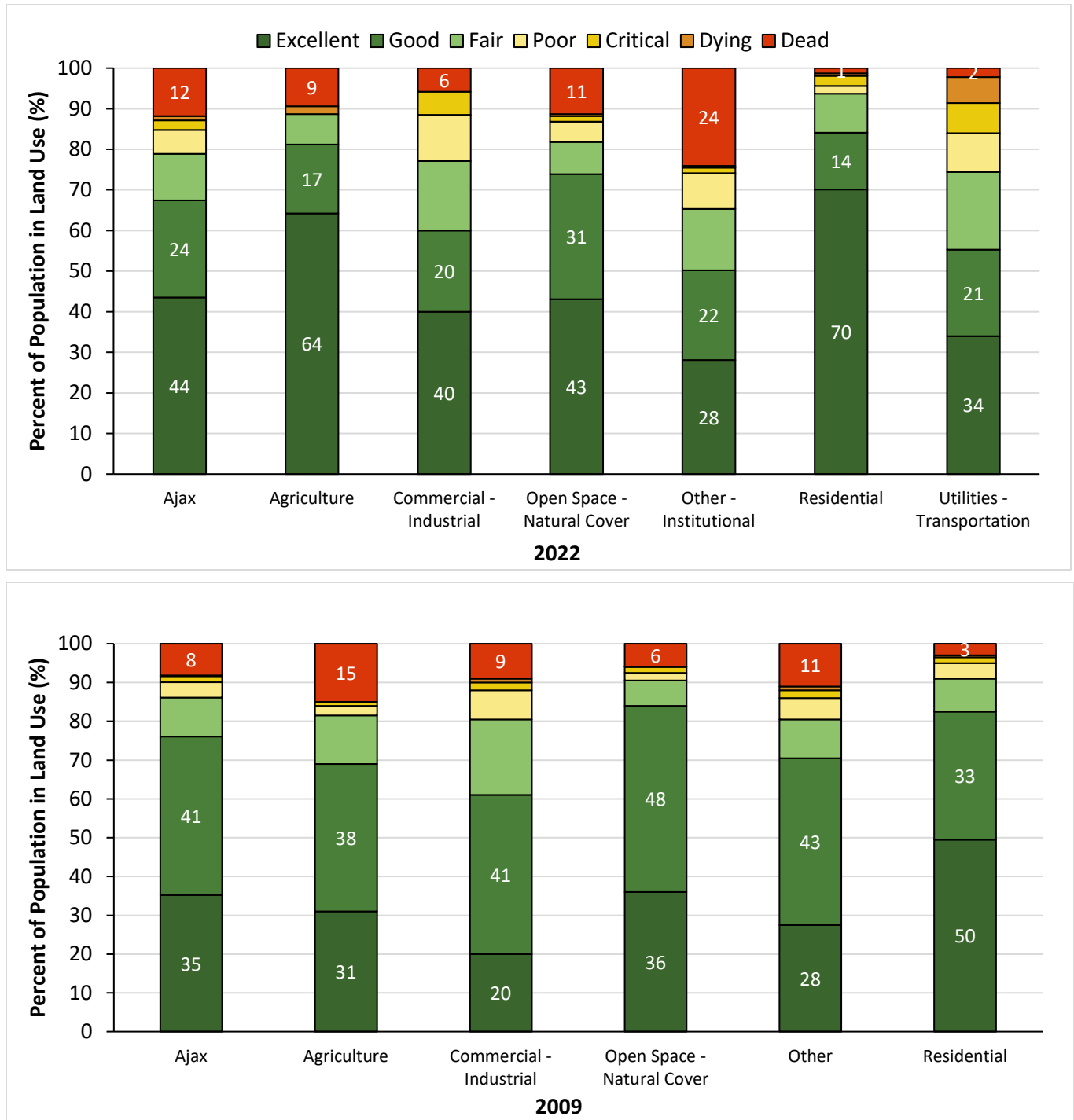


Figure 14: Condition of trees by land use stratum in Ajax in 2022 (top) and 2009 (bottom)

The assessment of dead trees is much more straightforward and objective than healthier trees and can therefore be compared more reliably. There was an overall increase in dead trees from 2009 to 2022 from 8 percent to 12 percent overall. *Open Space – Natural Cover* also saw an increase in dead trees by 5 percent. It should be noted that a higher number of trees in poor health and dead trees are expected in natural areas as

these are not generally a risk to the public or homeowners and may be left to stand. In fact, dead trees provide important habitat and resources to wildlife and other organisms.

The *Other – Institutional* stratum in 2022 is not exactly comparable to 2009’s *Other* stratum—the latter does not include institutional land uses. However, the *Institutional* land use category only occupies a small proportion of the *Other – Institutional* stratum, thus making a comparison possible. This land stratum saw the most dramatic increase in dead trees from 11 percent in 2009 to 24 percent in 2022. The *Other* land category includes a large proportion of parcels classified as vacant residential lands in the 2016 MPAC land use data and frequently contain woodlots or wooded ravines. Like *Open Space – Natural Cover*, dying and dead trees are not actively removed if they do not pose a risk to infrastructure or public safety. However, the large increase in dead trees is concerning.

In 2022, a large proportion of white, green, black, and unidentified species of ash in the *Open Space – Natural Cover* stratum were dead, at 55 percent, 68 percent, 80 percent, and 100 percent, respectively; together these species comprise 9 percent of the population in that land use stratum. While in *Other – Institutional*, 100 percent of white ash and 96 percent of green ash were recorded dead; these species together make-up 17 percent of the population in *Other – Institutional*. In *Agriculture*, 67 percent of green ash were recorded dead, with this species accounting for 6 percent of the population in the stratum. In *Commercial – Industrial*, 100 percent of ash of unknown species were dead, 3 percent of the stratum. Staghorn sumac (*Rhus typhina*) was also 100 percent dead in this land use stratum. Additionally, in the *Agriculture* use stratum, red pine (*Pinus resinosa*, 50% dead) and American elm (*Ulmus americana*, 50% dead), together making up 11 percent of the population, were also doing poorly. In *Open Space – Natural Cover*, most other species were recorded as fair or good, except paradise apple (*Malus pumila*, 100% dead), jack pine (*Pinus banksiana*, 100% dead), black cherry (*Prunus serotina*, 33% dead), and American elm (33% dead). American elm was also struggling in *Other – Institutional*, with 57 percent recorded as dead, 8 percent of the stratum’s tree population.

4.2.5 Structural Value

The estimated structural value of all trees in Ajax in 2022 is approximately \$363 million. This value does not include the ecological or societal value of the forest, but rather represents an estimate of tree replacement cost if the trees were destroyed. I-Tree Eco assesses structural value uses a version of the Council of Tree and Landscape Appraisers (CTLA) Trunk Formula Method (Nowak, 2020). This value is based on species, DBH, condition, and location. A base value of a tree is determined by its replacement cost, which in turn is informed by the maximum DBH trees available for replacement and average cost per square cm of trunk area. The base value is adjusted by a species factor (species specific factors are available for Canada as a whole), condition (the inverse of percent dieback), and land use (as an indicator of location). For non-U.S. countries, the average replacement cost assumes a maximum replacement size of 10 cm and cost per unit area based on the average value of all species within hardwood (dicotyledon) and softwood (conifer) categories. There is a positive relationship between the structural value of an urban forest and the number and size of healthy trees. Trees in locations that provide more amenities to humans, such as golf courses, are also provided a higher score.

4.3 Forest Function

4.3.1 Annual Air Pollution Removal

The i-Tree Eco model quantified pollution removal by trees and shrubs in Ajax based on air pollution data from stations in Newmarket and north Toronto in 2019. Pollution removal is greatest for ozone (O₃), followed distantly by nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulate matter less than 2.5 microns (PM_{2.5}) (Figure 15). Trees and shrubs remove a total of 47 tonnes of air pollution (CO, NO₂, O₃, PM_{2.5}, SO₂) per year with an associated removal value of \$798,348 (based on estimated externality costs). The removal of PM_{2.5} has the greatest value in terms of health benefits, followed by ozone.

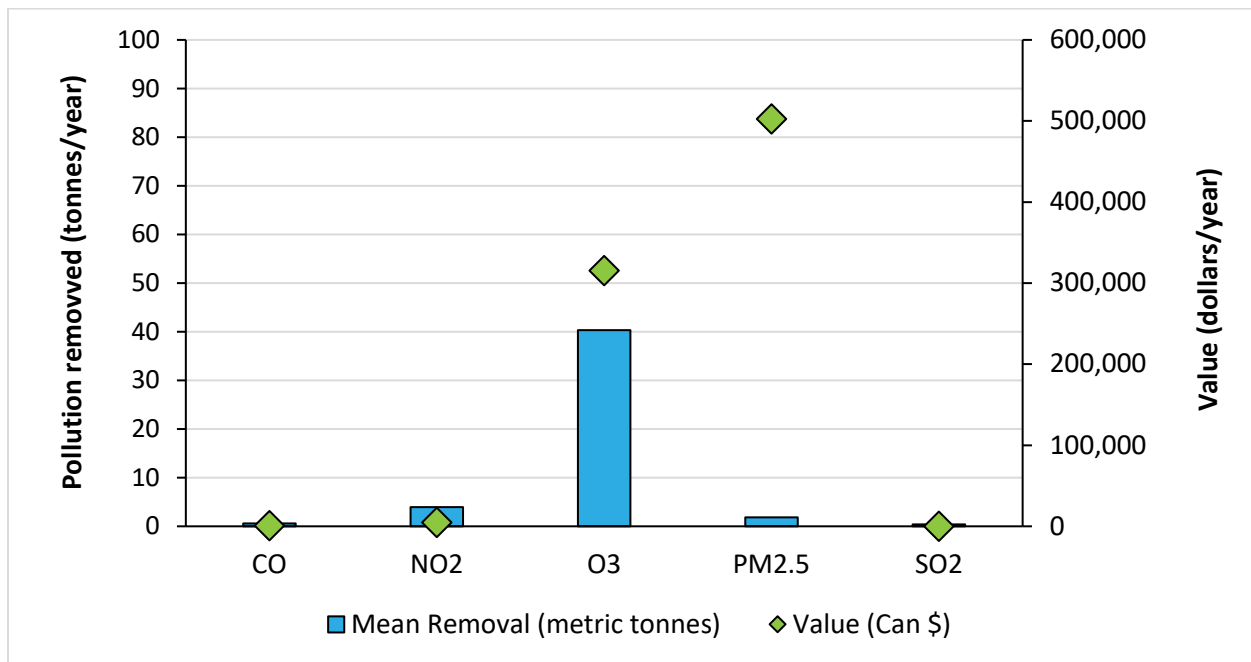


Figure 15: Annual pollution removal by trees and shrubs and associated removal value

4.3.2 Hydrological Effects

i-Tree Eco was used to calculate the hydrological benefits provided by trees in Ajax based on 2019 rainfall data from Oshawa Executive Airport²¹. The i-Tree Eco model estimates the amount of rainfall intercepted, stored, evaporated, and transpired by trees as well as the volume of runoff avoided because of the urban tree canopy (Nowak 2020). Results are shown in Figure 16. And summarized in Table 12. Trees in the *Open Space – Natural Cover* and *Other – Institutional* land use strata provide the greatest hydrological services to the municipality. Rainfall that is prevented from entering the stormwater system reduces the costs of building stormwater

²¹ A total of 89 centimeters of annual precipitation (excluding snow) was recorded in 2019.

infrastructure and the risk of flooding. The overall value of the stormwater benefit (measured as avoided runoff) is \$536,062 per year based on 2019 precipitation levels²².

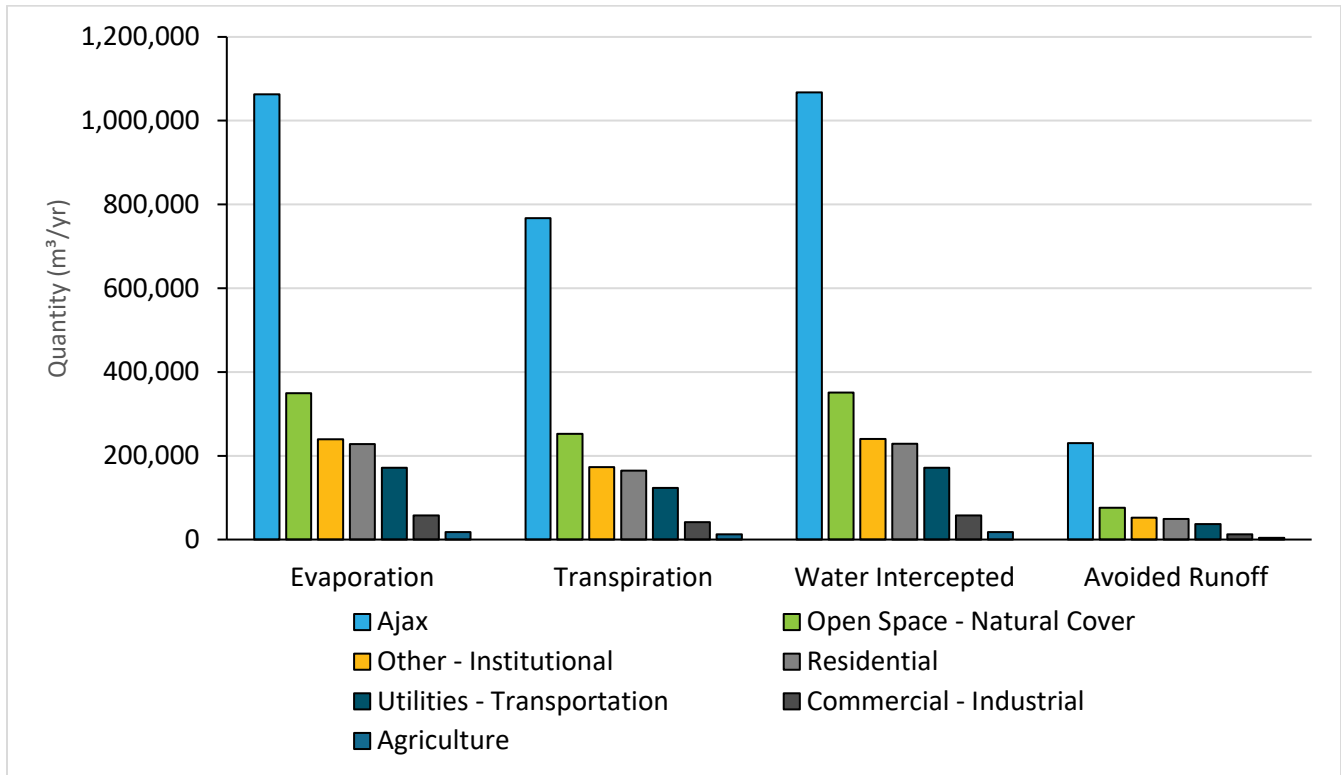


Figure 16: Hydrological services provided by trees in Ajax in 2019

Table 12: Avoided stormwater runoff and value

Land Use Stratum	Avoided Runoff (m³/yr)	Value (\$/yr)
Open Space – Natural Cover	75,754	\$ 176,106
Other – Institutional	51,919	\$ 120,696
Residential	49,487	\$115,043
Utilities – Transportation	37,091	\$ 86,225
Commercial – Industrial	12,488	\$ 29,032
Agriculture	3,855	\$ 8,961
Ajax	230,593	\$ 536,062

²² The overall value is based on a rate of \$2.325 / m³ - the default value from i-Tree Eco converted into CAD. This rate is based on sixteen research studies on costs of stormwater control and treatment (Nowak, 2020).

4.3.3 Residential Energy Effects

The i-Tree Eco model estimated the effects of trees ($\geq 6.1\text{m}$ in height and within 18.3m of a residential building, excluding high rises) on building energy use due to shading, windbreak effects, and local micro-climate amelioration. Estimates are based on field measurements of tree distance and direction to space-conditioned residential buildings²³. Annually, trees adjacent to residential buildings in Ajax are estimated to reduce energy consumption by 59,567 million British thermal units (MBTU) for natural gas use and 2,046 megawatt-hours (MWH) for electricity use (Table 13).

Based on average energy costs in 2021, trees in Ajax are estimated to reduce energy costs for residential buildings by \$501,703 annually (Table 14)²⁴.

Table 13: Energy savings due to trees near residential buildings in Ajax in 2021

Energy Units	Heating	Cooling	Total
Natural Gas (Million British Thermal Units)	59,567.1	n/a	59,567.1
Electricity (Megawatt-hour)	503.1	1,542.8	2,045.9

Table 14: Financial savings (Canadian \$) in residential energy expenditures during heating and cooling seasons in 2021

Energy Units	Heating	Cooling	Total
Natural Gas (Million British Thermal Units)	\$ 256,200	n/a	\$ 256,200
Electricity (Megawatt-hour)	\$ 60,370	\$ 185,133	\$ 245,503
Total	\$ 316,570	\$ 185,133	\$ 501,703

²³ Because this model component is designed specifically for the U.S., its utility is limited in international applications. International users will receive energy results that are based on the characteristics of the user-defined U.S. climate region, typical construction practices and building characteristics, and energy composition (i.e., type of and amount used). Therefore, results should be used with caution as they assume that the building types and energy use of the U.S. are the same as those internationally (Nowak, 2020).

The only local values used in the estimates outside the United States are electricity and fuel costs. The remainder of the estimation is based U.S. conditions from the assigned climate zone. Details on local energy values and the comparisons between international areas and U.S. climate zones is given in Nowak, 2020, [Appendix 9](#).

²⁴ See Section 3.2.6 for the source of electricity and gas costs. Energy saving value is based on the price of \$120.00 per MWH and \$4.40 per MBTU.

4.3.4 Carbon Storage and Sequestration

Gross sequestration by trees in Ajax is approximately 3,018 tonnes of carbon per year (11,065 tonnes of carbon dioxide per year) with an associated annual value of \$570,000. Net carbon sequestration²⁵ in Ajax is approximately 1,465 tonnes per year (5,372 tonnes CO₂ per year) with a value of \$277,000.

Trees in Ajax are estimated to store 117,275 tonnes of carbon (430,050 tonnes of CO₂-equivalents); the value of this service is \$22.1 million. The 2022 annual gross carbon sequestration has decreased slightly from the 2009 gross sequestration rate of 3,548 tonnes of carbon per year and increased in overall storage from 105,626 tonnes stored. This is in line with the decrease in overall trees and increase observed in canopy cover (correlated with accumulated biomass).

Sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*) stores the greatest volume of carbon (approximately 15.5% of total carbon stored), while eastern white cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*) annually sequesters the greatest volume of carbon (17.6% of total net sequestered carbon and 10% of gross sequestration). Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*) and Manitoba maple (*Acer negundo*) are two invasive tree species which also store or sequester a significant amount of carbon each year (Table 15).

Table 15: Top five species for carbon storage and net sequestration

Carbon Stored			Net Carbon Sequestration		
Species	Tonnes C	Percent	Species	Tonnes C/year	Percent
Sugar maple (<i>Acer saccharum</i>)	18,181	15.5%	Eastern white cedar (<i>Thuja occidentalis</i>)	258.22	17.6
Eastern white cedar (<i>Thuja occidentalis</i>)	10,201	8.7%	Freeman maple (<i>Acer x freemanii</i>)	162.99	11.1
Norway maple (<i>Acer platanoides</i>)	9,552	8.1%	Honey locust (<i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i>)	129.15	8.8
Freeman maple (<i>Acer x freemanii</i>)	9,127	7.8%	Manitoba maple (<i>Acer negundo</i>)	127.36	8.7
Black willow (<i>Salix nigra</i>)	5,358	4.6%	Black Willow (<i>Salix nigra</i>)	122.50	8.3

4.3.5 Other Benefits and Disservices

Ajax’s urban forest provides numerous other services, many of which are difficult to quantify. It produces 3,906 tonnes of oxygen per year and under the shade in residential areas reduces the UV index by 42.3 percent and by 18.7 percent overall in residential area, thereby reducing exposure to harmful UV rays and the risk of developing skin cancer. Additionally, Ajax’s urban forest contributes to reducing the impacts of the urban heat island effect by lowering land surface temperatures (LST) via tree shading and evapotranspiration. Beyond reducing energy

²⁵ Net sequestration is a measure of the carbon sequestered by trees calculated as the gross carbon sequestered minus the carbon emissions due to decomposition after tree death.

costs of cooling, this functions to decrease the risk of heat related illness/death. Unfortunately, trees also have some disservices. In addition to being a source of allergens, trees emit volatile organic compounds (VOCs) such as monoterpene and isoprene. A total of 23,553 kg/year is emitted per year, with the greatest mass being emitted from *Open Space – Natural Cover* and *Residential* areas which have the most trees. Northern red oak (*Quercus rubra*) emits the most VOCs at 2,188 kg/year followed by blue spruce (*Picea abies* – 2,119 kg/year), and Austrian pine (*Pinus nigra*– 1,839 kg/year). However, it should be noted that these disservices are largely outweighed by the numerous benefits' individual trees and the urban forest as a whole provide to the Town.

4.4 i-Tree Forecast

Based on the current municipal planting programs, Ajax is expected to see growth in canopy cover over the thirty-year forecast period. The forecast includes expected canopy growth and tree number over the next thirty-years alongside the anticipated impacts of spongy moth (*Lymantria dispar dispar*), emerald ash borer (*Agrilus planipennis*), and beech bark disease (*Neonectria faginata*) in the next ten years.

At the current rate of planting (based on an annual average since 2014), if completed annually over a thirty-year period coupled with natural growth, the i-Tree Forecast model estimates that canopy cover will increase by 7.3 percent to reach 31.4 percent by 2053. Under the Naturalization and Restoration Plan, the model estimates that canopy cover will increase by 7.47 percent to reach 31.57 percent to 2053. In a halved duration scenario (fifteen-year plan), within the same forecasted timeframe of 30 years, it is estimated that canopy will increase by 6.9 percent to reach 31 percent by 2053. Lastly, assuming no planting programs are undertaken, the forecast projects canopy cover will increase by 6.3 percent to reach 30.4 percent by 2053 (Figure 17). It is important to note that the annual number of frost-free days in Ajax was increased during the 30-year simulation period to an average value to account for climactic changes. The longer growing season is more likely to benefit tree growth in the latter half of the simulation period than the earlier half. Thus, canopy growth over the next six years is likely to be less than 3 percent.

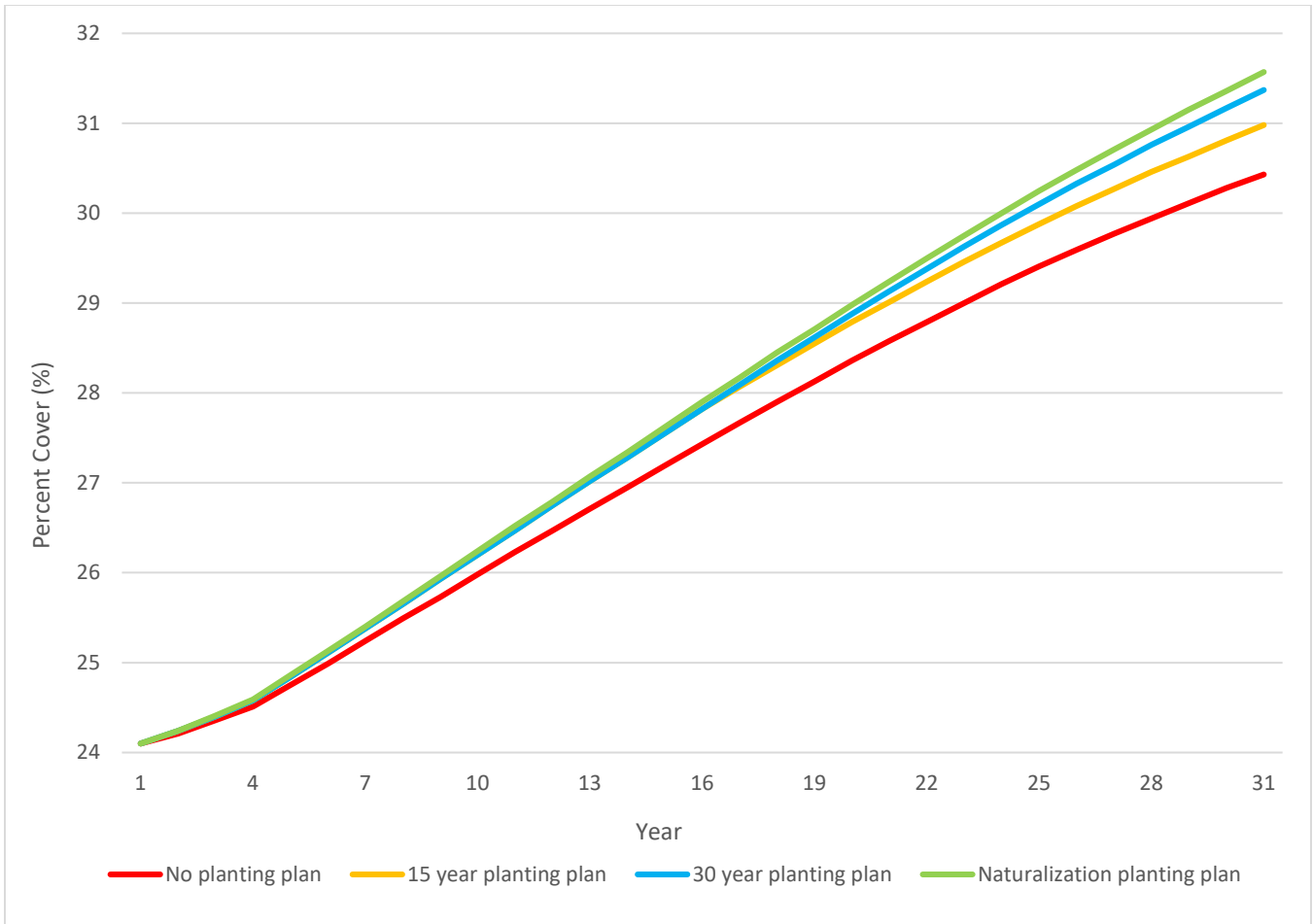


Figure 17: i-Tree Forecast projections on canopy cover across planting scenarios

It should be noted that while canopy cover is expected to increase, the number of trees, as determined by the i-Tree Forecast model, across the municipality is expected to decline in each forecast scenario. By 2053, the tree number is expected to decrease from 1.19 million to 954,000 under the thirty-year planting scenario, to 980,000 trees under the Naturalization and Restoration Plan, to 908,000 under the fifteen-year scenario and to 870,000 under the no planting scenario (Figure 18). The model assumes that canopy cover will largely consist of existing trees that have grown and shifted into larger size classes. Therefore, despite canopy growth, tree population and planting will not outpace tree mortality rates. Continued tree planting and replacement of older trees as they die is critical to maintain tree populations and help ensure a sustainable urban forest across all size classes, especially across built private and public lands.²⁶

²⁶ i-Tree Eco does not include natural regeneration or ingrowth of trees. In other words, it assumes that the only new trees established in the simulation period are those that are deliberately planted.

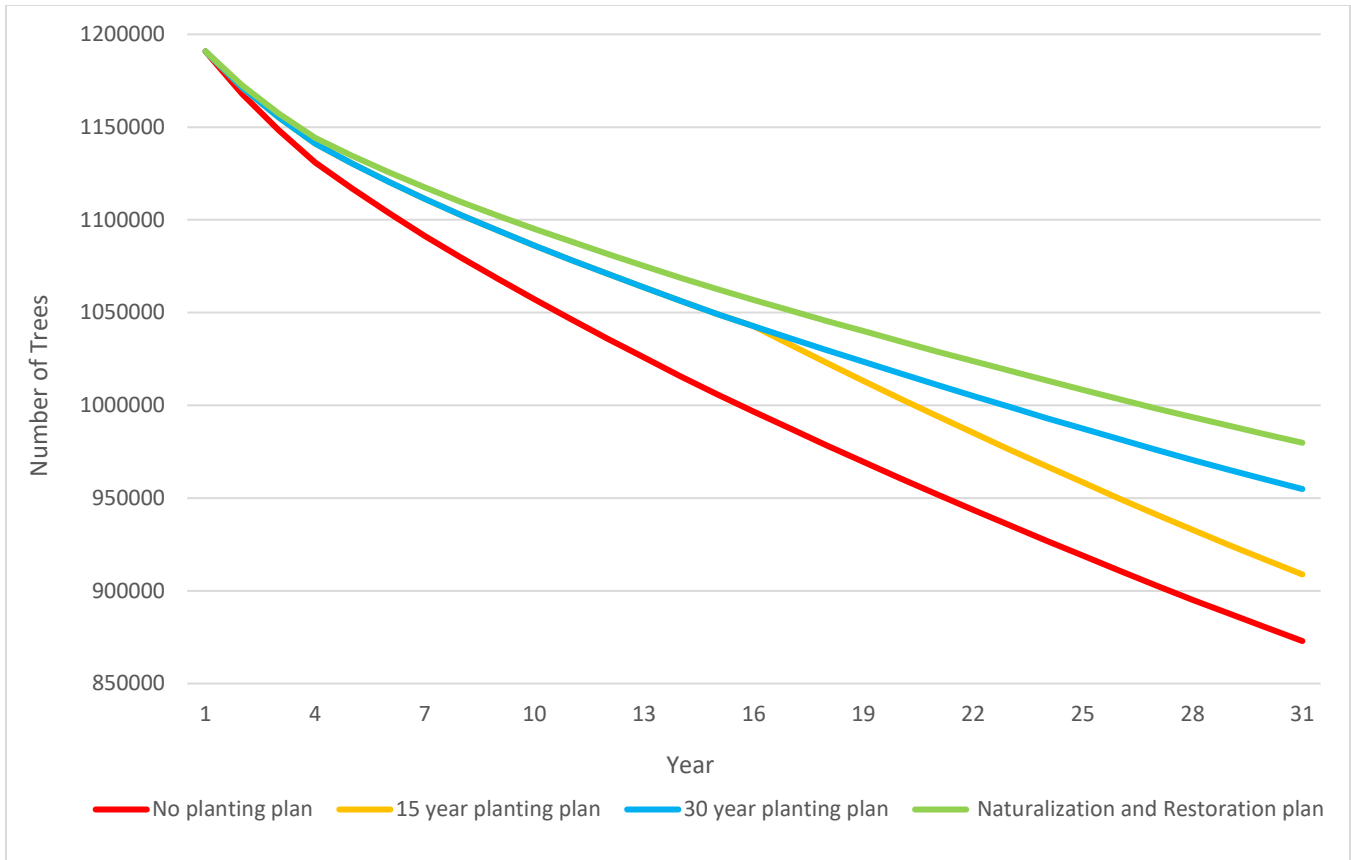


Figure 18: i-Tree Forecast projections on number of trees across planting scenarios

It should be noted that there is a great deal of uncertainty regarding tree mortality rates²⁷, the impacts of climate change, and future pests and diseases. Also, human policies around the protection of natural areas, urban development impacts, and associated removal of natural areas are not considered within the i-Tree Forecast model. Therefore, this forecast should be considered in light of these factors unaccounted for in the model.

4.5 Urban Heat Mapping and Planting Priorities

Land surface temperature across Ajax ranged from 14.85 °C to 39.16 °C in the afternoon on a late spring day in 2020 (Figure 19). Grouping the results by dissemination block (DB), the mean values range between 17.50 °C and 35.19 °C (Table 16, Figure 20). The largest areas of cool temperatures along the top of Ajax are within the Greenbelt and comprised of the Greenwood Conservation Area, golf courses, and private lands. Dense areas of high temperatures correspond with *Residential* and *Commercial – Industrial* land use strata.

²⁷ Mortality rates can only be specified based on the tree condition (percent dieback) and not on other factors such as how the tree was planted, or losses from development. i-Tree Forecast does however factor in the age (as indicated by size) when applying mortality rates to trees (Nowak, 2020).

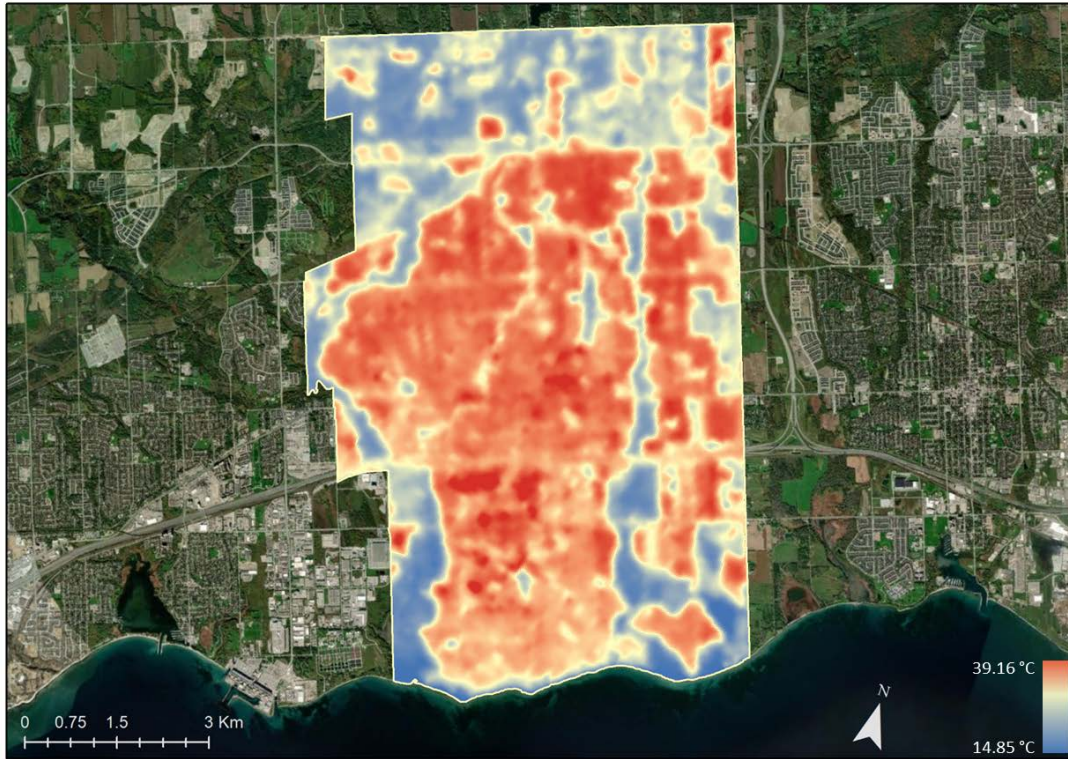


Figure 19: Land surface temperatures across Ajax in degrees Celsius

Table 16: Mean land surface temperature (LST) values in dissemination blocks

Mean LST Values (°C)	Class
17.50 – 24.49	Low
24.50 – 30.32	Medium
30.33 – 35.19	High

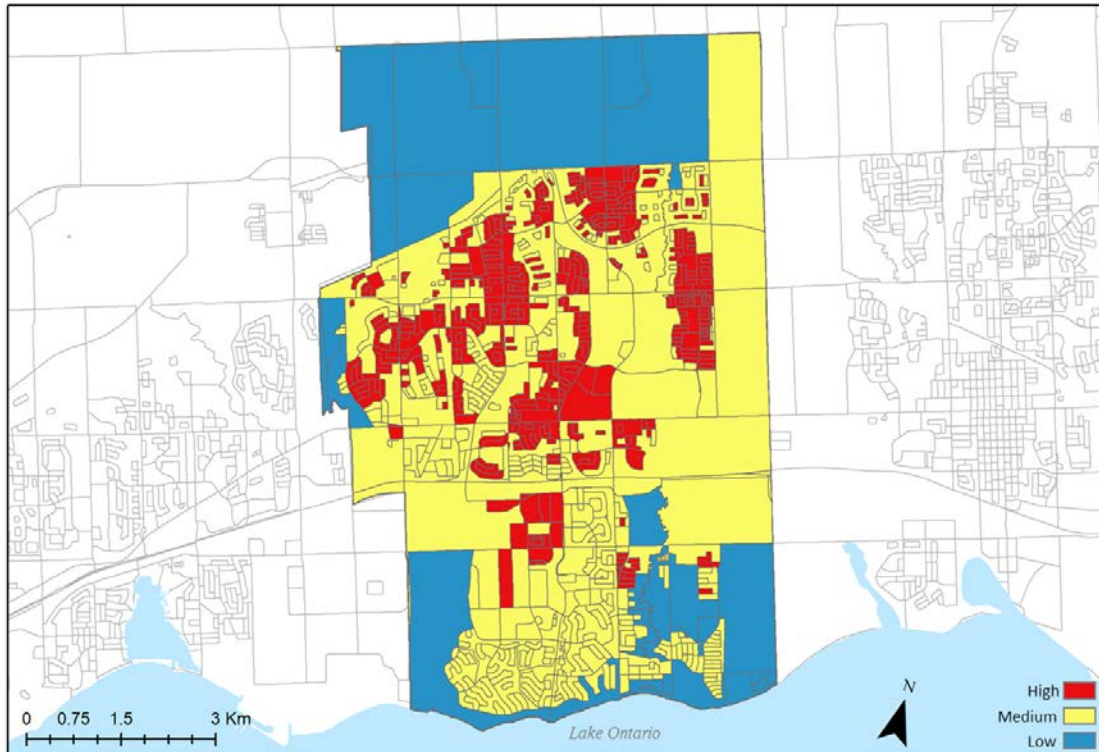


Figure 20: Mean land surface temperature values in dissemination blocks

The Enhanced Vegetation Index (EVI) across Ajax ranged from -0.000000015 to 0.000000033, representing bare ground to dense forests (Figure 21, Table 17). Figure 22 illustrates the most frequent EVI class in each DB, following the classification into Low, Medium, and High categories. The maps of LST and EVI are predominantly mirrored, with LST being low where EVI is high and vice versa. However, there are notable exceptions at the mouths of the Duffins and Carruthers Creeks, where both LST and EVI are low, signaling a lack of vegetation but potential temperature moderation being provided by the water. EVI also more closely tracks *Commercial – Industrial* areas compared to *Residential*, while LST is high in all of the more developed land use strata.

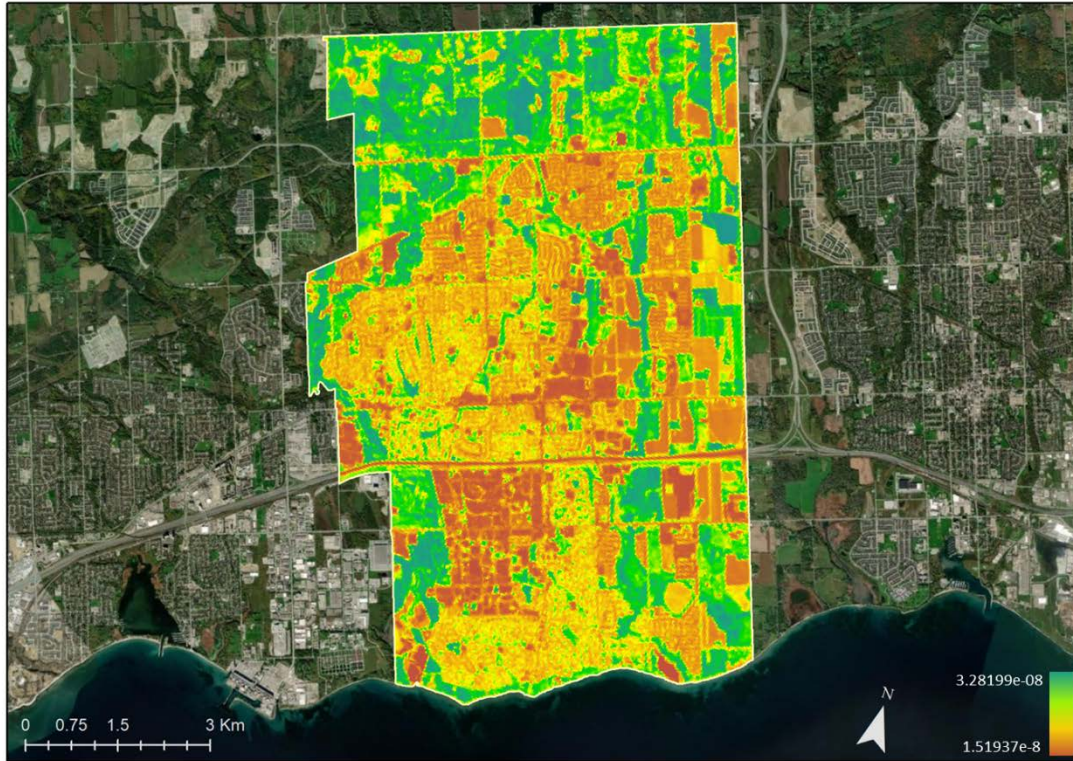


Figure 21: Enhanced Vegetation Index across Ajax

Table 17: Enhanced Vegetation Index (EVI) values and class IDs

EVI Values	Class	Class ID
$-1.5e^{-8} - 1.0e^{-8}$	Low	1
$1.1e^{-8} - 2.4e^{-8}$	Medium	2
$2.4e^{-8} - 3.3e^{-8}$	High	3

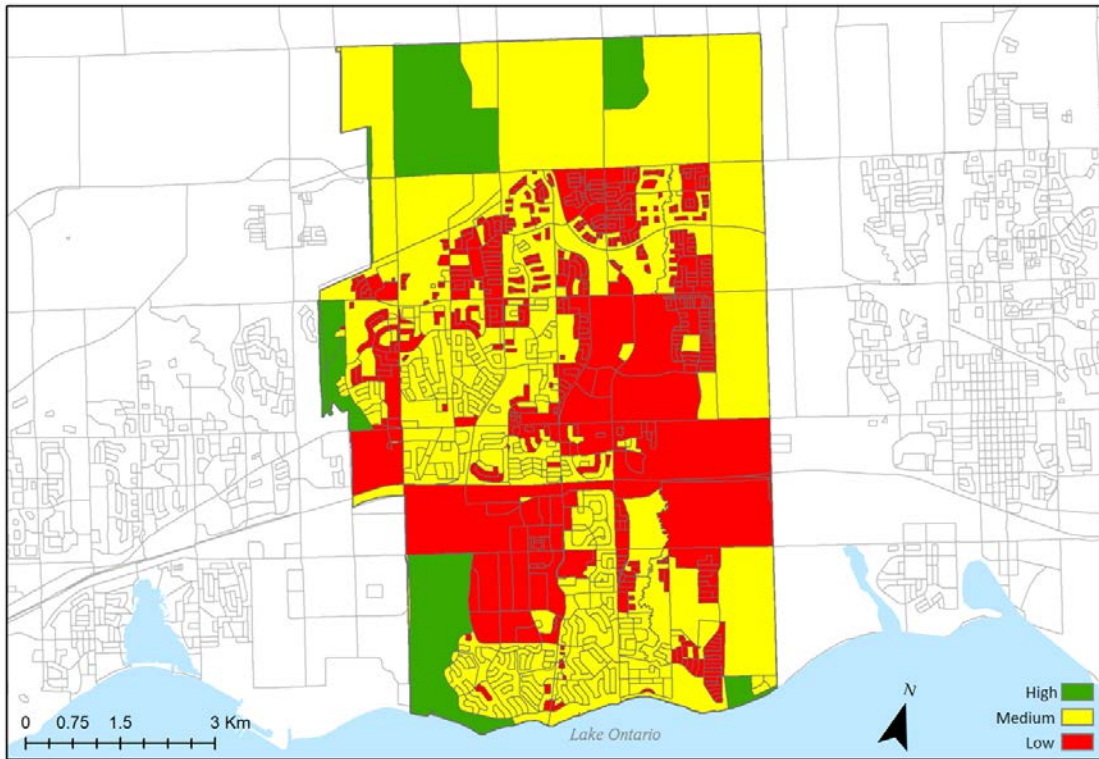


Figure 22: Enhanced Vegetation Index class by dissemination block

The planting priority areas highlight DBs with higher LST that could be mitigated by increasing EVI and are categorized into priority groups based on this prioritization criteria (Table 18, Figure 23). These priority planting areas are primarily in *Residential* and mixed-use *Commercial – Industrial* areas.

Table 18: Planting priorities considering land surface temperature and Enhanced Vegetation Index classes

Priority Group	Prioritization Criteria
Priority 1	Low EVI And High LST
Priority 2	Medium EVI And High LST
Priority 3	Low EVI And Medium LST
Priority 4	Medium EVI And Medium LST
Priority 5	Low EVI And Low LST
Priority 6	Medium EVI And Low LST

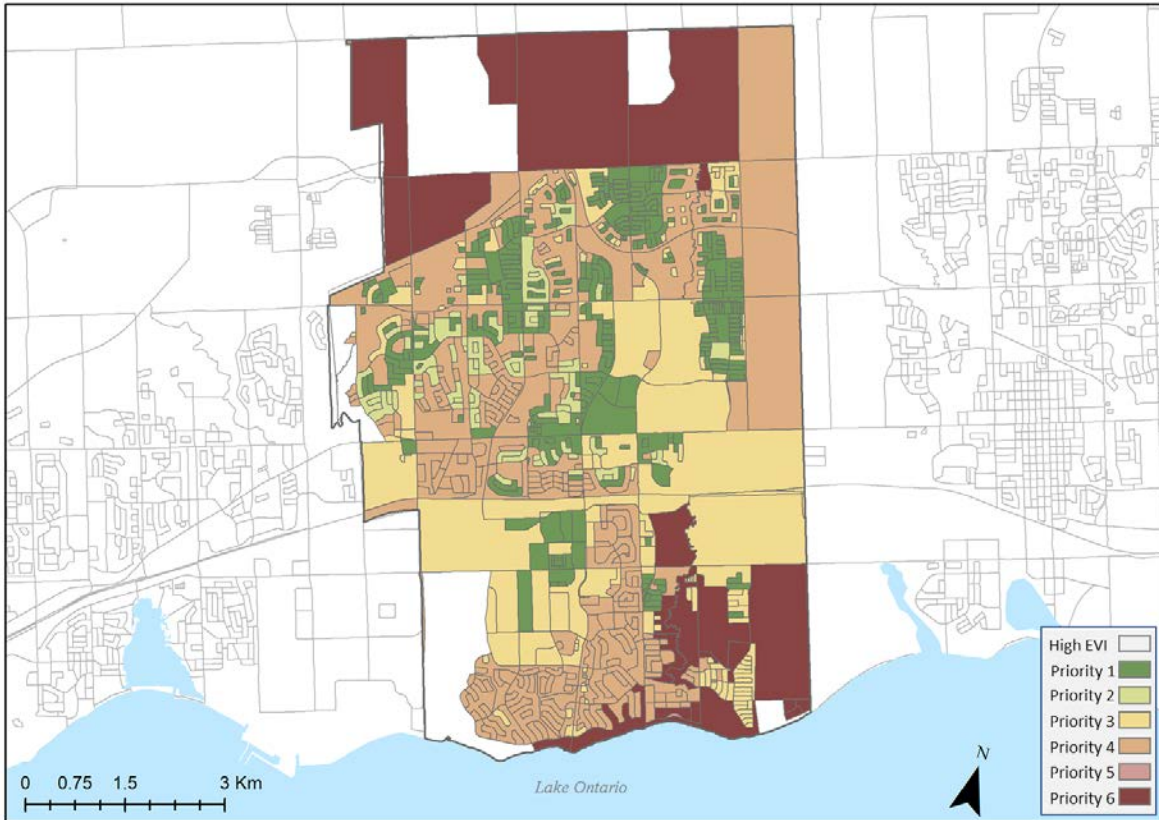


Figure 23: Planting priority areas

5.0 DISCUSSION

This section offers a discussion of the results and presents recommendations for strategic management of the urban forest; these recommendations are listed at the end of each relevant section and summarized again in Section 6.0. Several recommendations are relevant in different sections and appear more than once.

5.1 Urban Forest and Land Cover Distribution

5.1.1 Land Cover Assessment

The i-Tree Canopy land cover assessment characterized Ajax’s land cover based on 2019 imagery. This 2022 study improved overall accuracy of the land cover assessment compared with the previous 2009 assessment by increasing the number of points sampled from 1,000 to 4,300. The current assessment found *Grass – Herbaceous* cover to be the most prevalent land cover type, comprising just over 30 percent of Ajax’s municipal area, followed by *Tree – Shrub* cover at 24 percent cover. These two classes together, representing Ajax’s green vegetated cover, encompass just over half (approximately 54%) of the municipality. For comparison, a study averaging green cover across thirty-eight European cities, found the average to be approximately 42 percent (European Environment Agency, 2021). Overall, Ajax’s green cover, by percentage of municipal area, is within a

suitable proportion when contrasted to other municipalities and functions to enhance the ability of the land to provide ecological services and associated urban benefits.

Other cover types included in the 2022 land cover assessment are the *Agriculture* and *Soil – Bare ground* cover classes which combined encompass 14 percent of the municipal area. This combined cover is valuable to the municipality as well, especially with respect to albedo effects. Agricultural cover, assuming rotational growth of typical harvest crops, will have a mix of green (active crop growth) and brown cover (exposed soil post-harvest). Depending on the season, the area covered by these classes have less of an impact on the urban heat island, given higher albedo scores, and provide pockets of land to contribute to stormwater capture. While agricultural lands are often the first developed in urbanization efforts, these areas should be considered as valuable assets to the municipality under a future context where impervious surfaces continue to increase. Lastly, overall impervious cover, an amalgamation of *Impervious Buildings*, *Impervious Other* and *Impervious Roads*, comprises 29 percent of the municipal area. These are the cover types directly responsible for the majority of the urban heat island effect, negative impacts associated with albedo effects, and stormwater runoff.

Understanding current composition by the land cover change assessment presents a unique opportunity to contrast change in Ajax’s land cover composition over the last decade. Of notable interest is the 2 percent increase in *Tree – Shrub* cover from 22 percent in 2009 to 24 percent in 2019. A 2 percent increase over the last decade is a positive sign given the increased urbanization of the Town and recent extreme weather events and pest outbreaks like EAB that have impacted the urban forest. This is further underscored by the current trends of green cover across Canadian municipalities where, on average, there has been a decrease in overall green cover (Lantz et al., 2021). It is essential to continue efforts to increase canopy cover by maintaining and expanding canopy cover across the municipality as urban intensification continues to increase. Over the last decade across Ajax, impervious expansion has led to an increase of 4.4 percent combined impervious cover, from 24.8 percent in 2009 to 29.2 percent in 2019. Most of this increase (3.3%) is attributed to *Impervious Buildings* and *Impervious Other* land cover types and is presumably due to growth in developments as Ajax’s population size has increased by 13.5 percent since the last Urban Forest Study, from an estimated 109,600 in 2011 to 126,666 in 2021 (Statistics Canada, 2021). This is further emphasized by a decrease in both the *Soil – Bare Ground* and *Agriculture* classes from a combined cover of 19.9 percent in 2009 to 14.5 percent in 2019, as these lands are typically converted due to land use change. While there is the need for urban areas to provide the housing, facilities, and jobs required for an increasing population, the Town should also consider maintaining and improving the current green and other natural land cover classes so that their benefits continue to offset urban related environmental impacts. As recommended in the Ajax Green Standard and Official Plan, the Town of Ajax should continue to encourage developers to include the optional requirements for green roofs and green space additions to help improve green space connectivity throughout the Town. Additionally, as listed in the Official Plan (5.0), the Town should continue to enforce and ensure that the correct tree replacement practices are employed by developers across lands where trees have been removed for development.

Recommendation 1: As listed in the Official Plan, continue to implement the tree canopy compensation policy (2.1.4) in efforts to manage changes to land use following new developments. Where applicable, develop policy to incorporate monetary incentives for green space additions in new developments.

Recommendation 2: As outlined in the Official Plan (2.1.3) and the Ajax Green Standard, continue to encourage and incentivize the integration of green roof additions in the form of traditional green roof

planters and small urban agricultural spaces where possible. Consider emphasizing the impact of incorporating cool roofing recommendations in tandem with green roof additions to improve energy savings and reduce urban heat island impacts.

- Given urban intensification, the integration of green roof system recommendations based on the Ajax Green Standard could help alleviate urban heat island effects while improving species diversity, functional connections to natural landscapes for wildlife and public access to green spaces throughout the Town.

5.1.2 Existing and Possible Urban Forest Distribution

It is recommended that Ajax set a canopy target of at least 30 percent for the municipality in alignment with Durham’s goal for woodland cover. Based on the land cover results there is opportunity to increase canopy cover to meet this goal. Approximately 45 percent of the municipality has been identified as pervious vegetated land cover (area theoretically available for additional tree establishment) which could support possible tree canopy. However, it is not practical to plant in all pervious vegetated areas due to site considerations and other community objectives. For example, a significant portion of this pervious vegetated area (22%) is comprised of agricultural lands that are unlikely to be plantable. Additionally, some potential planting areas on impervious land cover types (i.e., asphalt, concrete, or bare soil surfaces), covering 29 percent of the municipality, may already be approved for development.

With the continued intensification of the urban landscape, the potential for integrating green infrastructure alongside grey infrastructure should be considered. Opportunities for planting on *Commercial* and *Industrial* land use should be explored, as properties on these strata often have lower canopy cover. The Town should engage and potentially incentivize commercial and industrial landowners to undertake tree planting, particularly as urban areas continue to be intensified. It will be important to consider species selection for planting in built environments to ensure suitable trees are planted that can successfully establish given the greater prevalence of stressors. Development guidelines should ensure that developers include tree planting that follows industry best practices.

Although establishing tree canopy in impervious surfaces would be more challenging than in pervious cover, it would reduce the heat transfer from such surfaces and would reduce the volume of stormwater runoff and therefore should be pursued. This is consistent with and would contribute to Ajax’s Climate Risk & Resiliency Plan to ensure lesser urban heat island effects.

While much of the existing canopy and planting potential in Ajax occurs on public properties (75 percent of trees fall in public lands), it is necessary to use a variety of tools like education programs and incentives to engage private landowners to facilitate tree planting and maintenance. For example, the Town has implemented a tree planting program in collaboration with Local Enhancement and Appreciation of Forests (LEAF) and could continue to assist homeowners with planting needs by developing a program for the replacement of dead, dying, hazardous and/or invasive species. Additionally, mechanisms like by-laws should be further developed and enforced to protect existing trees and ensure that residents and developers protect and plant trees.

Planting and establishment activities need not be focused only in areas lacking tree cover. Rather, a successful strategy for increasing the ecosystem services provided by the urban forest should also include an under-planting program, which will not only increase leaf area density in the short-term but will also ensure that aging trees are gradually replaced by a younger generation. Shifting from standalone plantings to natural, grouped

plantings can help improve connective cover and promote natural succession while reducing associated maintenance costs associated with individual trees. Many areas have also been impacted by emerald ash borer (EAB, *Agrilus planipennis*) resulting in a decline in ash tree (*Fraxinus spp.*) populations. These areas can be targeted for the planting of diverse tree and shrub species to ensure succession. Additionally, many areas have been recently impacted by spongy moth (*Lymantria dispar dispar*), particularly natural areas. While spongy moth has and will be problematic due to its cyclical emergence, it does not often cause widespread mortality. However, impacted areas should be monitored and restored as needed.

Increasing native shrub cover under canopied areas, such as the natural woodland cover by the Waterfront, represents an opportunity to increase total leaf area. Shrub cover that is established around mature trees can discourage human traffic and compaction of root zones. Many of the benefits provided by the urban forest, such as microclimate amelioration and sequestration of gaseous pollutants, are directly related to leaf atmospheric processes (e.g., interception, transpiration) (McPherson, 2003). It follows that an increase in the provision of these benefits can be best achieved by increasing total leaf area density.

Distribution of the urban forest is also an important social justice consideration. Ultimately the protection of trees equates to the protection of ecosystem services that are essential to the health of both humans and wildlife (e.g., clean air, cooler summer temperatures). The services provided by the urban forest are an asset that belong to the entire community and must be managed in a manner that ensures equitable access by all residents.

Recommendation 3: Set an official canopy cover target and proposed timeframe for achieving it. Based on common practice, consider a target of at least 30 percent canopy cover.

- Assess progress towards the canopy cover target every 5 years by conducting the canopy cover assessment component of the Urban Forest Study.

Recommendation 4: Engage and potentially incentivize commercial and industrial landowners to undertake tree planting and educate those landowners about maintenance best practices.

- The Town of Ajax provides public education about trees through their online resources, such as the [Tree Atlas](#), [Green Living Guide](#), [Tree Care Kit](#), [Caring for Your Street Tree](#). Further engagement, outreach, and programming will contribute to the protection and enhancement of the Town's urban forest.
- Consider the inclusion of schools in a similar program to mitigate poor survival and the impacts of emerald ash borer.

Recommendation 5: Finalize partnership with LEAF to implement a subsidized tree planting program to assist homeowners with the replacement of dead, dying, hazardous and/or invasive species.

Recommendation 6: The Town of Ajax should continue to develop and implement a 5-year Naturalization and Restoration Plan.

- Include updates to best account for current conditions, species recommendations and future climate change impacts.
- Refer to the Planting Priority Areas (Figure 23)

Recommendation 7: In line with naturalization recommendations from the Recreation & Parks Master Plan, continue to bolster natural plantings where appropriate, as opposed to standalone or individual plantings in open and natural park spaces.

- Consider integrating the Miyawaki method²⁸ in narrow planting areas to improve species diversity, ecosystem services, and promote succession with low associated maintenance costs in areas with space constraints.

5.2 State of the Forest

The discussion and recommendations presented in this Section pertain to three aspects of urban forest structure: species composition (sub-section 5.1.1), age (or size) (sub-section 5.1.2), and health (sub-section 5.1.3). Many benefits attributed to the urban forest are largely influenced by these structural elements.

5.2.1 Tree Species Effects

Leaf morphology is influenced by species characteristics and varies across the urban forest. For example, a dominant tree species in the study area, sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*), is a broad-leaved species and despite only being the third species by tree population (7.7%) it is the largest contributor to leaf area (9.4%) across Ajax. Alternatively, the most common species, eastern white cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*), a narrow-leaved species comprises 22.1 percent of all trees across the municipality but only contributes 8.5 percent of the leaf area across the urban forest.

Species composition in Ajax is influenced by the pattern of vegetation distribution between land uses. As such, species common in the *Residential* land use stratum strongly influence municipal-scale species composition. For example, eastern white cedar represents 29 percent of all trees in this land use and is the most common species in Ajax when expressed as a percent of total trees. This is due to extensive use of the species in hedgerows on residential properties.

The most dominant genera in Ajax in terms of leaf area are maple (*Acer spp.*, 33% of total leaf area), pine (*Pinus spp.*, 11%), and cedar (*Thuja spp.*, 7%). Together these three genera represent 51 percent of the total leaf area. In the previous assessment, the ash (*Fraxinus spp.*) genus represented approximately 8 percent of the leaf area however, due to the impacts of EAB it now only contributes 0.8 percent of the municipality's leaf area. In terms of percent of population, the dominant genera are cedar (23%), maple (17%), and buckthorn (*Rhamnus spp.*, 10%) are most abundant comprising 50 percent of the total trees.

These genera are distributed across land use categories as they thrive in natural areas as well as high traffic urban zones. A high relative abundance of maple is typical in the forests of this ecoregion; however, the lack of

²⁸ The Miyawaki method refers to a planting method aimed at promoting natural succession. Refer to the following article for additional information: <https://canadiangeographic.ca/articles/the-many-benefits-of-the-minuscule-but-mighty-miyawaki-forests/>

diversity among genera is a threat to the sustainability of the urban forest. It is also of concern, that European buckthorn, a non-native invasive species, is highly abundant across land uses.

It is important for urban forests to establish and maintain a diverse tree population (Leff, 2016). This increases the resilience of the urban forest to stressors such as species-specific insects or diseases and climate change. Thus, an urban forest that is not sufficiently diverse is at risk of widespread canopy loss. A greater diversity of tree species also supports more biodiversity and a wider range and quantity of ecosystem services (Gamfeldt et al., 2013). While native and introduced tree species have a place in urban forests, some introduced species can pose a risk to native plants if they spread easily and out-compete or displace native species.

In general, it is important to establish native species that support greater levels of biodiversity and ecosystem resilience. In addition, the Sustainable Forest Guide (Leff, 2016) recommends that no single species (native or not) represent more than 5 percent of the total tree population, no genus more than 10 percent and no family more than 15 percent. Yet, by these standards, Ajax is unfortunately overly dominated at the species, genera, and family levels. Monitoring species composition provides an indicator of the diversity of the forest and how vulnerable it might be to threats such as climate change and introduced pests. Changes over time indicate which species might be struggling with environmental changes and which might be thriving or perhaps becoming invasive and therefore requiring management intervention or changing planting strategies. It is important to note that these rules apply well to intensively managed urban trees, but not natural areas. Climatic and soil conditions, and natural disturbance patterns generally establish the diversity of species in natural forests.

Ajax is located in an ecoregion capable of supporting a high level of diversity, relative to other ecoregions in Canada. Therefore, more aggressive diversity targets may be feasible. In addition, by utilizing a diverse mix of species from both the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence and Deciduous Forest zones, Ajax's urban forest will be more adaptable to both the predicted and unknown impacts of climate change. Ajax is advised to establish a species composition for intensively managed urban trees in which no species represents more than 5 percent of the tree population, no genus represents more than 10 percent of the tree population, and no family represents more than 20 percent of the total tree population.

The frequency and severity of pest outbreaks is increasing, creating an even greater need for diversity and resilience. The impact of the EAB infestation highlights the risk associated with a lack of species diversity. Ash species were evenly distributed across all land uses in Ajax, reflecting the ability of these species to thrive in both natural areas and high traffic urban environments where soil quality is low. Unfortunately, while Ajax still has green (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*), black (*Fraxinus nigra*), and white ash (*Fraxinus americana*) populations, their overall condition is very poor (14%, 19%, and 38%, respectively) and 50 to 80 percent of each species have died. Additionally, the urban forest is now currently experiencing a widespread spongy moth (*Lymantria dispar dispar*) outbreak which feeds on a greater variety of tree species. Spongy moth has a cyclical life cycle, with outbreaks occurring every seven to 10 years, and emergence between early May to mid-July. Most healthy deciduous trees can tolerate one to several years of defoliation by spongy moth since they can recover each growing season. However, coniferous trees that have been defoliated will face severe, detrimental effects as only a small proportion of needles are replenished each year (Ontario Wildlife and Nature, 2014). This may be an area to consider appropriate management responses in future urban forest planning.

When developing species diversification programs consideration must be given to the potential damage of multi-host pests. The Pest Vulnerability Matrix (PVM) is a model developed to visualize and assess the

susceptibility of the urban forest to outbreaks of insects and diseases based on species composition and diversity (Laćan & McBride, 2008). The model predicts how the introduction of certain tree species, or a new pest species, will affect the overall vulnerability of the urban forest. The model has been applied for Toronto, conducted by Vander Vecht, & Conway (2015), which explored the vulnerability of Toronto's urban forest to pests using the PVM. Using a model such as the PVM during tree species selection will help account for potential damage by future pest outbreaks, particularly by multi-host pests.

Diversity targets must also include a spatial scale in order to ensure that a sufficient amount of diversity is observed at the neighbourhood and land use level. Such diversity is not likely feasible within the street tree population as a smaller range of species can survive the harsh growing conditions found along high traffic boulevards and streetscapes. Efforts must be made to encourage and support nurseries, private landowners, and developers to sell or plant a greater diversity of native and suitable non-native, non-invasive species. There is a need to decrease the planting of eastern white cedars on private properties, decrease the reliance on sugar maple, and control European buckthorn to increase species diversity. Ajax could consider adding an educational campaign focused on species diversity for private landowners.

The use of high-quality native or non-native, non-invasive planting stock grown from locally adapted or suitable seed sources is strongly encouraged in all municipal planting projects, particularly in locations adjacent to natural areas. Planting stock availability will be directly dependent on the supply levels of local nurseries. Genetic variability within a species facilitates the survival of that species by increasing the likelihood that some individuals will be adapted to withstand a major stress or disturbance event. A reliance on clones in the urban forest will have the opposite effect and will increase the risk of catastrophic loss of leaf area and tree cover in the event of a pest or disease outbreak.

Recommendation 8: In line with Ajax's 2010 Urban Forest Management Plan, the Town should strive to establish a diverse tree population in intensively managed urban areas, in which no species represents more than 10 percent of the tree population, no genus represents more than 15 percent of the tree population, and no family represents more than 30 percent of the tree population, both municipal-wide and at the neighborhood level.

Recommendation 9: Investigate updating and applying the Pest Vulnerability Matrix (PVM) for species selection in municipal tree and shrub planting.

- This recommendation was made in the 2009 report and was carried forward in the 2010 Urban Forest Management Plan. Given the anticipated increase in invasive pest outbreaks as a consequence of climate change, it is essential to enhance the diversity of the urban forest to ensure it is resilient to insect and disease outbreaks. Using a model such as the PVM during tree species selection will help account for potential damage by future pest outbreaks, particularly by multi-host pests.

Recommendation 10: Consider development of an education campaign focused on educating private landowners about the importance of species diversity for a resilient urban forest, particularly in the context of climate change.

- The Town of Ajax provides public education including the [Tree Care Kit](#), which provides guidance to homeowners about the urban forest. While the document is robust, additional resources could be

developed like an additional succinct fact sheet to specifically emphasize the benefits of species diversity to complement the toolkit.

Recommendation 11: Utilize native planting and appropriate non-native, non-invasive stock in both intensively and extensively managed areas. Increase genetic diversity of tree populations by using the guidance provided by the Ontario Tree Seed Transfer Policy²⁹. The policy is intended to help managers source seed based on the projected changes in climate to increase the likelihood of producing trees well-adapted to current and future conditions.

Recommendation 12: Continue to educate and incentivize private landowners through the LEAF program to plant a greater diversity of native, resilient species to increase the functional diversity in Ajax. Encourage private landowners to plant alternatives to eastern white cedar given its high vulnerability to climate change.

5.2.2 Tree Size Effects

The proportion of large trees in Ajax is low; less than 13 percent of the tree population fall in or above the 30.6 cm to 45.7 cm size class. However, this is an increase from 7.5 percent in 2009. Diameter class distribution of the tree population will be influenced by a variety of factors. Most notably, the natural growth patterns and forms of the dominant species will strongly influence average tree size. For example, eastern white cedar and European buckthorn are the first and second most dominant species with respect to the total number of trees. These species typically maintain a comparatively small, shrubby form even at maturity and are likely to never be in the larger size classes.

Tree age will also impact diameter class distribution. Much of the urban development in Ajax has occurred quite recently. Consequently, the trees planted at these new development sites have not yet reached maturity. However, there has been an increase in the number of trees in the second smallest size class (7.6 cm to 15.2 cm) which has positive benefits. Young urban trees show an exponential increase in ecosystem service contribution within their early growth windows. Given the increase in light availability and lack of competition in most urban environments, young urban trees have been shown to have accelerated carbon cycling by up to four times compared to their natural counterparts (Smith et al., 2019). As trees continue to age, their resources shift from focusing on primary growth to secondary growth and the once rapid increases in carbon cycling and associated ecosystem services slows down, albeit increasing over time.

Land use also influences diameter class distribution, as different land use types are managed differently. Within all the land use categories, there is a similar proportion of trees in the largest size classes (greater than 45.7 cm DBH), but the largest proportion of large trees are found on *Utilities – Transportation* lands (5.3% of trees greater than 45.7 cm), followed by *Residential* (6.3% of trees greater than 45.7 cm). Within the *Utilities –*

²⁹ Partnerships and resources from the Forest Gene Conservation Association and/or the National Tree Seed Centre can be leveraged to support seed sourcing and species selection.

Transportation, trees likely fall on public or hydro-owned land and are therefore protected by municipal by-laws.³⁰

As urban trees increase in size, their environmental, social, and economic benefits increase as well. Large trees provide much greater energy savings, air, and water quality improvements, runoff reduction, visual impact, increase in property values, and carbon sequestration. Large trees also provide greater infrastructure repair savings. For example, in Modesto, California, the shade from large-stature trees over city streets was projected to reduce costs for repaving by 58 percent (financial savings of \$7.13/m²) over a 30-year period when compared to unshaded streets. In comparison, shade from small-stature trees was projected to save only 17 percent in repaving costs (financial savings of \$2.04/m²) (McPherson & Muchnick, 2005). However, it is important to note that in the winter climate of Ajax, shaded streets require more salt to address snow and ice.

Due to the highly modified and intensively managed nature of the urban forest, there is no appropriate historic/pre-settlement age-class distribution for which to strive. In other words, the intensively managed areas of the urban forest will necessarily maintain a very different diameter or age-class distribution than that observed in conventionally managed woodlands. Typically, woodlands maintain an inverse j-shaped curve that reflects the abundance of small trees in the understory as a result of natural regeneration (Oliver & Larson 1996). Natural regeneration occurs infrequently in the intensively managed urban forest. Consequently, active management is needed in order to facilitate regeneration. In areas of the municipality where mature trees are dominant, managers should plan for future succession by planting replacement trees well in advance of mature tree decline and removal.

The Sustainable Urban Forest Guide recommends an ideal age distribution for an urban forest of 40 percent juvenile trees (average DBH of 0 to 20.3 cm), 30 percent semi-mature trees (average DBH of more than 20.3 cm and less than or equal to 40.6 cm), 20 percent mature (more than 40.6cm and less than or equal to 61.0 cm), and 10 percent senescent (more than 61.0 cm) (Leff, 2016).

The results of the i-Tree Eco analysis revealed the following diameter class distribution in Ajax: 64 percent of municipal trees were less than 15.2 cm DBH, 23 percent were between 15.2 and 30.5 cm, 11 percent were between 30.6 and 61 cm, and 2 percent were greater than 61 cm. According to these guidelines the proportion of small trees in Ajax is significantly higher than recommended and the proportion of large trees is significantly lower than what it should be. It is important to maintain these trees and ensure that they can grow into larger trees and provide more benefits into the future.

Recommendation 13: Evaluate and develop the strategic steps required to increase the proportion of large, mature trees in the urban forest.

- This can be achieved using a range of tools including Official Plan planning policy, by-law enforcement and public education. Maintenance and monitoring of new plantings is critical to ensure that juvenile trees are

³⁰ Town of Ajax's by-law No. 137-2006 regulates the removal and injury of trees on parkland, greenbelt land and environmental protection land while by-law 138-2006 protects trees planted on boulevards from unnecessary damage or removal.

healthy and able to grow to maturity. Where tree preservation cannot be achieved, compensation policies should be used to ensure they consider the loss of mature trees and associated ecosystem services.

Recommendation 14: As outlined in the Official Plan and Ajax Green Standard, encourage uptake of tree preservation requirements listed in municipal guidelines and recommendations to incorporate sustainable streetscape and subdivision design standards to support green space establishment.

Recommendation 15: As outlined in the Official Plan, consider enacting a Town-wide tree cutting by-law to regulate the destruction or injury of trees.

- An example of a successful tree by-law to consider is BY-LAW 124-18 of the City of Cambridge, Ontario.

While Ajax has two tree protection by-laws for municipally owned trees on select public and private lands, a private tree protection by-law has not yet been developed by the Town. Given the size distribution of Ajax's forest and that 64 percent of the tree population in Ajax is under 15.2 cm diameter, it is recommended that the Town consider setting the minimum regulated DBH of 15 cm in the by-law. The Ajax Official Plan does require a Tree Inventory and Preservation Plan for any development or site alteration where private or public trees/vegetation exist within the property and/or exist a minimum of three metres beyond the property line (policy 5.3(u)).

5.2.3 Tree Health Effects

The capacity for the urban forest to provide ecosystem services is predicated on the health of the forest, particularly trees. The i-Tree Eco model allows for the assessment of basic tree condition based on the data collected for percent dieback. Across Ajax, 68 percent of trees are in excellent or good condition, and that number goes up to 79 percent once trees in fair condition are considered. However, this is a decline from 86 percent in excellent to fair condition in 2009, and thus a 7 percent increase in trees that are in poor, critical, dying, or dead condition.

By stratum, *Residential* lands had the highest proportion of trees in excellent condition, 70 percent of the population, and 84 percent when good condition is included. Residential trees are typically manicured and pruned, similar to public trees in rights-of-way (ROW), to reduce risks associated with damaged or dying branches. A high health score across the second most treed stratum is a positive sign since these trees, specifically streetside trees, face many of the same urban stressors as street trees in more urbanized contexts (i.e., poorer soil conditions/compaction, roadside pollutants and contaminants, mechanical injury, and drought).

The *Agriculture* stratum had the second highest proportion of trees in excellent condition, 64 percent, increasing to 81 percent when good condition was also considered. Agricultural areas often have low canopy cover, but there may be windbreaks around buildings or hedgerows beside fields that may be cared for in a similar manner to those in *Residential* areas.

The *Open Space – Natural Cover* land use stratum had the third highest score when both excellent and good condition was considered, at 74 percent. Trees in this stratum are not managed as intensively for structural damage (such as dead, dying, or broken branches) like those in built environments. Additionally, being largely natural lands, the impacts of pests and diseases such as EAB have had pronounced impacts on the health of trees in this land use stratum. Dying trees in natural areas are not removed unless they pose a risk to public safety (e.g. on trails) and provide ecological benefits like bird and small mammal habitat, but dead trees

contribute negatively to the overall health score and many trees in natural areas have been impacted by EAB. Additionally, the various ecosystems across this stratum and their microclimates contribute to the success of trees in each natural system. For example, tree species within a wetland ecosystem often face greater risk of site-related mortality associated with saturated soils.

The condition of the trees in the *Commercial-Industrial* stratum remained relatively similar between 2009 and 2022, with 61 and 60 percent of trees respectively in excellent or good condition. However, the percentage of trees in the poor, critical, or dying condition categories has increased from 10.5 percent in 2009, to 17.1 percent in 2022. Therefore, there is a need to engage commercial and industrial landowners to conduct maintenance best practices to improve tree health on these properties.

The *Other – Institutional* stratum had the lowest values, with only 50 percent of trees in excellent or good condition, and 24 percent dead. This is a large increase from 2009, where the *Other* category had 11 percent of trees reported as dead. The 2009 category did not include *Institutional* land uses, however those occupy a small proportion of the land in the *Other – Institutional* stratum, so this comparison likely still represents a noticeable increase in dead trees. Therefore, this stratum should be targeted for maintenance, monitoring and removals given that many properties in this land use are public. The *Other – Institutional* land use also includes vacant lands which frequently contain woodlots and wooded ravines. These natural areas can be more susceptible to the impacts of pest and diseases as similarly described for the *Open space – Natural cover* stratum and should be considered for restoration management, particularly in areas that are accessed by the public.

Recommendation 4: Engage and potentially incentivize commercial and industrial landowners to undertake tree planting and educate those landowners about maintenance best practices.

5.3 Urban Forest Function

The following is a discussion of the services (benefits) that have been quantified by the i-Tree Eco model for effects on air quality, stormwater runoff, residential energy effects, and climate change mitigation and adaptation. All urban forest benefits should increase in Ajax as a result of the implementation of the recommendations shared in this report. In addition, recommendations are provided here to address additional needs and opportunities.

It should be noted that iterative changes have been made to the i-Tree Eco suite of software³¹ since the 2009 study, therefore the quantified benefits should not be directly compared between the study years (with the exception of carbon storage and sequestration).

³¹Refer to i-Tree Suite Change Log here for additional information on changes to the model:

https://www.itreetools.org/documents/186/iTree_suite_change_log.pdf

5.3.1 Effect on Air Quality

Trees and shrubs in Ajax removed a total of 47 tonnes of air pollution (CO, NO₂, O₃, PM_{2.5}, SO₂) annually with an associated removal value of \$798,348 annually. Pollution removal is greatest for ozone (O₃), followed distantly by nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulate matter less than 2.5 microns (PM_{2.5}). Ozone has been identified as the primary component of photochemical smog and is known to irritate and damage the respiratory system, reduce lung function, and increase susceptibility to respiratory infections (EPA, 2003). Exposure to ambient nitrogen dioxide is shown to have an interaction with the immune system which could increase the risk of respiratory tract infections (Chen et al., 2007). PM_{2.5} is shown to cause similar effects with acute exposure leading to irritation of the eyes, nose, throat, and lungs with potential for effects related to toxicity and inflammatory responses (Feng et al., 2016). Environmental pollution is now a concern as well, with the increasing presence of air pollution following the rapid urbanization of many municipalities, the compounded effects of air pollution on temperature regimes can have consequences on the frequency or presence of many infectious diseases and natural disasters (Manisalidis et al., 2020).

A study by Pollution Probe suggests that climate change (coupled with the urban heat island effect) could further exacerbate the degree of health effects associated with air pollution (Chiotti et al., 2002). For example, the occurrence of oppressive air masses that bring hot, humid and/or smoggy conditions is projected to increase from 5 percent of summer days to 23-39 percent by 2080. This means that the Greater Golden Horseshoe Region will likely experience more frequent, severe, and possibly longer smog episodes in the future. Thus, by mitigating the human health risks associated with air pollution, as well as mitigating both the causes and effects of climate change, Ajax's urban forest plays an important role in community wellness, particularly for those more vulnerable members of the population.

The i-Tree Eco results show that larger diameter trees remove more pollution on average, per tree, than smaller diameter trees. Similarly, trees were found to remove greater volumes of pollution than shrubs. In both cases, pollution removal capacity was a direct function of leaf area. Selecting species that are well adapted to local conditions and require little to no maintenance is recommended as they will typically have longer life spans providing long term filtration of air pollutants. Additionally, studies have shown that areas with high levels of ground emissions, such as vehicular traffic along a highway, should be targeted for plantings. As pollutants are released upwards from areas of high emission, the adjacent planted areas can increase immediate removal while limiting trapping pollutants beneath the canopy (Nowak et al., 2002).

However, it is important to note that trees and shrubs emit volatile organic compounds (VOCs) such as monoterpene and isoprene. These compounds are natural chemicals that make up essential oils, resins, other plant products and are the precursor chemicals to ozone and carbon monoxide formation (Kramer and Kozlowski, 1979). An estimated total of 23,553 kg/yr of VOC's (16,442 & 7,111 kg/yr of monoterpenes and isoprene, respectively) are emitted annually with the largest portion of the emissions coming from the *Open Space – Natural Cover* and *Residential* areas which have the most trees. However, this process is temperature dependent and given that trees typically contribute to lowering air temperature, the net results are still often positive in terms of the impact of trees on air quality.

Recommendation 16: Select and plant long lived, low maintenance, and low VOC emitting tree species.

- Since larger, long-lived individuals provide the greatest per-tree effects they should be selected to provide long term benefits. Similarly, having low maintenance trees will reduce the associated emissions from arborist maintenance by use of gas-powered equipment.

Recommendation 17: Bolster evergreen tree population across the municipality to improve year-round pollution removal services.

- By planting evergreen species, avoiding eastern white cedar given its prevalence in Ajax, with foliage all year round, such species can provide air pollution removal benefits during the shoulder seasons (late fall to early spring) where deciduous trees don't provide air pollution associated benefits.

Recommendation 18: Engage in strategic tree planting in high emission zones within the Town of Ajax jurisdiction.

- Areas with dense pollution emissions should be targeted as high priority planting sites. For example, planting adjacent to highways or high emission industrial sites would be beneficial to offsetting immediate emissions.

Recommendation 19: Consider developing an education campaign and community stewardship program focused on educating the public about the ecosystem benefits that Ajax's urban forest provides.

5.3.2 Effect on Stormwater Runoff

Stormwater runoff is a concern in urbanized landscapes as cities continue to develop and extreme weather events increase in frequency due to climate change. As grey infrastructure is implemented, the associated increase in impervious surfaces can function to increase runoff (Hirabayashi, 2012). The increase in impervious land cover allows contaminants such as oils and fertilizers to be transported by runoff into adjacent channels, streams, and ground water. As polluted stormwater feeds into the hydrological system, it can have cascading effects on sensitive species and nutrient balances (Kollin, 2006). Green infrastructure can help mitigate these negative impacts by retaining stormwater. The trees of Ajax provide a great hydrological benefit with a stormwater offset estimated at 230,593 m³ across the municipality valued at \$536,062 annually. The *Open Space – Natural Cover* and *Other – Institutional* land use strata provide the greatest benefit and remove approximately 75,754 m³ and 51,919 m³, respectively.

Green infrastructure, and trees specifically, provide a host of services relevant to stormwater runoff. Foliage and branches intercept precipitation which functionally reduces a portion of precipitation that may otherwise become runoff. Additionally, canopies reduce soil erosion caused by direct rain fall and allow soils to store larger volumes of precipitation (Brandt, 1988). At the ground level, runoff infiltrates soils, and pollutants are naturally filtered and broken down by roots and microbial life (Schloter et al., 2018).

To have a healthy, functional hydrological network, a balance between green and grey infrastructure should be considered in development planning. For example, green infrastructure provides shading which can improve pavement life while allowing for natural stormwater runoff controls and should be weighted in tandem with grey infrastructure.

Recommendation 14: As outlined in the Official Plan and Ajax Green Standard, encourage uptake of tree preservation requirements listed in municipal guidelines and recommendations to incorporate sustainable streetscape and subdivision design standards to support green space establishment.

Recommendation 19: Consider developing an education campaign and community stewardship program focused on educating the public about the ecosystem benefits that Ajax's urban forest provides.

Recommendation 20: Continue to advocate for the application of subsurface (Silva) cells and other enhanced rooting environment techniques for street trees.

- Consider including an optional requirement in the Ajax Green Standard on the application of Silva cells and other enhanced rooting environment techniques. Where possible, encourage the uptake of this optional requirement by providing incentives (eg. expediting the development process or reducing developer fees).
- Utilizing these technologies at selected sites in the short-term may provide a cost-effective means of integrating these systems into the municipal budget. Silva cells can function to improve stormwater runoff channels.

Recommendation 21: Explore the opportunity to utilize the Sustainable Technology Evaluation Program Treatment Train Tool to evaluate and quantify the stormwater benefits of planting trees.

- The Low Impact Development Treatment Train Tool provides the ability to design and evaluate different urban tree planting scenarios at the site level to determine stormwater management benefits and can be a very effective way to demonstrate the benefits of urban tree planting.

5.3.3 Effect on Residential Energy Bills

Trees that are adjacent to buildings can reduce the demand for heating and air conditioning through their moderating influence on solar insolation and wind speed. In addition, trees ameliorate climate by transpiring water from their leaves, a process that has a cooling effect on the atmosphere. Thus, the effective placement of trees or shrubs can lower building temperatures. McPherson and Simpson (1999) report that by planting two large trees on the west side of a house, and one large tree on the east side of a house, homeowners can reduce their annual air conditioning costs by up to 30 percent. Potential greenhouse gas emission reductions from urban forestry are likely to be greatest in regions with large numbers of air-conditioned buildings and long cooling seasons. However, in colder regions where energy demands are high during winter months, trees that are properly placed to create windbreaks can also substantially decrease heating requirements and can produce savings of up to 25 percent on winter heating costs (Heisler, 1986). This reduction in demand for heating and cooling in turn reduces the emissions associated with fossil fuel combustion (Simpson & McPherson, 2000). In Ajax the annual demand for heating and cooling was reduced by approximately 59,567 MBTU and 2,046 MWH, with an associated annual financial savings of approximately \$501,703. This is a sharp increase in energy and financial savings from 2009, where the estimated energy demand was reduced by 35,570 MBTU and 1,220 MWH, saving approximately \$403,430 annually. The difference is likely due to the maturation of Ajax's urban forest, where larger residential trees are more capable of blocking solar radiation and wind.

Given Ajax's colder winter climate, there were greater savings associated with the reduction of heating (\$316,570) than cooling (\$185,133), primarily related to a decrease in the need for natural gas (\$256,200). This

may also be due to current tree species and placement, which can have significant impact on potential energy savings. For example, evergreen species planted along the south facing wall of a building will block the heat from the winter sun and will increase the need for daytime heating. In contrast, large deciduous trees planted on the east and west sides of a house will shade buildings during hot summer months, but after their leaves have dropped, will allow heat to reach homes in the winter (Ko, 2018). Public education and outreach will be required to communicate these benefits and to provide direction for strategic planting around buildings to enhance energy savings.

Recommendation 19: Consider developing an education campaign and community stewardship program focused on educating the public about the ecosystem benefits that Ajax’s urban forest provides.

- The inclusion of schools in this campaign would help to target youth education on the urban forest and also raise the point that additional planting on school grounds could provide much needed shade and cooling benefits for students while improving associated energy savings.

Recommendation 22: Assess the Town’s current recommended planting list, in the Town of Ajax ‘Tree Atlas’, and shift recommendations, based on planting plans, to native and appropriate non-native, non-invasive species based on the following parameters:

- Selecting species based on their potential to provide energy savings
- Selecting species with a higher capacity for carbon storage and sequestration
- Selecting species with higher tolerances and lower vulnerability to climate change impacts

Tree species selection and placement should be targeted to provide summer shade and reduce winter wind speeds around residential buildings.

5.3.4 Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

Trees can mitigate climate change by sequestering atmospheric carbon and then storing it long-term as woody biomass. During photosynthesis, atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO₂) enters the leaf through surface pores, combines with water, and is converted into cellulose, sugars, and other materials in a chemical reaction catalyzed by sunlight. Most of these materials then become fixed as wood, while a small portion are respired back as CO₂ or are utilized in the production of leaves that are eventually shed by the tree (Larcher, 1980). In Ajax, trees sequestered approximately 3,018 tonnes of carbon annually (value of \$570,000 annually)³² and store approximately 117,275 tonnes of carbon (value of \$22.1 million). The annual carbon sequestration by trees in Ajax is equivalent to the annual carbon emissions from 2,384 automobiles or 1,394 single family homes³³. Since 2009, annual carbon sequestration has decreased from 3,548 tonnes of carbon per year, but total storage has

³² When carbon emissions due to decomposition after tree death were considered, net annual carbon sequestration was approximately 1,465 tonnes per year (5,372 tonnes CO₂ per year) with a value of \$277,000.

³³ Values approximated using Ajax’s gross annual carbon sequestration value in the United States EPA Greenhouse Gas Equivalencies Calculator: <https://www.epa.gov/energy/greenhouse-gas-equivalencies-calculator>

increased from 105,626 tonnes. This reflects the decline in Ajax’s urban forest population and leaf area, but the maturation of young trees from 2009 that are now capable of storing larger volumes of carbon.

The urban forest can also decrease carbon dioxide levels by reducing the demand for heating and air conditioning in residential buildings, subsequently avoiding carbon emissions by power plants. In Ajax, the annual demand for heating and cooling was reduced by approximately 59,567 MBTU for natural gas use (heating) and 2,046 MWH for electricity (heating and cooling). Ontario’s energy grid is currently nuclear and hydro dominant, with relatively low carbon emissions. However, it is projected to become more dependent on natural gas as nuclear plants are being closed for refurbishment or decommissioned. Therefore, the reduced demand for heating due to the urban forest may have a more substantial impact on natural gas use in the future.

Nowak and Crane (2002) argued that carbon released through tree management activities must be accounted for when calculating the net effect of urban forestry on atmospheric carbon dioxide. Tree care practices often release carbon into the atmosphere as a result of fossil fuel emissions from maintenance equipment. In order to compensate for the carbon emissions associated with planting, establishment, pruning, and tree removal, trees planted in the urban landscape must live for a minimum amount of time, dependent on the species. If trees succumb to early mortality, sustaining the tree population will lead to net emissions of carbon throughout the life cycle of that population (Nowak & Crane, 2002). This observation further highlights the importance of selecting low maintenance, well-adapted native species with the goal of maximizing tree health and longevity. Additionally, there should be a shift towards the use of electric tools to reduce the small-scale carbon emissions directly associated with maintenance.

When selecting trees for planting, it is also important to consider which have a greater potential for carbon sequestration and storage. In Ajax, sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*) stored the greatest volume of carbon (approximately 15.5% of total carbon stored), while eastern white cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*) annually sequestered the greatest volume of carbon (17.6% of total net sequestered carbon and 10% of gross sequestration). Both are native species, but already heavily represented as percent of the population and leaf area, so future plantings should consider other options for increased diversity. Other species with high storage or sequestration capabilities in Ajax include honey locust (*Gleditsia triacanthos*, 8.8% net sequestration), Freeman maple (*Acer x freemanii*, 11.1% net sequestration and 7.8% of carbon storage), and black willow (*Salix nigra*, 8.3% net sequestration and 4.6% of storage). These three species are not in the top five species for either percent of population or leaf area, which suggests they have greater inherent capabilities for carbon storage and sequestration. Freeman maple and honey locust may then be beneficial species to include in planting plans. Black willow could also be considered, though they have more niche habitat requirements and so should only be planted in specific, wet environments. Common, invasive species also provide carbon benefits, with Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*) storing 8 percent of total carbon and Manitoba maple (*Acer negundo*) sequestering almost 9 percent of total net carbon. However, while these trees may provide current benefits, future planting should still prioritize native species. By expanding the urban forest, Ajax can work towards reaching the municipality’s greenhouse gas emission reduction targets of 20 percent below 2019 levels by 2025, 40 percent by 2030, and 100 percent by 2050 (Town of Ajax, 2021).

As climate change worsens, the impact of trees will become more important to adapt to heat stress especially in urban areas which are already warmer than surrounding regions due to the urban heat island effect. Shade trees can decrease near-surface air temperatures by an average of 3 °C by intercepting solar radiation and evapotranspiration, improving pedestrian thermal comfort, and decreasing human mortalities during heatwaves (Wang et al., 2018; Wong et al., 2021). Thus, by improving and maintaining the urban forest, Ajax is investing in public health.

Recommendation 22: Assess the Town’s current recommended planting list, in the Town of Ajax ‘Tree Atlas’, and shift recommendations, based on planting plans, to native and appropriate non-native, non-invasive species based on the following parameters:

- Selecting species based on their potential to provide energy savings
- Selecting species with a higher capacity for carbon storage and sequestration
- Selecting species with higher tolerances and lower vulnerability to climate change impacts

Recommendation 23: Continue to follow both Ajax and Durham Regions' climate mitigation and adaptation plans by planting trees to increase carbon sequestration and reduce impacts from the urban heat island effect via shading and evapotranspiration.

5.4 Urban Heat Mapping and Planting Priorities

Vegetation, particularly tree canopy cover, can significantly reduce land surface temperatures (LST) through tree shading and evapotranspiration, blocking the sun and lowering the air temperature. This is especially important in cities as the large extent of unvegetated, paved areas cause the urban heat island effect, whereby more developed areas have higher temperatures than surrounding rural lands. Increases in the frost-free season and very hot days due to climate change will intensify this effect. Therefore, a robust urban forest is an important tool for heat amelioration to increase resident comfort, avoid heat related health problems, and lower energy bills associated with cooling buildings. Conversely, the loss of urban forest tree cover has been found to increase peak summer LST by 1 to 6 °C and extend the summer warm period by up to 15 days (Elmes et al. 2017). While the loss of canopy cover on its own increases LST by 0.7 °C, if the loss is associated with an equal growth in the exposure of impervious surface, such as paved lands, LST increases by 1.66 °C instead (Rogan et al. 2013).

In Ajax, the spatial distribution of vegetation mirrors LST. This was expected as previous research has found a 90 percent negative correlation between LST and vegetation cover (Ferreira & Duarte 2019). This suggests that given lowering LST is the goal, primary planting prioritization should be given to areas where High LST co-occurs with Low Enhanced Vegetation Index (EVI) values. In Ajax, LST is highest and EVI is lowest in specific *Commercial – Industrial*, and *Residential (Low and Medium/High)* areas. A visual comparison to Ajax’s Health Neighbourhoods shows that Priority 1 areas are predominantly found in Ajax 2, and Ajax 7 to 9 (Durham Region, 2020c). Given the planting priority layer was created using Statistics Canada’s Dissemination Blocks as the unit of analysis, residential neighbourhoods identified as high priority could be targeted by postal code under an education campaign promoting the LEAF program’s opportunities for tree planting and maintenance.

When selecting species for planting, consideration should be given to those that will provide greater canopy cover and the results of Ajax’s climate vulnerability study in the Community Climate Adaptation Plan (2018)

should be taken into account to select those that will respond best to climate change in the region. To maximize benefits, trees should be placed to reduce residential energy bills, as further explained in section 5.3.3. Additionally, plans should consider maintenance for new and existing trees to ensure they survive to maturity and support a large tree canopy.

Recommendation 24: Develop a tree planting plan targeting Priority 1 areas, considering species that are at low risk for climate change as determined by Ajax’s climate vulnerability study in the Climate Risk & Resiliency Plan (2019), and placed when relevant to maximize reductions in residential energy bills.

- Refer to the Planting Priority Areas (Figure 23)

5.5 Past and Future

5.5.1 Historical Change

Meaningful changes to urban forest composition, structure and succession can occur over the span of a decade and have impacts on canopy cover characteristics across an urban landscape. Studies have often considered the significance of decadal growth in natural succession to surmise the effects of a 10-year span on composition and structure in natural settings (Stickney, 1986). The Forest Studies provide an opportunity to compare change through time, given they involve the reassessment of the same pool of randomly distributed plots every 10 years.

There have been significant changes to the extent of canopy cover in Ajax since the last Urban Forest Study in 2009. The i-Tree Canopy model showed a 2 percent increase in canopy cover based on the updated 2009 land cover assessment (estimated 18.4 percent cover in the original 2009 report, 22.1 percent in the updated 2009 assessment to 24.1 percent cover in 2019). Such an increase in canopy cover is likely attributed to the natural growth of the canopy across land use strata but particularly in newer developments and residential areas where trees were more recently planted and have grown into larger size classes. A study examining Canadian urban areas from 1990-2012 found that land use changes from agricultural lands to urban residential landscapes may have an associated increase in canopy cover given newer plantings and tree maturation, supporting this assumption (McGovern and Pasher, 2016). In the case of Ajax, between 2009 and 2022, natural tree growth and by proxy canopy cover have increased in spite of urban intensification. However, the tree population has decreased from the estimated 1,365,760 ($\pm 228,063$) trees in 2009 to 1,190,800 ($\pm 190,528$) trees in 2022 when accounting for trees missed by the decrease in the minimum DBH threshold for measuring trees in forested areas, from 2.5 cm to 5 cm³⁴. This decrease in the number of trees likely due to increased mortality associated with urban stressors and more notably, the impact of EAB (*Agrilus planipennis*) on ash populations. This is reflected by a slight decrease in carbon sequestration and an increase in total storage since 2009, which has decreased from 3,548 to 3,018 tonnes of carbon sequestered per year, and an increase from 105,626 to 117,275 tonnes of total carbon storage. Given the current state, it is important to note that there is a continued need for

³⁴ Note, in the 2009 report, approximately 45% of trees in Ajax fell within the 2.5-7.6 cm (DBH) size class, the most in any class (Figure 12). Additionally, raw data suggests a large portion of this class is made up of trees below 5 cm in DBH across natural/forested areas which are underrepresented in the i-tree assessment.

tree planting and restoration plans as research shows that many younger street trees have high mortality rates associated with poor soil, nutrients, and growing quality (Smith et al., 2019). This is of special concern in residential areas where much of the canopy cover expansion in Ajax has occurred in recent years. A study focusing on street tree morphology shows that while urban street trees show accelerated rates of carbon cycling, up to four times as much as their rural counterparts, but the mean mortality rates of street trees are doubled (Smith et al., 2019). Therefore, without appropriate monitoring and maintenance, the newer urban plantings in Ajax will contribute to these higher mortality rates evidenced in the research. Additionally, the *Open Space – Natural Cover* stratum which provides the greatest number of trees and ecosystem services should be targeted for protection and additional plantings where possible.

Species composition across Ajax's urban forest has seen a shift in both percentage of total trees and total leaf area. The top five species in 2022, by percentage of total trees, represent 52 percent of all tree populations across Ajax, a 2 percent decrease compared to 2009. However, the top two species have increased their dominance, with invasive European buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*) taking over from sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*) as the second most common species. This increase was recorded even with a reduction in the minimum threshold for DBH, from 5 cm to 2.5 cm in forested areas, reducing the count of European buckthorn which tend to have short and narrow growth forms. Ash species (*Fraxinus* spp.) are of interest as well due to their declining numbers. White ash (*Fraxinus americana*) has dropped out of the top five species for 2022 and is replaced by green ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*), at 7 percent of the population. However, since 2009, ash trees (white; green; and black, *Fraxinus nigra*) have decreased in the population as a whole from 149,554 (standard error unreported) to 82,131 ($\pm 46,451$), and as a percentage of the population from 11 percent to 9 percent. This stark decrease is largely explained by the decimating impacts of EAB and while green ash is still in the top five species for population, it is likely due to regenerative younger seedlings and saplings. It should also be noted that the appearance of Scots pine in the top 5 is largely because of existing plantations along the northern extent of Ajax.

In terms of total leaf area, the top five species in 2022 represent 37 percent, an 11 percent decrease from 2009. Most notably, sugar maple leaf area has decreased from 23 percent in 2009 to 10 percent in 2022. While sugar maple still represents the largest proportion of leaf area in Ajax, it is now almost the same as the following two species, who account for 9 percent and 8 percent of the total leaf area, respectively. Population estimates from 2009 and 2022 indicate a decline in the number of sugar maple trees from 150,230 (standard error unreported) to 70,789 ($\pm 39,329$). While the cause of this loss is unclear, given the importance of the species in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence and Deciduous Forest Regions, the loss of sugar maple can have strong cascading impacts on forest composition. Sugar maple is also a key carbon storing species for Ajax, accounting for 15.5 percent of all storage in the municipality. Where applicable, sugar maples should be monitored and considered as part of a restoration planting plan to improve forest health in such natural areas. Additionally, Norway maple and eastern white cedar, species largely found across the *Residential* stratum, are responsible for providing the second and third greatest leaf area cover across Ajax. Both species' leaf areas are disproportionately high and Norway maple is an invasive species, and eastern white cedar represents 22.1 percent of the tree population. Therefore, consideration should be made around species selected to replace these trees once required to ensure the provision of similar leaf area benefits. Retaining leaf area can be a consideration in planting plans in both residential and natural areas.

Condition and tree size are relatively similar in 2022 to those of the previous study. Tree size has marginally increased since 2009, with approximately 64 percent of all trees in Ajax below 15.2 cm, compared to 71 percent in the last study. Condition, when considering good to excellent scores, has changed to 68 percent in 2022 when compared to 76 percent in 2009. However, when including trees in fair condition, the scores are quite similar to the previous study at 80 percent in 2022 and 86 percent in 2009. This may be attributable to surveyor consistency as staff could have slightly different observations when assessing tree condition between categories. While there is a standardized process for rating condition, it is impossible to completely account for surveyor variability. However, it should be noted that the percentage of trees in poor, critical, dying or dead condition has increased from 14 percent in 2009 to 21 percent in 2022. This may reflect a change in the condition of urban trees due to urban stressors, impacts of EAB on ash, and developmental effects.

Overall, since the last study, Ajax has expanded its canopy cover but should continue tree planting efforts, and continually monitor species composition as more invasive species, such as European buckthorn and Manitoba maple, have entered prominence across both the total population and total leaf area. In particular, natural areas should continue to be protected and planting plans should be bolstered. Additionally, maintenance strategies in urban landscapes need to be updated and integrated to improve the health of urban street trees and reduce mortality rates for the future, especially for newer plantings.

Recommendation 8: In line with Ajax’s 2010 Urban Forest Management Plan, the Town should strive to establish a diverse tree population in intensively managed urban areas, in which no species represents more than 10 percent of the tree population, no genus represents more than 15 percent of the tree population, and no family represents more than 30 percent of the tree population, both municipal-wide and at the neighborhood level.

Recommendation 25: Reassess urban tree care and maintenance practices. Predictors associated with high street tree mortality to be considered are the following: selecting hardy species tolerant of harsher urban conditions, direct tree care/stewardship, and assessing local traffic and building conditions.

Recommendation 26: Monitor stand level dynamics and patterns to select Carolinian species, where fit, for restoration of natural forest stands within the Town’s Naturalization and Restoration Plan.

- Considering species within the Schedule A – List of Trees, we recommend the following Carolinian indicator and related species be considered where fit: Butternut, Bitternut Hickory, Shagbark Hickory, Honey Locust, Black Maple, Red Maple, Sugar Maple, Red Mulberry, Red Oak, Swamp White Oak, White Pine, Sassafras, Tamarack, Kentucky Coffee Tree and Black Walnut.

Recommendation 27: Continue assessing urban forest structure, function, and distribution every 10 years through an Urban Forest Study.

5.5.2 Trajectory and Future Projections

The i-Tree Eco suite includes a forecast component that utilizes structural estimates generated via the i-Tree Eco model, such as number of trees, species composition, size, etc., alongside growth, mortality, and planting rates to estimate future forest conditions across a thirty-year span. Based on Ajax’s current planting programs, expected canopy growth, and the continued impact of EAB, spongy moth (*Lymantria dispar dispar*) and beech bark disease (*Neonectria faginata*) in the next ten years, the outputs of the model show that canopy cover is

expected to increase by 7.3 percent to 31.4 percent by 2053 under the thirty-year planting scenario. Under the Naturalization and Restoration Plan, canopy cover is expected to reach 31.57 percent by 2053. In a scenario when both the duration is halved (fifteen-year plan), canopy cover is expected to reach 31 percent. Lastly, under the no planting scenario, canopy cover is expected to reach 30.4 percent by 2053. The forecast predicts a positive trajectory for canopy cover and shows Ajax within the recommended canopy range of 30 percent by 2053 under all scenarios. Assuming planting programs are implemented as planned and tree maintenance and management are sustained, this potential increase in canopy cover is likely achievable.

While the potential increase in canopy cover output by the forecast model may be feasible, the projected loss of trees due to increased mortality should be considered in Ajax's planting plans. By 2053, the tree population, as derived from the forecast model, is expected to decline from 1.19 million to 954,000 under the current thirty-year planting scenario, to 980,000 trees under the Naturalization and Restoration Plan, to 908,000 under the halved duration (fifteen-year) planting scenario, or to 870,000 under the no planting scenario. As the canopy across Ajax continues to mature (largely consisting of existing trees that have shifted into larger size classes) the overall expected losses are anticipated to outpace the rate of canopy growth over time. The contrast between expected tree numbers across each scenario further highlights the need to continue plantings in priority areas. Adhering to a similar rate of planting as outlined in the Naturalization and Restoration Plan, and where possible improving upon the planting rate, would greatly reduce the loss associated with high mortality rates for trees in urban spaces. Furthermore, to ensure the success of new plantings, there is a need to develop a post-tree planting management strategy to alleviate some of the causes associated with high mortality rates in young, newly planted urban trees (Smith et al., 2019). Ultimately, while the projected canopy cover estimates provide a lens to the future of Ajax's forest, they should be considered in the context of an ever-changing climate, future land use changes, and the impacts of urban conditions on tree health.

The forecast cannot accurately account for complex changing conditions, specifically climate change. Frost-free days were increased in Ajax to account for a changing climate, however this does not completely capture the dynamic nature and compounded effects of climate change. One such impact is the shifting geographical ranges of common and dominant tree species. For example, eastern white cedar is at its southernmost extent in Ajax and is at risk of being extirpated. Given that the species accounts for the largest proportion of the tree population, this risk is of the utmost concern. Actions should be taken to encourage planting alternative, less vulnerable native and non-native naturalized species, where possible, and eastern white cedar should be monitored in natural settings for restoration management as they dominate fresh-moist ecosites.

Additionally, the northward shift of species' range can function to introduce pests and diseases novel to the region. As of 2021, oak wilt (*Bretziella fagacearum*) had not yet crossed into Canada from the United States, but hemlock woolly adelgid (*Adelges tsugae*) has been reported in the Niagara Peninsula at Wainfleet and Fort Erie. Both are of concern to Ajax in the near future and should be monitored. Successful planning for future, concerning pests and diseases is predicated on the provincial, regional, and municipality-wide control responses and proactive management.

The forecast outputs should be considered critically given the limited capacity to consider all possible factors that influence future canopy cover in the model and the uncertainty surrounding future climatic changes. However, the results of the forecast are currently encouraging, and provide guidance to suggest the Town

should continue with restoration, tree planting, replacement, maintenance, and monitoring on public and private property – especially as Ajax continues to urbanize.

Recommendation 22: Assess the Town’s current recommended planting list, in the Town of Ajax ‘Tree Atlas’, and shift recommendations, based on planting plans, to native and appropriate non-native, non-invasive species based on the following parameters:

- Selecting species based on their potential to provide energy savings
- Selecting species with a higher capacity for carbon storage and sequestration
- Selecting species with higher tolerances and lower vulnerability to climate change impacts

Recommendation 28: Develop a post-tree planting maintenance, management and monitoring strategy and program to ensure tree survivorship and mitigate common stressors in the urban environment.

- It is recommended that management, monitoring, and maintenance begin directly after tree planting. Monitoring of municipal plantings should be undertaken for at least five years following planting (year 1, 3 and 5). Some stressors to mitigate include soil compaction, salt pollution, mechanical injuries, and drought related stress.

5.6 Urban Forestry and Asset Management

Asset management planning is intended to support the management of municipal assets over their entire life cycle to ensure sustainable service delivery, manage risks to an acceptable level, and keep costs to a minimum. In recognition of the essential role played by green infrastructure in municipal service provision, *Ontario Regulation 588/17 Asset Management Planning for Municipal Infrastructure (O.Reg.588/17)* directs municipalities to include green infrastructure assets in asset management plans by July 2024. The regulation defines green infrastructure as “an infrastructure asset consisting of natural or human-made elements that provide ecological and hydrological functions and processes and includes natural heritage features and systems, parklands, stormwater management systems, street trees, urban forests, natural channels, permeable surfaces and green roofs.”³⁵ This presents an opportunity to prioritize green infrastructure assets in conjunction with traditional assets to support their long-term funding needs for development, maintenance, enhancement, and replacement.

The first, foundational component of asset management planning is summarizing the state of municipal infrastructure. In this stage, municipalities identify the assets they own, the monetary value of these assets, how old the assets are, and the condition of assets. Ajax has already begun incorporating green infrastructure, including the urban forest through boulevard trees, in their Corporate Asset Management Plan (Town of Ajax, 2017). Since then, in 2021, Ajax updated their replacement value estimate for park and boulevard trees and calculated the value of 87.9 hectares of woodlot, at \$45,145,144.20 and \$5,897,216.27, respectively.

³⁵ Definition sourced from *O.Reg.588/17* at <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/r17588>.

The structural valuation that was undertaken in this Urban Forest Study report differs from the asset valuation the Town has undertaken for their Corporate Asset Management Plan. One major difference is that the valuation for this study includes both public and private trees, while the asset valuation for the Corporate Asset Management Plan focuses solely on the replacement cost of Town-owned boulevard trees or woodlots.

Recommendation 29: Continue to integrate green infrastructure into asset management planning.

Recommendation 30: Continue to encourage uptake of green space additions in development planning processes as outlined in the Official Plan and Ajax Green Standard.

5.7 Progress Towards Implementing Recommendations from 2009 Urban Forest Study

Number	Ajax Urban Forest Study (2009) Recommendations	2009-2022 Progress
Criterion: Town-wide Management Plan		
1	Develop and implement a strategic urban forest management plan for all public and private property in the Town of Ajax.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ajax published its Urban Forest Management Plan, directing the management of the forest between 2011-2015, with an additional 20-year strategic framework. https://www.ajax.ca/en/get-involved/resources/Sustainability/Trees/UFMP-14-Dec-2010-Final-with-Appendices.pdf
2	Utilize the criteria and performance indicators developed by Urban Forest Innovations and Kenney (2008) to guide the creation of a strategic management plan and to assess the progress made towards urban forest sustainability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Ajax Urban Forest Management Plan (2010) recommends that progress is monitored using Kenney et al. (2008) indicators on a regular basis (i.e., every five years).
Criterion: Sustainable Canopy Cover		
3	Conduct an Urban Tree Canopy (UTC) assessment of the Town of Ajax using the methodology proposed by the USDA Forest Service. This cover analysis will map the existing and potential tree cover and will facilitate the selection of priority planting areas. Future tree cover targets can then be determined accordingly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This recommendation was carried forward in the 2010 Urban Forest Management Plan and updated for the 2022 report.
4	Conduct a full i-Tree Eco (UFORE) analysis again in 2013 to capture trends in tree establishment as well as leaf area, species diversity, and tree health.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2010 Urban Forest Management Plan deferred this to accommodate other priorities. This report serves as the next iteration of the i-Tree Eco (UFORE) analysis.
Criterion: Tree Inventory		
5	Conduct a complete inventory of all publicly owned trees using the STRATUM protocol created by the USDA Forest Service. Update the inventory on an on-going basis by systematically entering all new plantings and tree removals into a municipal inventory database. Conduct a complete re-inventory every	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This recommendation was carried forward in the 2010 Urban Forest Management Plan. The Town of Ajax last updated their tree inventory in 2021.

five years. The inventory should be used to guide the selection of new species for planting in order to ensure that diversity targets are being met.

Criterion: Tree Protection Policy Development and Enforcement

6

Develop and implement a private tree protection by-law that regulates the injury and removal of trees located on privately owned property. Specifications for protection to trees during construction activity must be included.

- While Ajax has two tree protection by-laws for municipally owned trees on select public and private lands, and they have explored the cost and effectiveness of a private tree protection by-law, it has not yet been developed. Therefore, this recommendation has been carried forward in the 2022 Urban Forest Study.
- Durham Region also has a tree protection by-law for woodlands, but not private, individual trees.
- The Ajax Official Plan does require a Tree Inventory and Preservation Plan for any development or site alteration where private or public trees/vegetation exist within the property and/or exist a minimum of three metres beyond the property line (policy 5.3(u)).

Criterion: General Awareness of Trees as a Community Resource

7

Conduct a detailed assessment of potential opportunities to enhance urban forest stewardship through public education and outreach programs.

- The Town of Ajax provides public education about trees through their online resources, such as the [Tree Atlas](#), [Green Living Guide](#), [Tree Care Kit](#), [Caring for Your Street Tree](#), on social media as part of the LEAF programs, as well as in-person planting and environmental events.

Criterion: Tree Establishment Planning and Implementation		
8	Increase leaf area in canopied areas by planting suitable tree and shrub species under existing tree cover. Planting efforts should be focused in areas where mature and aging trees are over-represented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This recommendation was carried forward in the 2010 Urban Forest Management Plan. Since then, Ajax has been planting under existing tree cover where possible and appropriate. This recommendation has been undated for the 2022 report.
9	Increase leaf area and tree cover at locations surrounding common emissions sources such as highways and industrial centres. Tree species that are pollution tolerant and that maintain a high stomatal conductance should be utilized in these locations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ajax has continued to explore planting along provincial and regional corridors in collaboration with both governments. This recommendation was carried forward in the 2010 Urban Forest Management Plan and updated for the 2022 report.
10	Focus tree planting and establishment in “hot-spots” identified by thermal mapping analysis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ajax previously worked with NASA to conduct a thermal mapping analysis and subsequent Social Vulnerability layer to be incorporated into their planting plan. The urban heat mapping and overlay analysis with vegetation in this report is the next step in targeting planting to areas that would most benefit from increased canopy cover. This recommendation will be incorporated in the new 5-year Restoration and Naturalization Plan to focus on areas that would most benefit from increased canopy cover.
11	Apply and monitor the use of structural soils, sub-surface cells and other enhanced rooting environment techniques for street trees. Utilizing these technologies at selected test-sites in the short-term may provide a cost-effective means of integrating these systems into the municipal budget.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ajax has continued to work internally and with developers to incorporate enhanced rooting techniques where soil volumes cannot be met and growing space is limited. This recommendation was carried forward in the 2010 Urban Forest Management Plan and updated for the 2022 report.

12	Encourage natural regeneration where appropriate by minimizing unnecessary disturbance such as grass mowing and high-impact public recreation. Selected areas in parks and open spaces should be fenced off to protect the growth of new saplings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This recommendation was carried forward in the 2010 Urban Forest Management Plan but not in the 2022 report as these practices are now common standards in development plans. • Ajax will include this recommendation in the new 5-year Restoration and Naturalization Plan as part of current campaigns such as “No Mow May”.
13	Implement a municipal standard for required soil volumes for all plantings on public property; a minimum of 2 cubic feet of soil volume for every square foot of future crown area spread is recommended; however larger soil volumes are strongly encouraged where possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This recommendation was carried forward in the 2010 Urban Forest Management Plan.
14	Utilize the Pest Vulnerability Matrix during species selection for municipal tree and shrub planting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This recommendation was carried forward and developed in the 2010 Urban Forest Management Plan. New recommendations included implementing plant health care, improving tree habitat, diversifying the forest, conducting a public tree inventory, updating the Pest Vulnerability Matrix, and developing targeted strategies for pest management. An ash tree inventory was specifically highlighted to effectively manage EAB infestations. • This recommendation has also been updated for the 2022 report.
Criterion: Species Distribution		
15	Establish a diverse tree population in which no single species represents more than 5 percent and no single genus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This recommendation was amended in the 2010 Urban Forest Management Plan to no tree family exceeds 30 percent, no

	represents more than 10 percent of the entire tree population city-wide or at the neighbourhood / street segment level.	genus exceeds 20 percent, and no species exceeds 10 percent of the inventory.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This recommendation was carried forward to the 2022 report to underscore the importance of a diverse urban forest and guide diversification efforts.
Criterion: Age Distribution of Trees in the Community		
16	Determine the relative DBH of the tree population in Ajax. Establish a tree population that is divided equally among the four relative age-classes as proposed by Urban Forest Innovations, Inc. and Kenney (2008).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This recommendation was carried forward in the 2010 Urban Forest Management Plan, but only concerning municipal trees.
Criterion: Native Vegetation		
17	Utilize native planting stock grown from locally adapted seed sources on a project appropriate basis in both intensively and extensively managed areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This recommendation was carried forward in the 2010 Urban Forest Management Plan and updated for the 2022 report.
18	In collaboration with the TRCA, develop strategies for implementing invasive species control measures in infested areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This recommendation was carried forward in the 2010 Urban Forest Management Plan.
Additional Recommendations		
19	Undertake a formal investigation of opportunities for green roof development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This recommendation was removed from the 2010 Urban Forest Management Plan as green roofs were considered unable to accommodate medium and large trees. However, following the creation of the Ajax Green Standards, an updated recommendation has been included in the 2022 report.
20	Conduct an assessment of current urban forest maintenance activities (e.g., pruning, tree planting) to determine areas where a reduction in fossil fuel use can be achieved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2010 Urban Forest Management Plan provided an assessment of current maintenance but did not consider an emissions analysis. Since then, Ajax has been transitioning away from fossil fueled to battery powered equipment.

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- 21 Reduce residential energy consumption by providing direction and assistance to residents for strategic tree planting around buildings.
- Through the Town's [Tree Care Kit](#) and LEAF social media awareness programs, homeowners are given guidance on how to do this through the selection and placement of trees.
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6.0 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: As listed in the Official Plan, continue to implement the tree canopy compensation policy (2.1.4) in efforts to manage changes to land use following new developments. Where applicable, develop policy to incorporate monetary incentives for green space additions in new developments.

Recommendation 2: As outlined in the Official Plan (2.1.3) and the Ajax Green Standard, continue to encourage and incentivize the integration of green roof additions in the form of traditional green roof planters and small urban agricultural spaces where possible. Consider emphasizing the impact of incorporating cool roofing recommendations in tandem with green roof additions to improve energy savings and reduce urban heat island impacts.

Recommendation 3: Set an official canopy cover target and proposed timeframe for achieving it. Based on common practice, consider a target of at least 30 percent canopy cover.

Recommendation 4: Engage and potentially incentivize commercial and industrial landowners to undertake tree planting and educate those landowners about maintenance best practices.

Recommendation 5: Finalize partnership with LEAF to implement a subsidized tree planting program to assist homeowners with the replacement of dead, dying, hazardous and/or invasive species.

Recommendation 6: The Town of Ajax should continue to develop and implement a 5-year Naturalization and Restoration Plan.

Recommendation 7: In line with naturalization recommendations from the Recreation & Parks Master Plan, continue to bolster natural plantings where appropriate, as opposed to standalone or individual plantings in open and natural park spaces.

Recommendation 8: In line with Ajax's 2010 Urban Forest Management Plan, the Town should strive to establish a diverse tree population in intensively managed urban areas, in which no species represents more than 10 percent of the tree population, no genus represents more than 15 percent of the tree population, and no family represents more than 30 percent of the tree population, both municipal-wide and at the neighborhood level.

Recommendation 9: Investigate updating and applying the Pest Vulnerability Matrix (PVM) for species selection in municipal tree and shrub planting.

Recommendation 10: Consider development of an education campaign focused on educating private landowners about the importance of species diversity for a resilient urban forest, particularly in the context of climate change.

Recommendation 11: Utilize native planting and appropriate non-native, non-invasive stock in both intensively and extensively managed areas. Increase genetic diversity of tree populations by using the guidance provided by the Ontario Tree Seed Transfer Policy. The policy is intended to help managers source seed based on the projected changes in climate to increase the likelihood of producing trees well-adapted to current and future conditions.

Recommendation 12: Continue to educate and incentivize private landowners through the LEAF program to plant a greater diversity of native, resilient species to increase the functional diversity in Ajax. Encourage private landowners to plant alternatives to eastern white cedar given its high vulnerability to climate change.

Recommendation 13: Evaluate and develop the strategic steps required to increase the proportion of large, mature trees in the urban forest.

Recommendation 14: As outlined in the Official Plan and Ajax Green Standard, encourage uptake of tree preservation requirements listed in municipal guidelines and recommendations to incorporate sustainable streetscape and subdivision design standards to support green space establishment.

Recommendation 15: As outlined in the Official Plan, consider enacting a Town-wide tree cutting by-law to regulate the destruction or injury of trees.

Recommendation 16: Select and plant long lived, low maintenance, and low VOC emitting tree species.

Recommendation 17: Bolster evergreen tree population across the municipality to improve year-round pollution removal services.

Recommendation 18: Engage in strategic tree planting in high emission zones within the Town of Ajax jurisdiction.

Recommendation 19: Consider developing an education campaign and community stewardship program focused on educating the public about the ecosystem benefits that Ajax's urban forest provides.

Recommendation 20: Continue to advocate for the application of subsurface (Silva) cells and other enhanced rooting environment techniques for street trees.

Recommendation 21: Explore the opportunity to utilize the Sustainable Technology Evaluation Program Treatment Train Tool to evaluate and quantify the stormwater benefits of planting trees.

Recommendation 22: Assess the Town's current recommended planting list, in the Town of Ajax 'Tree Atlas', and shift recommendations, based on planting plans, to native and appropriate non-native, non-invasive species based on the following parameters:

Recommendation 23: Continue to follow both Ajax and Durham Regions' climate mitigation and adaptation plans by planting trees to increase carbon sequestration and reduce impacts from the urban heat island effect via shading and evapotranspiration.

Recommendation 24: Develop a tree planting plan targeting Priority 1 areas, considering species that are at low risk for climate change as determined in Ajax's climate vulnerability study in the Climate Risk & Resiliency Plan (2019), and placed when relevant to maximize reductions in residential energy bills.

Recommendation 25: Reassess urban tree care and maintenance practices. Predictors associated with high street tree mortality to be considered are the following: selecting hardy species tolerant of harsher urban conditions, direct tree care/stewardship, and assessing local traffic and building conditions.

Recommendation 26: Monitor stand level dynamics and patterns to select Carolinian species, where fit, for restoration of natural forest stands within the Town's Naturalization and Restoration Plan.

Recommendation 27: Continue assessing urban forest structure, function, and distribution every 10 years through an Urban Forest Study.

Recommendation 28: Develop a post-tree planting maintenance, management and monitoring strategy and program to ensure tree survivorship and mitigate common stressors in the urban environment.

Recommendation 29: Continue to integrate green infrastructure into asset management planning.

Recommendation 30: Continue to encourage uptake of green space additions in development planning processes as outlined in the Official Plan and Ajax Green Standard.

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APPENDIX A: MPAC LAND USE CATEGORIES

Table 19: Description of Land Use Classes

Generalized Land Use Class		MPAC Land Uses within each Generalized Class
1	Open Space	<p>Municipal parks, golf courses, cemeteries, and campgrounds.</p> <p>Open Space was combined with the Natural Cover land use class for this report.</p>
2	Residential Low	<p>Single family detached houses, semi-detached houses, residence with a commercial unit, residence with commercial/industrial use building, linked homes, community lifestyle homes, townhouse/row houses, clergy residences, house-keeping cottages, group homes, student housing, bed & breakfasts.</p> <p>The Residential Low land use category was combined with the Residential Medium/High land use stratum.</p>
3	Residential Medium / High	<p>Townhouse blocks, row housing (3 or more) under single ownership, residential property with four-self contained units, rooming or board houses; bachelorettes, cooperative housing, multi-residential (7 or more), condominium units.</p> <p>Residential Medium/High was combined with the Residential Low land use class.</p>
4	Commercial	<p>Office buildings, retail, Beer Stores or LCBOs, restaurants, cinemas, concert halls, entertainment complexes, automotive service centres, fuel stations, automotive shops/dealers, shopping centres, department stores, banks and financial institutions, supermarkets, hotels, motels, lodges, inns, resorts, commercial condominiums, parking lots or garages, funeral homes, bowling alleys, casinos, crematoriums, vacant commercial lands.</p> <p>The Commercial land use category was combined with Industrial land use.</p>
5	Utilities – Transportation	<p>Communication buildings, hydraulic, fossil or nuclear generating stations, transformer stations, Hydro Right of Ways, wind turbines, airports, public transportation-easements and rights, bridges/tunnels, pipelines, compressor stations, railway right of ways, railway buildings and lands, rail stations/yards, airport leasehold or hangars, subway stations, transit garages, public transportation, lighthouses, wharves and harbours, canals and locks, navigational facilities, historic site/monuments, communication.</p> <p>Utilities – Transportation lands were combined with rights-of-way (ROWs) for this assessment.</p>
6	Industrial	<p>Mines, mine tailings, oil/gas wells, sawmill/lumber mills, forest products, heavy manufacturing, pulp and paper mills, cement/asphalt manufacturing, steel mills, automotive assembly or parts plant, shipyards, steel production, smelters, foundries, distilleries/breweries, grain elevators and handling, process elevators, slaughterhouses, food processing plants, freezer plants, warehouses, dry cleaning, R&D facilities, other industrial, printing plants, truck terminals, major distribution centres, petro-chemical plants, oil refineries, tank farms, bulk oil/fuel distribution terminals, gravel pits, quarries, sand pits, peat moss operations, heat or steam</p>

plants, sewerage treatments, water treatments, recycling plants, power dams, vacant industrial lands.

The Industrial land use category was combined with the Commercial land use category.

7	Institutional	<p>Post-secondary educational, educational residence, school, day care, other education, institutional residence, hospital, senior care facility/retirement/nursing/old age homes, other health care facilities, penitentiary or correctional facilities, places of worship, museums or art galleries, libraries, conference centres, banquet or assembly halls, clubs, research facilities, military properties, post offices/depots, fire halls, ambulance stations, police stations.</p> <p>The Institutional land use category was combined with the Other land use category for this assessment.</p>
8	Agricultural	<p>Farms with or without buildings, farms with or without residence, wineries, grain/seed and feed operations, tobacco farms, ginseng farms, exotic farms, nut orchards, farms with gravel pit, farms with campground, intensive farm operations, large scale greenhouses, large scale swine or poultry operations, agricultural research facilities, farms with oil/gas, portion being farmed</p>
9	Natural Cover	<p>Managed forest properties, provincial or federal parks, lands designated/zoned for open space, conservation authority lands.</p> <p>Natural Cover was combined with the Open Space land use class for this report.</p>
10	Other	<p>Water, marina, billboard, island, time-share, seasonal/recreational dwelling, mining lands, non-buildable land walkways, buffer/berm, stormwater management pond, vacant residential land, vacant lot, residential dockominium, boathouse, vacant recreational, common land, co-ownership, life lease, racetrack, exhibition/fair grounds, sports complex, amusement park, sport club, golf centre/driving range, condominium development land, property in process of redevelopment, residential development land, cooperative housing, vacant land condominium, condominium parking space/locker unit</p> <p>The Other land use category was combined with the Institutional land use category for this assessment.</p>
11	Right-of-way	<p>Rights-of-way (ROWS) including smaller roads and adjacent ROW. Added to land use layer by UVM by filling in the gaps between parcel boundaries.</p> <p>ROWS were included in the Utilities – Transportation stratum for this report.</p>

APPENDIX B: PARAMETERS USED FOR I-TREE FORECAST

Table 20: General simulation parameters used for i-Tree Forecast

Parameter	Value	Comments
Simulation period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2023 – 2053 (30 years) 	
Length of frost-free season	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 178 days 	Average of current frost-free season and projected frost-free season according to Historical and Future Climate Trends in York Region
Base annual tree mortality rate for healthy trees (dieback <50%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.6% 	The base annual mortality rate based on projected mortality rate used in relevant previous forest studies.
Base annual tree mortality rate for sick trees (dieback 50-75%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13.1% (default) 	Default values were used as no locally applicable data on the impact of health on annual mortality.
Base annual tree mortality rate for dying trees (>76% dieback)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50% (default) 	
Base annual tree mortality rate for dead trees (100% die back)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% (default) 	

Table 21: Simulation parameters for pests

Insect	Start of outbreak and duration	Annual mortality rate from outbreak ³⁶	Plant host trees during event (i.e. plant trees affected by pest/disease)?	Notes
Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)	2023, three years	Default value: 3.3% ³⁷	No	Mortality rates in Michigan at the peak of the outbreak were as high as 100% (Klooster et al., 2014). However, since we are passed the peak in Ontario the lower value recommended by i-Tree Eco will be used. EAB is nearing past its peak and phasing out in Ontario according to TRCA staff.

³⁶ Mortality rates only apply to species affected by pest.

³⁷ Default mortality rates are based on a synthesis of literature by the i-Tree Eco team.

Spongy moth	2023, three years	4.4%	No	<p>Mortality rate depends on the crown condition prior to defoliation, the extent of defoliation, and the number of years defoliation was seen (Davidson et al., 1999). Davidson et al. (1999) found that mortality rates within five years could be as high as 50% following two consecutive severe defoliations of a tree with fair crown condition and as low as 7% for a single year of defoliation in a tree with good crown condition. The default value of 10% annual mortality rate is consistent with assuming two severe defoliations of a tree with fair or poor crown condition.</p> <p>A more conservative estimate would be to assume 2 years of defoliation of a tree in good crown condition. Davidson et al. (1999) found a mortality rate of 22% over five years, translating to an annual mortality rate of 4.4%. The default value provided by i-Tree Eco is 10.0 %.</p>
Beech Bark Disease (BBD)	2023, 10 years	2.35% (Default is 4.7%)	No	<p>According to Reed et al. (2022) BBD has been in Ontario since the 2000s and is moving eastwards and northwards. Mortality also occurs within a long time frame of five to 10 years. So it is anticipated that it will be here for still many years. Their study of plots around Lake Erie indicated that 4% of Beech trees were affected. Mortality rate for trees with a high density of scale was 50% within 10 years. That translates to 0.5% per year. Therefore, the annual mortality rate was reduced from the default mortality rate of 4.7% to 2.35% (0.5 x 4.7). The default value provided by i-Tree Eco is 4.7%.</p>

Ajax Tree Planting Parameters

- Based on average current rate of planting from 2014-2022, where available data was most complete.
- Years with no planting data between 2014-2022 were removed from consideration.

Table 22: Tree planting simulation parameters for Ajax

Stratum/Strata	Annual Planting Rate	DBH at planting	Start	Duration (years)	Comments
Utilities – Transportation	965 / year	5 cm	2023	15-30	Based on average, from 2014-22, Boulevard Tree Plantings. Included under the 15 and 30-year planting plan.
Open Space – Natural Cover	538 / year	5 cm	2023	15-30	Based on average, from 2014-22, Contracted Tree Plantings. Included under the 15 and 30-year planting plan.
Open Space – Natural Cover	2,182 / year	1 cm	2023	15-30	Based on average, from 2014-22, Community Planting, Contracted Tree Planting and Contracted Shrub Plantings. Included under the 15 and 30-year planting plan.
Open Space – Natural Cover	1,865 / year	1 cm	2023	30	Based on scheduled tree planting numbers included under the Naturalization and Restoration Plan.
Open Space – Natural Cover	206 / year	5 cm	2023	30	Based on scheduled tree planting numbers included under the Naturalization and Restoration Plan.
Other – Institutional	1,865 / year	1 cm	2023	30	Based on scheduled tree planting numbers included under the Naturalization and Restoration Plan.
Utilities – Transportation	800 / year	5 cm	2023	30	Based on scheduled tree planting numbers included under the Naturalization and Restoration Plan.

APPENDIX C: URBAN FOREST COMPOSITION AND STRUCTURE

Table 23: i-Tree Eco derived Composition and Structure by Species across Ajax

Species	Trees		Leaf Area		Leaf Biomass		Tree Dry Weight Biomass		Average Condition
	Number	SE	(ha)	SE	(metric ton)	SE	(metric ton)	SE	(%)
Northern white cedar	182459	±65,564	498.87	±214.750	959.37	±412.981	20,401.599	±7,555.158	93.70
European buckthorn	86661	±34,403	204.84	±73.291	91.04	±32.574	3,598.646	±1,281.774	79.02
Sugar maple	70789	±39,329	716.88	±382.015	431.88	±230.144	36,362.756	±21,494.580	81.48
Green ash	62860	±35,153	21.03	±8.586	13.71	±5.600	8,169.744	±4,475.503	13.85
Scots pine	41062	±24,982	146.09	±84.371	140.81	±81.321	2,484.919	±1,350.703	90.45
Eastern hemlock	30899	±15,451	353.95	±186.342	328.77	±173.084	6,501.710	±2,950.272	89.19
Boxelder	28170	±11,235	272.53	±120.953	249.32	±110.652	6,651.476	±3,504.963	87.00
American elm	24103	±18,379	37.78	±25.580	27.48	±18.605	1,089.031	±862.808	44.82
Norway maple	21558	±7,055	669.07	±231.146	361.13	±124.762	19,104.873	±7,406.766	84.67
White cedar	19839	±19,821	16.63	±16.618	10.13	±10.118	647.03	±646.461	80.49
White spruce	19511	±10,881	125.41	±54.575	201.45	±87.670	2,106.155	±989.594	93.55
Quaking aspen	16732	±9,459	86.40	±56.146	68.03	±44.213	2,620.774	±1,590.957	83.68
Staghorn sumac	15885	±13,179	5.63	±4.263	5.00	±3.788	474.67	±425.515	71.92
Eastern white pine	15650	±7,032	312.69	±143.863	201.10	±92.522	3,877.927	±2,066.652	95.77
American beech	15456	±12,258	119.08	±105.309	50.74	±44.875	1,400.648	±1,099.542	97.82
Austrian pine	14525	±8,852	280.02	±132.401	269.90	±127.615	6,673.535	±3,711.250	78.51
Thornless honeylocust	14049	±6,182	316.73	±176.269	331.69	±184.594	10,468.902	±6,291.988	92.05
American basswood	12745	±5,466	182.20	±92.748	53.19	±27.078	4,112.504	±2,440.927	90.07
Paper birch	11790	±9,225	125.31	±104.462	87.64	±73.056	3,721.958	±3,398.805	85.89
Black locust	10769	±7,591	119.81	±84.188	64.51	±45.326	3,358.010	±2,347.248	85.87
Freeman maple	10192	±3,707	297.97	±123.006	167.71	±69.233	18,254.239	±10,267.893	95.44
Yellow birch	8502	±4,316	131.58	±103.457	54.48	±42.839	2,513.203	±1,468.633	86.60
Black ash	8502	±6,254	2.39	±1.725	1.43	±1.027	147.25	±104.865	19.23

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White ash	8073	±3,075	22.05	±17.717	12.53	±10.067	6,707.520	±5,536.421	37.85
Black walnut	7982	±4,249	247.23	±179.801	198.15	±144.106	1,853.751	±1,415.430	97.37
Littleleaf linden	7277	±2,776	188.66	±115.939	141.33	±86.852	2,601.619	±1,439.536	90.19
Silver maple	6942	±3,323	227.77	±152.557	119.88	±80.297	3,934.210	±2,849.154	91.19
Red pine	6702	±5,223	21.08	±18.830	31.00	±27.690	1,687.435	±1,536.789	72.82
Crack willow	6545	±6,541	2.23	±2.226	1.41	±1.410	16.17	±16.157	77.13
European larch	5194	±3,842	76.55	±62.849	49.50	±40.637	1,927.919	±1,469.828	97.00
Blue spruce	5188	±2,457	174.30	±119.037	290.20	±198.197	2,965.644	±1,969.884	87.53
Paradise apple	5106	±2,086	29.60	±18.875	25.52	±16.273	1,253.030	±828.466	81.93
Northern hackberry	4988	±4,093	45.93	±33.255	23.90	±17.302	115.76	±86.394	96.43
Eastern red cedar	4981	±4,177	15.67	±11.106	43.55	±30.859	323.65	±244.755	99.50
Rose-of-sharon	4501	±3,690	2.73	±2.057	1.32	±0.994	77.32	±56.647	99.50
Black willow	4332	±2,559	181.42	±125.860	114.92	±79.729	10,715.965	±7,327.360	91.97
Black cherry	4155	±2,198	9.93	±5.673	7.70	±4.400	1,054.495	±708.977	75.31
Red maple	3968	±2,542	59.97	±49.378	40.39	±33.256	980.34	±861.652	94.93
Callery pear	3841	±2,291	12.71	±10.418	9.56	±7.838	299.30	±255.949	94.98
Northern red oak	3741	±2,393	122.75	±88.785	97.81	±70.745	2,547.469	±1,846.517	85.08
White mulberry	3601	±1,738	4.06	±2.245	2.97	±1.642	206.62	±136.621	99.50
Nannyberry	3553	±3,038	5.11	±4.222	2.67	±2.211	89.28	±81.815	99.50
Balsam poplar	3401	±2,502	7.49	±5.511	5.41	±3.976	123.40	±90.063	71.42
Black maple	3272	±3,270	67.59	±67.546	38.04	±38.018	2,476.238	±2,474.724	83.50
White poplar	3272	±3,270	104.07	±104.002	90.49	±90.436	2,740.946	±2,739.270	72.50
American hornbeam	3174	±2,333	6.98	±4.933	4.21	±2.972	60.01	±43.787	62.05
Eastern cottonwood	3036	±2,269	50.73	±35.866	36.60	±25.879	631.70	±506.489	97.82
Nootka cypress	2941	±2,229	17.15	±16.112	40.21	±37.769	525.73	±494.285	97.97
Bur oak	2934	±2,126	37.52	±28.766	36.86	±28.265	410.15	±307.619	98.53
Amur maple	2701	±1,523	32.45	±28.496	18.26	±16.039	1,498.751	±1,302.349	99.50
Northern catalpa	2701	±2,699	12.56	±12.552	7.65	±7.642	853.72	±853.243	96.17
ash spp	2696	±1,969	0.00	±0.000	0.00	±0.000	4,493.896	±3,601.244	0.00
Autumn olive	2454	±2,453	0.61	±0.607	0.32	±0.315	11.30	±11.296	37.67
Eastern hophornbeam	2267	±2,265	33.60	±33.570	21.93	±21.915	177.80	±177.644	97.00
Butternut	2203	±1,730	20.01	±18.454	11.05	±10.195	285.50	±203.256	70.92
Sweet cherry	2040	±1,418	49.40	±48.868	38.22	±37.812	6,007.502	±5,983.772	97.00

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Siberian elm	2040	±2,039	1.02	±1.017	0.69	±0.693	15.92	±15.913	82.50
apple spp	1952	±1,397	23.22	±19.763	20.02	±17.038	822.91	±803.215	88.75
European mountain ash	1920	±1,360	12.15	±8.723	9.64	±6.923	315.88	±243.253	96.84
Japanese tree lilac	1920	±1,360	1.65	±1.170	1.60	±1.129	85.18	±66.944	82.50
Japanese maple	1800	±1,258	12.60	±10.562	7.09	±5.945	136.06	±121.908	91.00
Alternateteaf dogwood	1800	±1,258	1.57	±1.234	1.05	±0.823	144.53	±101.482	99.50
Common lilac	1800	±1,258	1.82	±1.331	1.76	±1.284	139.39	±127.502	97.00
Hedge maple	1700	±1,699	4.82	±4.815	2.71	±2.710	76.85	±76.787	99.50
American sycamore	1700	±1,699	1.48	±1.479	0.72	±0.716	29.60	±29.577	41.67
Bigtooth aspen	1587	±1,166	1.24	±1.008	0.63	±0.514	5.75	±4.419	88.57
Horse chestnut	1134	±789	88.41	±64.178	61.83	±44.883	6,637.237	±5,475.648	94.50
Grey alder	1134	±1,133	6.00	±5.992	4.37	±4.368	9.41	±9.400	99.50
Jack pine	1134	±1,133	0.00	±0.000	0.00	±0.000	205.26	±205.082	0.00
Balsam fir	1020	±1,020	0.27	±0.267	0.28	±0.279	398.18	±397.988	13.00
Tulip tree	1020	±1,020	5.78	±5.774	3.41	±3.404	27.06	±27.042	99.50
London planetree	1020	±1,020	0.59	±0.590	0.26	±0.257	4.78	±4.780	82.50
Common pear	1020	±1,020	0.02	±0.017	0.01	±0.013	2.66	±2.661	99.50
Northern pin oak	1020	±1,020	1.36	±1.357	1.40	±1.399	43.26	±43.239	99.50
Ginkgo	995	±995	1.04	±1.042	1.00	±1.001	6.26	±6.261	99.50
European spindletree	900	±900	0.73	±0.728	0.54	±0.542	53.76	±53.730	99.50
Kentucky coffee tree	900	±900	8.32	±8.315	7.05	±7.046	121.16	±121.097	99.50
Siberian crabapple	900	±900	32.21	±32.187	27.77	±27.750	516.96	±516.671	99.50
Swamp white oak	900	±900	2.44	±2.439	2.40	±2.397	65.17	±65.135	99.50
Hybrid yew	900	±900	1.04	±1.044	1.28	±1.274	140.55	±140.468	94.50
European white birch	818	±818	10.20	±10.194	6.06	±6.055	98.00	±97.936	99.50
Smooth service berry	567	±566	0.55	±0.553	0.42	±0.419	28.92	±28.895	99.50
Dotted hawthorn	567	±566	3.11	±3.105	2.34	±2.339	24.86	±24.840	99.50
Study Area	916640	±137,871	7,156.39	±878.226	5,900.387	±761.918	234,551.242	±34,226.683	80.06

Table 24: i-Tree Eco derived Composition and Structure by Stratum across Ajax

Stratum	Species	Trees		Leaf Area		Leaf Biomass		Tree Dry Weight Biomass		Average Condition
		Number	SE	(ha)	SE	(metric ton)	SE	(metric ton)	SE	(%)
Agriculture	Green ash	2690	±2,688	0.02	±0.023	0.02	±0.015	70.78	±70.743	4.33
	Black walnut	1793	±1,792	0.80	±0.796	0.64	±0.638	1.36	±1.360	99.50
	European larch	1793	±1,792	15.62	±15.611	10.10	±10.094	573.09	±572.766	97.00
	Red pine	1793	±1,792	2.39	±2.388	3.51	±3.512	157.83	±157.740	49.75
	Eastern white pine	1793	±1,792	21.75	±21.734	13.99	±13.977	399.61	±399.389	99.50
	European buckthorn	24207	±20,783	47.98	±39.344	21.33	±17.486	795.80	±666.171	96.13
	Northern white cedar	9862	±9,857	29.35	±29.332	56.44	±56.407	1,140.638	±1,140.001	97.95
	American elm	3586	±3,584	1.72	±1.720	1.25	±1.251	104.48	±104.423	49.75
	Total	47518	±42,251	119.63	±109.460	107.27	±102.327	3,243.584	±3,099.820	86.35
Commercial - Industrial	Norway maple	995	±995	28.27	±28.257	15.26	±15.252	401.26	±401.058	62.50
	American beech	2986	±2,985	10.10	±10.093	4.30	±4.301	341.25	±341.083	97.83
	ash spp	995	±995	0.00	±0.000	0.00	±0.000	1,044.140	±1,043.615	0.00
	Green ash	995	±995	0.14	±0.137	0.09	±0.089	8.66	±8.656	99.50
	Ginkgo	995	±995	1.04	±1.042	1.00	±1.001	6.26	±6.261	99.50
	Thornless honeylocust	4977	±3,508	42.35	±39.953	44.35	±41.840	563.28	±497.122	88.10
	White spruce	2986	±2,985	38.20	±38.185	61.37	±61.342	741.88	±741.511	66.50
	Austrian pine	2986	±2,985	47.14	±47.117	45.44	±45.414	859.93	±859.496	79.83
	Eastern cottonwood	995	±995	24.65	±24.640	17.79	±17.779	146.64	±146.565	99.50
	European buckthorn	2986	±2,985	3.36	±3.358	1.49	±1.492	28.37	±28.360	67.50
	Staghorn sumac	995	±995	0.00	±0.000	0.00	±0.000	12.01	±12.003	0.00
	Black willow	995	±995	33.98	±33.958	21.52	±21.512	1,072.719	±1,072.180	94.50
	Northern white cedar	1991	±1,990	32.20	±32.178	61.91	±61.882	671.43	±671.094	99.50

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	American basswood	3982	±3,980	81.32	±81.276	23.74	±23.729	2,265.866	±2,264.728	95.25
	Eastern hemlock	1991	±1,990	40.73	±40.709	37.83	±37.813	680.35	±680.009	82.50
	Nannyberry	2986	±2,985	4.10	±4.102	2.15	±2.148	81.49	±81.444	99.50
	Total	34842	±15,951	387.57	±190.324	338.25	±160.776	8,925.544	±4,466.489	82.13
Open Space - Natural Cover	Hedge maple	1700	±1,699	4.82	±4.815	2.71	±2.710	76.85	±76.787	99.50
	Freeman maple	3401	±1,719	85.79	±55.702	48.28	±31.351	8,802.517	±8,344.034	93.33
	Boxelder	5668	±3,305	48.40	±31.225	44.27	±28.565	1,838.443	±1,257.837	78.30
	Red maple	3968	±2,542	59.97	±49.378	40.39	±33.256	980.34	±861.652	94.93
	Silver maple	1134	±1,133	88.31	±88.232	46.48	±46.440	2,608.211	±2,605.910	82.50
	Sugar maple	13037	±7,438	102.25	±67.833	61.60	±40.866	1,117.961	±787.058	87.20
	Horse chestnut	1134	±789	88.41	±64.178	61.83	±44.883	6,637.237	±5,475.648	94.50
	Grey alder	1134	±1,133	6.00	±5.992	4.37	±4.368	9.41	±9.400	99.50
	Smooth service berry	567	±566	0.55	±0.553	0.42	±0.419	28.92	±28.895	99.50
	Yellow birch	8502	±4,316	131.58	±103.457	54.48	±42.839	2,513.203	±1,468.633	86.60
	Paper birch	10769	±9,168	111.95	±103.605	78.29	±72.456	3,622.667	±3,397.356	84.61
	American hornbeam	1134	±1,133	3.44	±3.438	2.07	±2.071	22.29	±22.268	72.50
	Northern hackberry	3968	±3,964	28.10	±28.076	14.62	±14.608	77.58	±77.506	95.64
	Dotted hawthorn	567	±566	3.11	±3.105	2.34	±2.339	24.86	±24.840	99.50
	American beech	12470	±11,889	108.98	±104.824	46.44	±44.669	1,059.394	±1,045.301	97.82
	ash spp	1700	±1,699	0.00	±0.000	0.00	±0.000	3,449.757	±3,446.712	0.00
	White ash	6235	±2,783	4.64	±3.308	2.64	±1.879	5,904.557	±5,483.925	33.55
	Black ash	8502	±6,254	2.39	±1.725	1.43	±1.027	147.25	±104.865	19.23
	Green ash	17004	±6,741	15.08	±8.036	9.84	±5.242	3,663.317	±2,301.155	23.20
	Butternut	567	±566	1.61	±1.611	0.89	±0.890	160.38	±160.239	37.50
	Black walnut	2834	±2,832	73.80	±73.731	59.15	±59.094	494.12	±493.687	95.10
	European larch	3401	±3,398	60.93	±60.880	39.40	±39.363	1,354.833	±1,353.637	97.00
	apple spp	1134	±1,133	19.41	±19.394	16.74	±16.720	803.69	±802.985	81.00
	Paradise apple	567	±566	0.00	±0.000	0.00	±0.000	186.37	±186.202	0.00
	Eastern hophornbeam	2267	±2,265	33.60	±33.570	21.93	±21.915	177.80	±177.644	97.00

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	Jack pine	1134	±1,133	0.00	±0.000	0.00	±0.000	205.26	±205.082	0.00
	White spruce	11903	±10,187	35.07	±24.718	56.34	±39.707	405.49	±271.695	98.45
	Blue spruce	567	±566	3.70	±3.698	6.16	±6.157	321.79	±321.509	82.50
	Eastern white pine	3968	±3,964	99.31	±99.226	63.87	±63.815	1,800.145	±1,798.557	91.07
	Scots pine	40244	±24,969	143.54	±84.332	138.35	±81.284	2,308.986	±1,339.210	90.61
	American sycamore	1700	±1,699	1.48	±1.479	0.72	±0.716	29.60	±29.577	41.67
	Balsam poplar	3401	±2,502	7.49	±5.511	5.41	±3.976	123.40	±90.063	71.42
	Bigtooth aspen	567	±566	0.97	±0.973	0.50	±0.496	4.11	±4.104	99.50
	Quaking aspen	2834	±2,013	10.62	±7.431	8.36	±5.852	713.99	±499.878	78.60
	Black cherry	1700	±1,251	4.06	±3.428	3.15	±2.659	329.48	±323.803	63.00
	Bur oak	1134	±1,133	26.67	±26.644	26.20	±26.181	278.13	±277.887	97.00
	Northern red oak	1700	±1,251	47.20	±46.695	37.61	±37.207	979.55	±976.557	88.17
	European buckthorn	6235	±4,280	15.17	±9.447	6.74	±4.199	320.55	±192.837	77.95
	Black locust	10769	±7,591	119.81	±84.188	64.51	±45.326	3,358.010	±2,347.248	85.87
	Black willow	1700	±1,699	29.93	±29.898	18.96	±18.940	3,073.200	±3,070.487	93.83
	White cedar	19839	±19,821	16.63	±16.618	10.13	±10.118	647.03	±646.461	80.49
	Northern white cedar	126967	±60,580	358.04	±206.537	656.56	±397.187	12,046.256	±6,855.439	90.51
	American basswood	2834	±2,013	38.82	±27.208	11.33	±7.944	644.06	±475.938	89.70
	Eastern hemlock	28908	±15,322	313.22	±181.841	290.94	±168.903	5,821.359	±2,870.835	89.65
	American elm	1700	±1,251	11.78	±11.769	8.57	±8.560	122.01	±98.315	64.67
	Nannyberry	567	±566	1.00	±1.001	0.53	±0.524	7.80	±7.788	99.50
	Total	363895	±94,670	2,350.997	±511.604	2,075.531	±529.120	79,302.160	±18,947.631	82.33
Residential	Freeman maple	2701	±1,523	122.67	±71.221	69.04	±40.086	6,356.854	±5,240.657	99.50
	Amur maple	2701	±1,523	32.45	±28.496	18.26	±16.039	1,498.751	±1,302.349	99.50
	Boxelder	13503	±8,538	145.22	±102.788	132.85	±94.034	3,684.106	±3,173.733	95.10
	Japanese maple	1800	±1,258	12.60	±10.562	7.09	±5.945	136.06	±121.908	91.00
	Norway maple	12603	±4,791	387.60	±144.213	209.21	±77.840	12,510.542	±5,933.753	90.86
	Silver maple	900	±900	3.18	±3.174	1.67	±1.671	67.75	±67.709	99.50
	Sugar maple	900	±900	2.41	±2.407	1.45	±1.450	55.51	±55.481	62.50
	Northern catalpa	2701	±2,699	12.56	±12.552	7.65	±7.642	853.72	±853.243	96.17
	Alternatleaf dogwood	1800	±1,258	1.57	±1.234	1.05	±0.823	144.53	±101.482	99.50

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European spindletree	900	±900	0.73	±0.728	0.54	±0.542	53.76	±53.730	99.50
Green ash	2701	±1,994	1.00	±0.855	0.65	±0.558	186.21	±184.244	37.50
Thornless honeylocust	900	±900	2.01	±2.012	2.11	±2.107	27.23	±27.215	99.50
Kentucky coffee tree	900	±900	8.32	±8.315	7.05	±7.046	121.16	±121.097	99.50
Rose-of-sharon	4501	±3,690	2.73	±2.057	1.32	±0.994	77.32	±56.647	99.50
Black walnut	900	±900	163.84	±163.750	131.31	±131.242	1,326.909	±1,326.172	94.50
Eastern red cedar	900	±900	8.41	±8.406	23.37	±23.357	223.45	±223.324	99.50
Paradise apple	2701	±1,523	16.00	±13.306	13.79	±11.472	294.62	±257.901	87.17
White mulberry	3601	±1,738	4.06	±2.245	2.97	±1.642	206.62	±136.621	99.50
White spruce	3601	±2,163	32.14	±22.590	51.63	±36.290	445.40	±303.858	99.50
Austrian pine	9902	±8,256	146.58	±107.800	141.28	±103.904	4,522.590	±3,492.960	74.64
Blue spruce	3601	±2,163	57.64	±37.551	95.97	±62.523	760.35	±482.676	89.75
Eastern white pine	900	±900	30.81	±30.793	19.82	±19.804	571.12	±570.804	94.50
Siberian crabapple	900	±900	32.21	±32.187	27.77	±27.750	516.96	±516.671	99.50
Callery pear	1800	±1,799	10.25	±10.243	7.71	±7.706	254.10	±253.958	99.50
Swamp white oak	900	±900	2.44	±2.439	2.40	±2.397	65.17	±65.135	99.50
Bur oak	1800	±1,799	10.85	±10.841	10.66	±10.653	132.01	±131.939	99.50
European buckthorn	8102	±3,777	34.52	±20.155	15.34	±8.958	597.14	±373.275	89.06
Staghorn sumac	1800	±1,258	1.50	±1.051	1.33	±0.934	425.50	±423.721	99.50
European mountain ash	900	±900	4.99	±4.990	3.96	±3.960	89.59	±89.541	99.50
Japanese tree lilac	900	±900	0.86	±0.860	0.83	±0.829	63.31	±63.273	82.50
Common lilac	1800	±1,258	1.82	±1.331	1.76	±1.284	139.39	±127.502	97.00
Hybrid yew	900	±900	1.04	±1.044	1.28	±1.274	140.55	±140.468	94.50
Northern white cedar	41408	±19,382	65.03	±34.751	125.05	±66.829	5,266.196	±2,800.168	97.72
Littleleaf linden	3601	±1,738	174.73	±115.281	130.89	±86.359	2,528.161	±1,438.356	98.25
Nootka cypress	900	±900	1.07	±1.066	2.50	±2.498	32.26	±32.237	94.50
Total	141329	±29,603	1,535.817	±364.269	1,271.567	±291.629	44,374.878	±12,513.003	93.07

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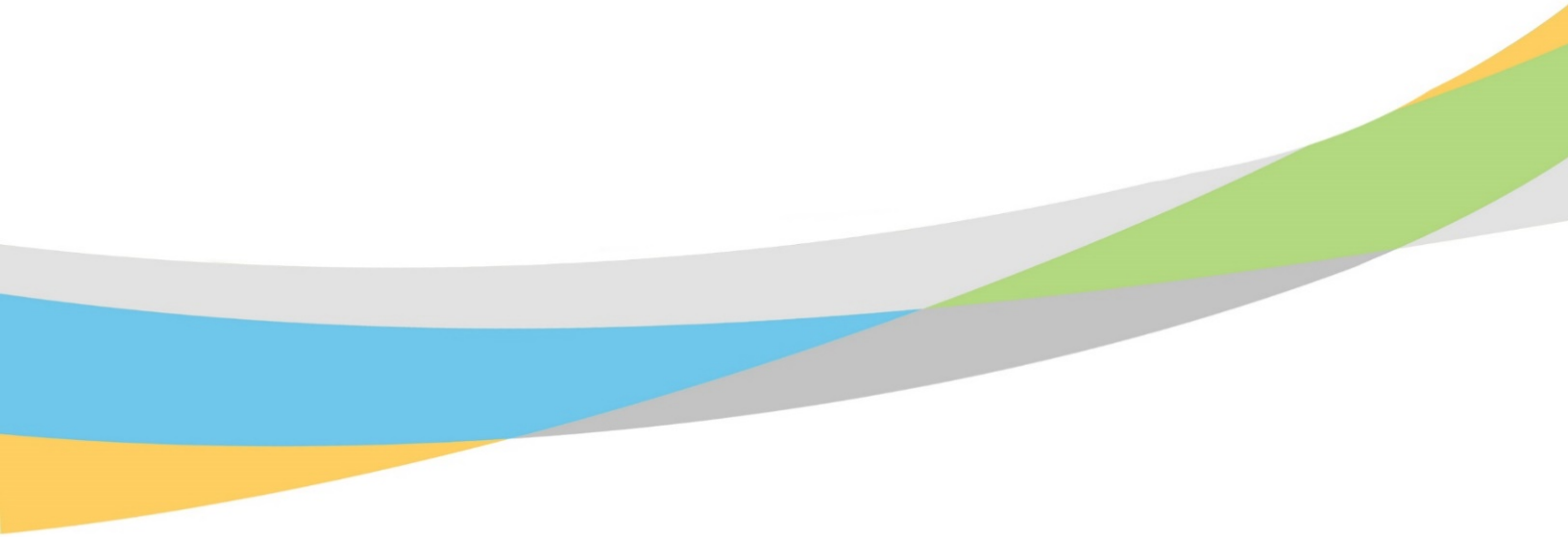
Utilities - Transportation	Balsam fir	1020	±1,020	0.27	±0.267	0.28	±0.279	398.18	±397.988	13.00
	Norway maple	7142	±5,016	233.53	±177.331	126.05	±95.715	5,639.074	±4,379.883	75.14
	Sugar maple	2040	±2,039	180.73	±180.643	108.88	±108.828	11,964.331	±11,958.467	72.50
	Paper birch	1020	±1,020	13.36	±13.358	9.35	±9.342	99.29	±99.242	99.50
	American hornbeam	2040	±2,039	3.54	±3.537	2.13	±2.131	37.72	±37.702	56.25
	Northern hackberry	1020	±1,020	17.83	±17.822	9.28	±9.272	38.19	±38.167	99.50
	White ash	1020	±1,020	17.41	±17.406	9.90	±9.890	43.11	±43.086	94.50
	Green ash	1020	±1,020	1.51	±1.513	0.99	±0.987	7.33	±7.322	99.50
	Thornless honeylocust	4081	±4,079	145.63	±145.554	152.50	±152.428	5,188.764	±5,186.220	89.75
	Eastern red cedar	4081	±4,079	7.26	±7.258	20.18	±20.168	100.21	±100.157	99.50
	Tulip tree	1020	±1,020	5.78	±5.774	3.41	±3.404	27.06	±27.042	99.50
	Paradise apple	1020	±1,020	13.39	±13.386	11.55	±11.540	765.31	±764.936	99.50
	White spruce	1020	±1,020	19.98	±19.975	32.10	±32.088	513.39	±513.137	94.50
	Blue spruce	1020	±1,020	112.95	±112.898	188.07	±187.976	1,883.501	±1,882.577	82.50
	Eastern white pine	4081	±4,079	60.26	±60.225	38.75	±38.733	675.66	±675.325	94.50
	London planetree	1020	±1,020	0.59	±0.590	0.26	±0.257	4.78	±4.780	82.50
	Eastern cottonwood	2040	±2,039	26.08	±26.063	18.82	±18.806	485.06	±484.820	97.00
	Bigtooth aspen	1020	±1,020	0.26	±0.263	0.13	±0.134	1.64	±1.639	82.50
	Quaking aspen	4081	±4,079	51.16	±51.131	40.28	±40.264	1,444.358	±1,443.650	95.75
	Sweet cherry	2040	±1,418	49.40	±48.868	38.22	±37.812	6,007.502	±5,983.772	97.00
	Callery pear	2040	±1,418	2.46	±1.901	1.85	±1.431	45.20	±31.862	91.00
	Common pear	1020	±1,020	0.02	±0.017	0.01	±0.013	2.66	±2.661	99.50
	Northern pin oak	1020	±1,020	1.36	±1.357	1.40	±1.399	43.26	±43.239	99.50
	Northern red oak	2040	±2,039	75.55	±75.513	60.20	±60.170	1,567.920	±1,567.151	82.50
	European buckthorn	29587	±25,473	60.16	±53.449	26.74	±23.755	1,060.875	±930.994	59.59
	European mountain ash	1020	±1,020	7.16	±7.154	5.68	±5.678	226.28	±226.173	94.50
	Japanese tree lilac	1020	±1,020	0.79	±0.794	0.77	±0.766	21.87	±21.863	82.50
	Northern white cedar	8162	±4,390	20.66	±17.348	39.73	±33.362	740.39	±601.724	98.88

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American basswood	1020	±1,020	3.22	±3.221	0.94	±0.940	56.03	±56.006	82.50	
Littleleaf linden	2040	±1,418	1.70	±1.594	1.27	±1.194	17.11	±14.986	68.50	
Siberian elm	2040	±2,039	1.02	±1.017	0.69	±0.693	15.92	±15.913	82.50	
Nootka cypress	2040	±2,039	16.09	±16.077	37.71	±37.687	493.48	±493.233	99.50	
Total	95902	±41,760	1,151.096	±345.984	988.10	±294.133	39,615.436	±14,335.008	79.38	
Other - Institutional	Freeman maple	4090	±2,910	89.52	±83.399	50.39	±46.941	3,094.868	±2,888.291	94.50
	Boxelder	8999	±6,512	78.92	±55.581	72.20	±50.847	1,128.927	±793.748	80.32
	Black maple	3272	±3,270	67.59	±67.546	38.04	±38.018	2,476.238	±2,474.724	83.50
	Norway maple	818	±818	19.67	±19.658	10.62	±10.610	554.00	±553.659	99.50
	Silver maple	4909	±2,992	136.28	±124.413	71.73	±65.484	1,258.252	±1,149.926	91.67
	Sugar maple	54812	±38,555	431.50	±329.692	259.95	±198.621	23,224.952	±17,843.472	80.77
	European white birch	818	±818	10.20	±10.194	6.06	±6.055	98.00	±97.936	99.50
	Autumn olive	2454	±2,453	0.61	±0.607	0.32	±0.315	11.30	±11.296	37.67
	White ash	818	±818	0.00	±0.000	0.00	±0.000	759.86	±759.391	0.00
	Green ash	38450	±34,308	3.27	±2.468	2.13	±1.610	4,233.452	±3,833.501	4.23
	Thornless honeylocust	4090	±2,910	126.74	±91.019	132.73	±95.318	4,689.626	±3,527.656	97.50
	Butternut	1636	±1,635	18.40	±18.384	10.16	±10.156	125.12	±125.045	82.50
	Black walnut	2454	±2,453	8.80	±8.795	7.05	±7.049	31.36	±31.339	99.50
	apple spp	818	±818	3.81	±3.802	3.28	±3.278	19.22	±19.207	99.50
	Paradise apple	818	±818	0.21	±0.213	0.18	±0.184	6.73	±6.724	99.50
	Austrian pine	1636	±1,140	86.30	±60.737	83.18	±58.542	1,291.018	±913.167	99.50
	Red pine	4909	±4,905	18.69	±18.677	27.48	±27.467	1,529.607	±1,528.672	81.25
	Eastern white pine	4909	±3,615	100.56	±76.178	64.67	±48.992	431.39	±307.980	99.50
	Scots pine	818	±818	2.56	±2.554	2.46	±2.462	175.93	±175.826	82.50
	White poplar	3272	±3,270	104.07	±104.002	90.49	±90.436	2,740.946	±2,739.270	72.50
	Quaking aspen	9817	±8,293	24.62	±21.973	19.39	±17.303	462.43	±444.006	80.13
	Black cherry	2454	±1,808	5.87	±4.520	4.55	±3.506	725.02	±630.714	83.83
	European buckthorn	15544	±7,830	43.65	±21.450	19.40	±9.534	795.90	±393.811	86.79
	Staghorn sumac	13089	±13,081	4.13	±4.132	3.67	±3.672	37.16	±37.134	73.59

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Crack willow	6545	±6,541	2.23	±2.226	1.41	±1.410	16.17	±16.157	77.13
Black willow	1636	±1,635	117.52	±117.446	74.45	±74.399	6,570.046	±6,566.029	88.50
Northern white cedar	13907	±11,521	10.23	±7.463	19.68	±14.352	536.69	±361.096	99.50
American basswood	4909	±2,992	58.84	±35.294	17.18	±10.304	1,146.546	±774.260	87.67
Littleleaf linden	1636	±1,635	12.23	±12.226	9.16	±9.159	56.35	±56.316	99.50
American elm	18816	±17,983	24.28	±22.647	17.66	±16.471	862.54	±850.804	42.09
Total	233154	±73,389	1,611.275	±457.101	1,119.674	±304.417	59,089.639	±20,514.069	67.32
Study Area	916640	±137,871	7,156.386	±878.226	5,900.387	±761.918	234,551.242	±34,226.683	80.06



Town of Ajax Report



Report To: General Government Committee

Prepared By: Mike Sawchuck, MCIP, RPP, CAHP
Senior Planner

Report #: PDS-2023-18

Subject: **Community Improvement Plans Review: Program Recommendations**

Ward(s): All

Date of Meeting: May 8, 2023

Reference: General Government Committee – December 20, 2019
Council – July 27, 2020
Council – October 5, 2020
General Government Committee – December 14, 2020
General Government Committee – September 13, 2021
General Government Committee – December 13, 2021

Recommendations:

1. That staff be authorized to undertake the required consultation process to amend the Downtown and Pickering Village Community Improvement Plans to realign them with the Town's strategic objectives, as prescribed under Section 28(5) of the *Planning Act*;
2. That program suspensions under the Downtown and Pickering Village Community Improvement Plans be extended until December 31, 2023 (or to the date of approval for any amended Community Improvement Plan, whichever is sooner) for the following programs:
 - a. Downtown Community Improvement Plan
 - i. Rehabilitation Grant Program;
 - ii. Planning and Development Fees Grant Program;
 - iii. Development Charge Exemption/Grant Program;
 - iv. Reduced Parkland Dedication Requirements Program;
 - b. Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan
 - i. Development Tax Rebate Program;
 - ii. Planning and Development Fees Rebate Program;
 - iii. Development Charge Exemption/Reduction Program;
 - iv. Reduced Parkland Dedication Requirements Program;

- 3. That unspent funds from future Downtown and Pickering Village CIP annual budgets be redirected to the CIP Development Improvement Fund, and that these funds be made available for future Town-led initiatives in either CIP area.**

1. Background:

1.1 Community Improvement Plan Background

The Town of Ajax has two Community Improvement Plans (CIPs) – the Downtown Community Improvement Plan (“DCIP”), which came into effect in 2005, and the Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan (“PVCIP”), which came into effect in 2013. Both CIPs were developed to encourage and facilitate appropriate redevelopment projects in their respective CIP areas by offering financial incentives to development projects that meet specified criteria.

The DCIP includes six programs:

- Municipal Property Acquisition, Investment and Partnership Program
- Rehabilitation Grant Program
- Planning and Development Fees Grant Program
- Development Charge Exemption/Grant Program
- Reduced Parkland Dedication Requirements Program
- Exemption from Parking Requirements Program

All of these programs can be categorized as “Redevelopment Incentive Programs” and are intended to stimulate large-scale new investment and/or redevelopment projects in the Downtown.

The PVCIP includes six programs divided into two separate categories – Redevelopment Incentive Programs and Property Improvement Incentive Programs. There are four Redevelopment Incentive Programs, all geared towards large-scale investment and redevelopment:

- Redevelopment Tax Rebate Program
- Planning and Development Fees Rebate Program
- Development Charge Exemption/Reduction Program
- Reduced Parkland Dedication Requirements Program

The PVCIP includes two Property Improvement Incentive Programs, which offer modest grants to improve the condition of existing properties:

- Façade Improvement Grant Program
- Sign Grant Program

There has been considerable development interest in both CIP areas over the last several years. This has led to questions from Council members about the necessity of the CIPs for attracting development in these areas and concerns about the level of financial support being provided by the Town to support applications. In response, several of the DCIP’s Redevelopment Programs were temporarily suspended in December 2019 to provide Town staff with time to conduct a fulsome review of the CIP program. In October 2020, this review was expanded to include the PVCIP, and all Redevelopment Incentive Programs under that program were also suspended. Suspensions under both CIP programs are set to expire on July 1, 2023.

1.2 Work to Date

The CIP Review was prompted to reduce financial liability for the Town and to determine the continued appropriateness and feasibility of the CIPs in the future. In order to successfully achieve these objectives, Town staff engaged in several tasks.

First and foremost, Town staff initiated efforts to ensure the fulsome suspension of all CIP programs that represented a financial liability. Although most programs were effectively halted with the formal Council motions for program suspensions in December 2019, the Development Charge Exemption/Reduction Programs could not be suspended without amendments to the Town's Development Charges By-law 50-2018 ("DC By-law"). Accordingly, Town staff carried out the legislated process for amending the DC By-law and brought the amendments to Council for approval in December 2020. The DC By-law amendment was approved but was appealed in January 2021. This appeal was later dismissed in July 2022.

Town staff also engaged in a review of previous CIP approvals to gain a better understanding of the Town's financial commitments. This work, which began in March 2020 and continued to June 2020, included soliciting a legal opinion on past development agreements that incorporated CIP benefits. However, this work was not able to resolve all uncertainties due to the complexity of past projects and the presence of outstanding appeals.

In summer 2021, Town staff conducted a review of active CIP applications to assess how they would be impacted by the recent program suspensions. Council approved the retention of incentives for all CIP applications where benefits had already been secured through a development agreement or where development approvals were in a state of substantial completion. Council also approved a formal queuing process for CIP applications received after the program suspensions, which would be put into use if suspended programs were reactivated.

In December 2021, Town staff completed an analysis to determine whether the Town's two CIPs (the DCIP and PVCIP) should be eliminated entirely or retained and modified. The analysis included a detailed evaluation of the programs operating under the Town's CIPs, highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of each, as well as assessing their inherent liabilities. Council approved staff's recommendation to retain both CIPs and make modifications to the constituent programs that would limit their financial liabilities and better align them with existing growth priorities and objectives.

Staff began the process of drafting CIP amendments in January 2022, which proposed the removal of several existing programs, the modification of others, and the introduction of new programs. These draft amendments were put on hold on March 30, 2022 with the Province of Ontario's release of Bill 109 - the *More Homes for Everyone Act*. Bill 109 introduced amendments to five pieces of provincial legislation, including the *Planning Act*, and had direct implications on the CIP amendments being proposed by Town staff.

Further changes to the municipal planning framework were introduced on October 25, 2022 with the Province of Ontario's release of Bill 23 – the *More Homes Built Faster Act*. Bill 23 introduced amendments to ten pieces of provincial legislation, once again including the *Planning Act*. The implications of Bill 23 were even more profound than those of Bill 109 and further complicated the CIP amendments being proposed by Town staff.

With the introduction of Bills 109 and 23, many of the CIP tools and programs that had been previously desirable for the Town immediately became either obsolete or sources of undesirable financial liability. As a result, Town staff were forced to reevaluate their in-process amendments and to reconceptualize the Town's CIPs into a set of tools that would be productive and advantageous in a post-Bill 109/23 planning context.

2. Discussion:

Given the scale of potential impacts from Bills 109 and 23 on development-related revenues, the Town is no longer in a position where it is willing to take on the financial burden of large, redevelopment-oriented CIP programs – even where they are strategically applied. As a result, the nature of the CIP Review has shifted dramatically away from financial incentives that support large new developments to those that provide modest incentives to existing businesses and property owners. Despite their smaller scale, CIP programs of this nature can have a dramatic impact in achieving planning and development objectives, as evidenced by the success of the Pickering Village CIP’s Façade Improvement and Sign Grant programs.

This section of the report outlines the recommended direction for amendments to the Town’s two CIPs. It includes information on the general objectives of the CIP areas, proposed changes to the rosters of component programs in each CIP, detailed accounts of new and retained programs, and descriptions of the various administrative modifications recommended to improve the overall operation and sustainability of the CIPs.

2.1 CIP Area Objectives

The general objectives of both the DCIP and PVCIP are outlined at the outset of either plan. While many of the existing objectives are development-oriented, others are well-suited for attainment via property-scaled incentive programs. Examples of these property-scaled objectives are as follows:

Downtown Community Improvement Plan

- To improve the image and appearance of the area
- To improve pedestrian amenity and the safety of the area
- To strengthen the economic viability of the Downtown by maintaining a vibrant, economically viable retail and service base

Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan

- To establish a range of local destinations that include retail uses and the arts
- To improve the pedestrian experience including the provision of active building facades along streets, parks, squares and pedestrian routes
- To support commercial and small business development and/or redevelopment inclusive of retail and niche markets
- To encourage investment in private properties by providing programs to support rehabilitation of heritage buildings, and focused redevelopment where appropriate

Any program, whether existing or new, that is considered for inclusion in either CIP must be capable of helping to achieve one or more of these objectives. Further, any program included in the CIP must be able to stimulate positive change in the CIP area without representing a financial liability for the Town.

2.2 Programs Proposed for Removal from the CIPs

As previously discussed, the Town is no longer in a position where it is willing to take on the financial burden of large, redevelopment-oriented CIP programs. This means that many of the incentive programs that originally composed the Downtown CIP and Pickering Village CIP are no longer desirable. Programs that are being considered for discontinuation are discussed below. The first four of these programs are offered under both the Downtown CIP and the Pickering Village CIP, while the fifth is exclusive to the Downtown CIP.

2.2.1 Tax Increment Equivalency Grant Programs

Tax Increment Equivalency Grant Programs are the most common form of CIP incentive in the province. They offer property owners annual grants (for a fixed-term) to offset the large tax increases that typically accompany property redevelopment or improvement. Both CIPs in Ajax include a Tax Increment Equivalency Grant, with the Downtown CIP's version called the Rehabilitation Grant Program and the Pickering Village CIP's version called the Redevelopment Tax Grant Program. While these programs are very desirable to applicants, they represent significant liability for the Town given their high value and long and lasting impacts. In both CIPs, grants under these programs are paid out over ten-year terms and can add up to incentives totaling millions of dollars for a single project. Further, since the amount of the grant is entirely dependent of the post-project assessment of the new property value, there is no easy or accurate means for predicting grant costs at the outset of a grant agreement. This creates scenarios where the Town is required to enter into grant agreements without a true sense of the pending financial implications. For these reasons, Town staff recommend the removal of Tax Increment Equivalency Grant Programs from both the Downtown and Pickering Village CIP.

2.2.2 P&D Fees Grant Program

The Planning and Development Fees Grant Program is common to both the Downtown and Pickering Village CIPs and offers rebates for eligible projects on the full or partial value of planning and development fees. Given that this program results in relatively modestly-scaled grants that can be accurately calculated and easily administered, Town staff recommended to Council in December 2021 that the program be retained and reactivated, albeit with revised eligibility criteria. However, the Province of Ontario's release of Bill 109 in March 2022 resulted in legislative amendments that now threaten the Town's ability to retain its planning and development fee revenues by requiring full or partial refunds on fees for applications that are not processed within provincially-mandated timelines. Given this new threat to retaining fee revenues, Town staff recommend the removal of the P&D Fees Grant Programs from both the Downtown and Pickering Village CIP.

2.2.3 DC Exemption/Grant Program

The Development Charge Exemption/Grant Program is common to both the Downtown and Pickering Village CIPs and offers exemptions for eligible projects on the full or partial value of the development charges. Despite the large financial commitment inherent in this type of program, it has proven to be a very attractive incentive to developers, and one that can be easily administered by staff. Accordingly, Town staff recommended to Council in December 2021 that the program be retained and reactivated with very narrow eligibility criteria that would benefit only the most highly desired projects, such as affordable housing projects. However, the Province of Ontario's release of Bill 23 in October 2022 resulted in legislative amendments that mandated development charge exemptions for certain types of development, including affordable housing. As such, there is no further need for the Town to offer its own such incentives. For this reason, Town staff recommend the removal of the DC Exemption/Grant Program from both the Downtown and Pickering Village CIP.

2.2.4 Reduced Parkland Dedication Program

The Reduced Parkland Dedication Program is common to both the Downtown and Pickering Village CIPs and offers reductions in parkland contribution for eligible projects. Although this type of program has the potential to limit the acquisition of an important resource in parkland, it is a popular incentive amongst developers that can represent significant financial value. Accordingly, Town staff recommended to Council in December 2021 that the program be retained and reactivated in a format similar to the DC Exemption/Grant Program with very

narrow eligibility criteria that would benefit only the most highly desired projects, such as affordable housing projects. However, the Province of Ontario’s release of Bill 23 in October 2022 resulted in legislative amendments that introduced new formulas for calculating parkland contribution and exempted certain development types, such as affordable and non-profit housing. Given the reduced parkland contribution yields resulting from these new formulas and exemptions, Town staff recommend the removal of the Reduced Parkland Dedication Programs from both the Downtown and Pickering Village CIP.

2.2.5 Exemption from Parking Requirements Program

The Exemption from Parking Requirements Program exists only within the Downtown CIP. While it promotes opportunities for the Town to consider reductions in required parking for eligible projects, it does not actually provide any specialized tools or financial incentives for this purpose. As such, Town staff recommend the removal of the Exemption from Parking Requirements Program from the Downtown CIP.

2.3 Programs Proposed for Retention or Addition to the Downtown CIP

Given the program removals outlined in Section 2.2, only one program is proposed for retention in the Downtown CIP. As a result, several new programs have been conceptualized that will help to ensure that the objectives of the Downtown CIP are met, while not introducing any significant new sources of financial liability for the Town. A summarized description of each program is provided below. For full program details, please see the Annotated Guide to the Proposed Amendment of the Downtown CIP, available as Attachment No. 1.

Note that the proposed annual budget for all programs under the Downtown CIP is \$30,000. This budget is to be shared amongst all constituent programs, ensuring that available funds are always accessible where they are needed most.

2.3.1 Municipal Property Acquisition, Investment and Partnership Program

Status:	Retained
Purpose:	To rehabilitate properties, acquire new parcels, undertake capital projects, and participate in public-private partnerships to rehabilitate properties.
Terms:	None – Activities under this program can only be initiated by the Town and are not accessible to external parties.
Notable Revisions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modified to reflect the new primary funding source for the program, which will be unused funds from annual CIP allocations rather than Building Permit fees, as in the past.

2.3.2 Commercial Property Accessibility and Beautification Grant Program

Status:	New
Purpose:	To incentivize renovations that improve accessibility and/or improve the visual appearance of properties.
Terms:	Matching grants for commercial properties up to \$5,000 for accessibility projects and \$2,500 for beautification/aesthetic improvements.
Notable Provisions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eligible accessibility projects are generally exterior projects but may include some interior works.

- Eligible beautification projects are limited to superficial exterior works visible from the public realm, such as façade and landscape improvements.
- Applicants are only eligible for a grant once every five years (some exceptions apply at the discretion of the Town).
- A minimum of two quotes are required as a means to ensure that project prices are reasonable.

2.3.3 Patio Grant Program

Status: New

Purpose: To support pedestrian scaled streetscapes through the Downtown that connect public areas/gathering spaces and to encourage new/expanded restaurant uses.

Terms: Matching grants for the construction or renovation of permanent patios up to \$10,000 in value.

- Notable Provisions:**
- Eligible costs can include material and labour costs necessary for the construction/retrofit of a permanent patio but do not include costs for appliances, furniture and/or furnishings.
 - Applicants are only eligible for a grant once every five years (some exceptions apply at the discretion of the Town).
 - A minimum of two quotes are required as a means to ensure that project prices are reasonable.

A summary of the proposed changes to the programs offered under the Downtown CIP is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 – Proposed Changes to the Town’s Downtown CIP Programs

	Program	Status	Rationale
EXISTING	Municipal Property Acquisition, Investment & Partnership Program	Retain	Valued program that is Town-motivated and doesn’t present any financial liability
	Rehabilitation Grant Program	Remove	Too much financial liability – Large grants, high rates of uncertainty and lengthy terms (10-year)
	P&D Fees Grant Program	Remove	Already too much liability for lost fee revenue due to fee refunds required under Bill 109
	DC Exemption/Grant Program	Remove	Already forced into select DC exemptions (e.g. affordable housing) under Bill 23
	Reduced Parkland Dedication	Remove	Already significant reductions and exemptions for parkland contributions due to Bill 23
	Exemption from Parking Requirements Program	Remove	Program did not provide any powers not already available through other means (ZBLA, MV, etc.)
NEW	Commercial Property Accessibility and Beautification Grant Program	New	Encourages business owners to improve the accessibility and aesthetics of their properties
	Patio Grant Program	New	Enhances the commercial viability and pedestrian-orientation of the Downtown area

2.4 Programs Proposed for Retention or Addition to the Pickering Village CIP

Given the program removals outlined in Section 2.2, only two existing programs are proposed for retention in the Pickering Village CIP. As a result, several new programs have been conceptualized that will help to ensure that the objectives of the Pickering Village CIP are met, while not introducing any significant new sources of financial liability for the Town. A summarized description of each program is provided below. For full program details, please see the Annotated Guide to the Proposed Amendment of the Pickering Village CIP, available as Attachment No. 2.

Note that the proposed annual budget for all programs under the Pickering Village CIP is \$120,000. This budget is to be shared amongst all constituent programs, ensuring that available funds are always accessible where they are needed most.

2.4.1 Façade Improvement Grant Program

- Status:** Retained
- Purpose:** To incentivize the ongoing conservation of heritage properties in Pickering Village.
- Terms:** Matching grants for façade improvements (includes landscaping and structural works) up to \$15,000 with an additional \$5,000 available for accessibility projects. Matching grants up to \$30,000 for properties with multiple units or frontage on more than one street.
- Notable Revisions:**
 - Maximum grant size for general projects increased from \$10,000 to \$15,000, with additional \$5,000 available only for accessibility projects.
 - Modified to reflect “shared” instead of program-specific funding model.
 - Addition of project triggers to enable increased grants for large projects.
 - Additional clarity provided on multi-year grant eligibility.

2.4.2 Sign Grant Program

- Status:** Retained
- Purpose:** To incentivize the installation of heritage-style signage in Pickering Village.
- Terms:** Matching grants for new signage (includes lighting) up to \$2,500 per property/unit.
- Notable Revisions:**
 - Maximum grant size increased from \$2,000 to \$2,500.
 - Modified to reflect “shared” instead of program-specific funding model.
 - Addition of benchmarks to enable increased grants for large projects.
 - Additional clarity provided on multi-year grant eligibility.

2.4.3 Interior Renovation Grant Program

- Status:** New
- Purpose:** To incentivize the conversion/improvement of commercial space for restaurant, retail, museum or art gallery use.
- Terms:** Matching grants for interior renovations and upgrades up to \$15,000 in value.

- Notable Provisions:**
- Restricted to art gallery, museum, restaurant and retail uses.
 - Eligible costs can include a wide array of interior improvements (structural, accessibility, washrooms, mechanical, plumbing, electric, painting, etc.) but do not include costs for appliances, furniture and/or non-permanent fittings/furnishings.
 - Priority is given to properties where there hasn't been an approved grant within a five-year period.
 - A minimum of two quotes are required as a means to ensure that project prices are reasonable.

2.4.4 Patio Grant Program

- Status:** New
- Purpose:** To support pedestrian scaled streetscapes and encourage new restaurants in Pickering Village.
- Terms:** Matching grants for the construction or renovation of permanent patios up to \$10,000 in value.
- Notable Provisions:**
- Eligible costs can include material and labour costs necessary for the construction/retrofit of a permanent patio but do not include costs for appliances, furniture and/or furnishings.
 - Applicants are only eligible for a grant once every five years (some exceptions apply at the discretion of the Town).
 - A minimum of two quotes are required as a means to ensure that project prices are reasonable.

2.4.6 Cash-in-Lieu of Parking Equivalency Grant Program

- Status:** New
- Purpose:** To ease the burden of cash-in-lieu parking payments for high-intensity uses where on-site parking options are limited.
- Terms:** Equivalency grants to cover full cost of cash-in-lieu payments up to a maximum contribution of \$20,000.
- Notable Provisions:**
- Restricted to art gallery, museum, restaurant and retail uses.
 - Eligible only where a new use is located within an existing building or a newly constructed building on a lot where there is already an existing building.

A summary of the proposed changes to the programs offered under the Pickering Village CIP is presented in Table 2.

Table 2 – Proposed Changes to the Town’s Pickering Village CIP Programs

	Program	Status	Rationale
EXISTING	Façade Improvement Program	Retain	Highly successful program with record of success over its nine-year history
	Sign Grant Program	Retain	Highly successful program with record of success over its nine-year history
	Redevelopment Tax Grant Program	Remove	Too much financial liability – Large grants, high rates of uncertainty and lengthy terms (10-year)
	P&D Fees Grant Program	Remove	Already too much liability for lost fee revenue due to fee refunds required under Bill 109
	DC Exemption/Grant Program	Remove	Already forced into select DC exemptions (e.g. affordable housing) under Bill 23
	Reduced Parkland Dedication Program	Remove	Already significant reductions and exemptions for parkland contributions due to Bill 23
NEW	Interior Renovation Grant Program	New	Encourages the retention and establishment of key commercial uses in Pickering Village
	Patio Grant Program	New	Enhances the commercial viability and pedestrian-orientation of Pickering Village
	Cash-in-Lieu of Parking Equivalency Grant Program	New	Encourages the introduction of key commercial uses where land for parking is limited

2.5 Other Considerations

In addition to the programming changes being proposed for the Downtown and Pickering Village CIPs, there are also several proposed changes to the overall administration of the CIPs, as follows:

- Housekeeping revisions are proposed to ensure accurate reference to legislation, to better reflect best practices and to remove reference to organizations and/or stakeholders that no longer exist.
- Reference to “Priority Properties” is proposed for removal since all of the programs with eligibility criteria based upon “priority” are proposed for discontinuation.
- Suspension of a program is proposed as an action that would not require an amendment to the CIP (Note: Program discontinuation, which is a more significant action than suspension, is already captured as an action that does not require an amendment).
- Language is proposed to clarify that the Town has the discretion to determine who is awarded incentives under the CIP, and further, that an applicant is not entitled to receive incentives simply because they have met a program’s eligibility criteria.
- A change to the composition of the Application Review Team is proposed so that it is consistent within the Downtown and Pickering Village CIPs.
- Inclusion of information is proposed that references a four-year cycle for the operation of the CIPs, with each cycle beginning on the year following a municipal election.
- Reference to the new funding model is proposed, to outline how all programs will have shared access to a single source of funding, rather than having separate funds allocated to each program.
- Direction for the use of unallocated funds is proposed to ensure a steady source of funding for the Town’s CIP Development Fund, which will be used to fund Town-initiated projects within either CIP area.

3. Financial Implications:

The proposed transformation of the Town’s CIPs will result in a fixed annual budget that includes separate allocations to the Downtown (\$30,000/year – new starting in 2024) and Pickering Village (\$120,000/year – increase of \$45,000 starting in 2024). This stands in stark contrast to the existing scenario where a lack of program funding caps means that there is no limit to the amount of funding that could be allocated in any given year. This new system will ensure that modest funding allocations can be easily worked into annual budgets and also provides Council with an opportunity to reevaluate programming needs and funding limits on a four-year basis. Further, the proposal to shift all unspent funds at the end of each year to the Town’s CIP Development Fund will provide a steady stream of funding that can be utilized for desired Town-initiated capital works in either of the CIP areas.

4. Communication Issues:

The amendment of the Town’s CIPs will require assistance from Communications staff for items such as, but not limited to, development of an IMO web platform, posting of public notices and general advertising/marketing initiatives. Planning staff will develop a public and stakeholder consultation program to identify the appropriate groups to engage in the process and will hold open houses, public meetings and other consultation opportunities, as required. Support from Communications staff will be sought where necessary.

5. Relationship to the Strategic Plan:

This report aligns with the following section of the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan – Action26:

Pillar:	Growing our Community
Priority:	1. Embrace dynamic and sustainable growth 1.1 Advance our vision for community growth
Supporting Action:	Community Improvement Plans (Downtown and Pickering Village)

6. Conclusion:

The amendments proposed to the Downtown and Pickering Village CIPs will enable the Town to continue incentivizing improvements in its CIP areas while limiting the financial liability that has plagued the CIPs in the past. The elimination of high-risk redevelopment programs and the introduction of new low-risk property incentive programs will help the Town achieve previously developed CIP goals and objectives in an efficient, effective and sustainable manner.

Attachments:

ATT-1: Annotated Guide to the Proposed Amendment of the Downtown CIP

ATT-2: Annotated Guide to the Proposed Amendment of the Pickering Village CIP

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Approved by:

Shane Baker – Chief Administrative Officer

TOWN OF AJAX DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

1.0 Legislative Basis

Under normal circumstances, Section 106(1) of the *Municipal Act* prohibits municipalities from assisting, either directly or indirectly, any manufacturing business or other industrial or commercial enterprise through the granting of bonuses for that purpose. However, an exception is made in Section 106(3) of the *Municipal Act*, for municipalities exercising powers under Section 28(6) or (7) of the *Planning Act*. Section 28 of the *Planning Act* allows municipalities with provisions in their Official Plans relating to community improvement to designate by by-law a “community improvement project area” ~~and then. Once this is done, a municipality may~~ prepare a “Community Improvement Plan” (“CIP”) for ~~the community improvement project that~~ area. ~~It is the Town of Ajax’s intention, through Through~~ adoption ~~and Provincial approval~~ of the Downtown Community Improvement Plan, ~~to avail itself of said waiver of the Town of Ajax has availed itself of the~~ prohibited ~~bon~~using provisions available ~~underincluded in the Municipal Act, and the Planning Act.~~

According to Section 28(1) of the *Planning Act*, a “community improvement project area” is defined as ~~“a municipality or an area within a municipality, the community improvement of which in the opinion of the council is desirable because of age, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement, unsuitability of buildings or for any other~~ *environmental, social or community economic development reason.*”

For the purposes of carrying out a CIP, a municipality may engage in the following activities within the community improvement project area:

- acquire, hold, clear, grade or otherwise prepare land for community improvement (Section 28(3));
- construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on land acquired or held by it in conformity with the community improvement plan (Section 28(6));
- sell, lease or otherwise dispose of any land acquired or held by it in conformity with the community improvement plan (Section 28(6)); and,
- make grants or loans to registered owners, assessed owners and tenants of lands and buildings within the community improvement project area, and to any person to whom such an owner or tenant has assigned the right to receive a grant or loan, to pay for the whole or any part of the cost of rehabilitating such lands and buildings in conformity with the community improvement plan (Section 28(7)).

1.1 Purpose of the Downtown Community Improvement Plan

The lands designated on Schedule ‘A’, *Downtown Community Improvement Project Area Boundaries*, of By-law 43-2005 (the ‘Designation’ By-law) form the target for the Town’s Downtown Community Improvement programs (see **Schedule A**). The intent of the Downtown Community Improvement Plan is to encourage and facilitate appropriate rehabilitation projects in the Community Improvement Project Area. The Downtown CIP allows for the Town to offer financial assistance to encourage and support the ~~(re)development~~*continued improvement* of lands in the Downtown area, and supplements the Town’s ability to take a leading role as a direct participant in Downtown improvement initiatives.

Commented [MS1]: Modified to reflect the existing status of the Downtown CIP and remove language associated with its initial implementation.

Commented [MS2]: Modified to reflect the language currently used in the *Planning Act*.

Commented [MS3]: Modified from “(re)development” to “continued improvement” to better reflect the revised nature of the CIP.

The goals of the CIP are consistent with and build upon the community improvement goals of the Town of Ajax Official Plan. The objectives of the Town with respect to the Downtown CIP are as follows:

- to enhance the Downtown as a unique district and the heart of the Town;
- to strengthen the Downtown in terms of vibrancy, diversity and economic viability by stimulating investment interest in the redevelopment potential of the Downtown;
- to strengthen the economic viability of the Downtown by maintaining a vibrant, economically viable retail and service base;
- to improve the image and appearance of the area (much of the development in the Downtown is aging and shows visible signs of deterioration);
- ~~to promote redevelopment/rehabilitation that supports the Downtown "vision", i.e., the creation of an intensive, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented, transit-supportive district, functioning as the cultural and administrative centre of the Town;~~
- ~~to increase the provision of diverse housing opportunities (medium and high-density residential forms in a Downtown "infill" location versus lower density forms in peripheral "greenfield" locations);~~
- to improve the pedestrian amenity and safety of the area, including the Downtown's function as a major transit hub; and
- to enhance private sector investment opportunities and property maintenance; and
- ~~to increase tax assessment and revenues for the Town of Ajax.~~

To these ends, the following actions or programs may be implemented by the Town under the Downtown CIP:

- (A) a Municipal Property Acquisition, Investment and Partnership Program to facilitate the Town's acquisition of key strategic Downtown sites (to provide sites either for the provision of public amenities or to facilitate rehabilitation directly in partnership with the private sector), to rehabilitate lands that the Town already owns, and/or provide grants to other levels of government for purposes which support the goals/objectives of this CIP;
- (B) ~~a Commercial Property Accessibility and Beautification Grant Program providing financial assistance to owners of commercial properties for improving accessibility and/or the general visual appearance of their businesses where Town property taxes increase as a direct result of improving a property in accordance with the goals and objectives of this CIP; and~~
- (C) ~~a Patio Grant Program providing financial assistance to owners of commercial properties for the construction of permanent patios to enhance streetscape character and activity-rebates to Planning and Development Fees for Official Plan Amendments, rezonings, minor variances, consents, site plans, plans of subdivision/condominium, sign permits, exemptions from part lot control, and demolition permits; and providing a grant to offset Building Permit Fees; and,~~
- ~~(D) exempting/reducing the Town's portion of development charges for eligible commercial, office and residential development, either through an outright exemption/reduction at the time of building permit issuance, or through the issuance of a grant equivalent to the eligible development charge exemption/reduction pending final inspection of the completed works.~~

Commented [MS4]: Removed to reflect the cancellation of the large, redevelopment-focused CIP programs.

Commented [MS5]: Removed to reflect the cancellation of the large, redevelopment-focused CIP programs.

Commented [MS6]: Modified to reflect the full range of incentive programs being offered. New programs are described and references to discontinued programs have been removed.

~~Other Downtown assistance initiatives not forming part of the Downtown CIP may also be offered by the Town, including the following:~~

- ~~(i) providing relief, in the form of an exemption or reduction in the number of parking spaces required, to property owners who undertake improvement projects; and,~~
- ~~(ii) providing relief, in the form of a reduction of parkland dedication requirements (either land or cash-in-lieu requirements), to property owners who undertake improvement projects involving the provision of new high-density residential development and/or new medium-density residential development featuring underground parking.~~

1.2 General Rules

1.2.1 Establishing Priority

The provision of assistance under any program as described in Sections 2.2, ~~or 2.3 or 2.4~~ shall generally be administered on a first come, first served basis, to the limit of available funding in any given year. ~~If applications are received in the same general timeframe that exceed the total budget of the CIP, the Town will award funding on the basis of which application(s) are most likely to contribute positively towards achieving the objectives of the CIP.~~

Due to market uncertainties and the impact they have on Town revenues in any given year, the Town reserves the right to suspend, at any time and without formal notice or amendment to the Downtown Community Improvement Plan, participation in any active program on an interim basis pending approval of the next annual budget. ~~Given the Town's desire to accommodate all eligible participants wishing to partake of the incentives offered under the CIP in any given year, an annual cap on the disbursements the Town can issue under the Downtown CIP has not been instituted. However, due to the limited funds available in any given year (the amount of which varies from year to year according to market vagaries) and the inability to predict the level of participation, the Town may suspend further participation in any program(s) if, over the course of a given year, the number of applications and/or the magnitude of the projects proposed for the CIP exceed available funds for that year.~~

In such instances, applications approved up to the point of program suspension will continue to proceed unhindered, and receive disbursements (where applicable) in the normal fashion. Applications which have been received but not yet approved at the point of program suspension will continue to be processed toward approval/refusal of the application in the standard manner, and if approved, will be put in a queuing sequence with priority being established in the order that the applications were received. Any applications submitted after the point of program suspension will not be accepted until the next annual budget is approved by the Town. Applications which have been approved but suspended in the queue will be reactivated upon approval of the next annual budget, with the newly available CIP funding being allocated in order of the queuing sequence.

~~1.2.1.1 Priority Sites~~

~~Within the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area, a number of specific sites have been targeted to receive priority treatment in the event that multiple competing applications seek to take advantage of the limited financial resources available. Consequently, while applications are generally administered on a first come, first served basis (with priority being established in the order that applications are received), any application received involving one of the targeted sites shall receive first priority in the queue.~~

Commented [MS7]: Removed since the Exemption from Parking Requirements Program and Reduced Parkland Dedication Requirements Program are being discontinued.

Commented [MS8]: Added to clarify how funding decisions will be made in scenarios where the value of submitted applications exceeds the total CIP budget.

Commented [MS9]: Removed since all CIP programs will be grant programs, operating under a fixed annual budget.

~~The priority target sites consist of the following (see Schedule B):~~

- ~~(A) the vacant portion of the former Verona lands (within Sundial Central Park Village);~~
- ~~(B) the vacant lands located at the southwest corner of Harwood Avenue South and Bayly Street;~~
- ~~(C) the lands bounded by Station Street to the north, Harwood Avenue South to the east, Hunt Street to the south, and Commercial Avenue to the west, containing the Ajax, Station Street and Scot Plazas;~~
- ~~(D) the Sherwood Gardens apartment complex, located on the east side of Harwood Avenue South, extending north from Bayly Street to the north side of King's Crescent (south leg); and,~~
- ~~(E) the vacant Atlas Tag lands located on the north side of Bayly Street, between Sundial Central Park Village and Harwood Plaza.~~

1.2.2 Nullification of Program Applications

The Town reserves the right to nullify any program application(s) which has been approved but which does not result in any building activity within 6 months of the issuance of an associated building permit (building permits are valid for 6 months). Extensions of this timeframe may be permitted provided an extension of the building permit is also granted.

~~Further, the Town reserves the right to nullify any program application(s) relating to a property subject to outstanding work orders and/or requests to comply from Planning and Development Services, By-law, or any other Town department.~~

1.2.3 Participation in Multiple Programs

Provided all eligibility criteria and conditions are met for any particular program, participation in any given program does not preclude the owner from being eligible to participate in other programs offered under the Downtown Community Improvement Plan.

1.2.4 Program Details

Specific details regarding the programs (including description, funding, eligibility requirements, and administrative procedures) are outlined for each of the various CIP programs outlined under Section 2.0. The parameters, terms and conditions of any CIP program may be changed, altered, ~~amended~~ or modified by ~~the Town of Ajax Council resolution~~ without the necessity of an amendment to this Community Improvement Plan if they are minor in nature. Minor ~~amendments~~ modifications consist of the following:

- ~~changes to parameters identifying who is eligible to receive grants or loans, subject to the provisions of Section 28(7) of the *Planning Act*;~~
- ~~decreases to percentages/ratios regulating the size of grants as a proportion of taxes, fees, or development charges otherwise owing;~~
- ~~changes to the type of works qualifying as eligible projects within individual grant programs considered by the Town as elements contributing to the cost of rehabilitating lands and buildings, above and beyond the work indicated on the building permit application;~~
- removal of "tax arrears" or "outstanding liens" as conditions precluding program eligibility;
- changes to the duration of programs; and
- ~~discontinuation of any program.~~
- ~~changes to values/amounts specified in eligibility criteria dealing with site development area and/or gross floor area requirements;~~
- ~~the addition or removal of "priority sites" within the Downtown Community Improvement Project~~

Commented [MS10]: Removed since there is no longer a need to label some properties as "Priority Properties" within the CIP. All previous programs with criteria specific to Priority Properties have been discontinued.

Commented [MS11]: Added to provide terms, similar to those in the Pickering Village Community Improvement Program, that nullify applications where outstanding work orders and/or requests to comply may exist.

Commented [MS12]: Modified to specify that minor modifications to the CIP are subject to a Council resolution.

~~Area, as shown on Schedule 'B' of the Downtown Community Improvement Plan.~~

Commented [MS13]: Modified to better reflect the types of minor revisions that may be necessary, given the new roster of constituent programs in the CIP. Note that "discontinuation of any program" has been added to the bulleted list since it was previously defined as a "minor" modification in the last sentence of this section.

All other ~~amendments~~ modifications to the rules, parameters and programs contained in the Downtown Community Improvement Plan shall require ~~the approval of Council~~ an amendment. The addition or increase in value of a grant or loan program shall likewise require an amendment to this Community Improvement Plan; ~~however, the Town may discontinue any program without requiring an amendment to this Plan.~~

1.3 Implementation

The Downtown Community Improvement Plan will be implemented through the provisions of Section 7.1.6 of the Town of Ajax Official Plan and Section 28 of the *Planning Act*.

The overall implementation of the CIP programs offered under the umbrella of Section 28 of the *Planning Act*, including liaison with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, shall be the responsibility of Planning and Development Services.

1.4 Interpretation

Sections 1.0 and 2.0, together with ~~Schedules A and B~~, form the actual Community Improvement Plan for the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area. ~~Section 3.0 does not constitute part of the actual Community Improvement Plan.~~

Commented [MS14]: Modified since Schedule B is no longer applicable.

Commented [MS15]: Removed since the programs outlined under Section 3.0 are being discontinued.

Alterations to the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area boundary, or the addition or increase in value of grants or loans of CIP programs permitted under Section 28 of the *Planning Act*, shall require an amendment to this Plan, to be approved by Council. This Plan has been prepared in accordance with and shall be deemed to conform to the Town of Ajax Official Plan.

This Plan shall be referred to as the Downtown Community Improvement Plan for the Town of Ajax. At such time as other Community Improvement Plans are prepared for this or other areas, this title may be modified for clarification purposes without requiring an amendment to this Plan.

1.5 Administration

A dedicated group comprised of representatives from individual Town departments/sections shall be responsible for administering the Downtown CIP and assessing applications. This team-based approach mirrors the administrative structure used across the Province by other municipalities with active CIP programs. The 'Application Review Team' will consist of one member from each of the following departments/agencies:

- Planning and Development Services – Planning Section (Policy and Development);
- Planning and Development Services - Economic Development Team; and,
- ~~Financial Services~~ Planning and Development Services – Building Section.

Commented [MS16]: Modified to align with the membership of the Application Review Team outlined under the Pickering Village CIP. Given the nature of the programs proposed in the revised Downtown CIP, there value in replacing the representative from Financial Services with one from the Building Section.

Commented [MS17]: Modified to reflect the changes to the composition of the Application Review Team.

The Town's solicitor, ~~Financial Services staff~~ and ~~Building/~~ Engineering staff will be requested to provide advice on applications, as needed.

The Application Review Team will work under the Manager of Planning and the Director of Planning and Development Services. All decisions/recommendations of the Application Review Team shall be approved by the Director of Planning and Development Services ~~or designate and/or Council~~. The composition of the Application Review Team may be modified without an amendment to the CIP.

Commented [MS18]: Added to align with the decision-making process laid out under the Pickering Village CIP.

1.6 Funding

Funding for the Downtown Community Improvement Plan will be allocated each year as part of the Town's Operating Budget. While the program descriptions included in this CIP provide reference to the intended budgets, Council may, at its discretion, change the level of funding when necessary.

Rather than providing an annual budget for each separate program operating under the CIP, funding will be conveyed as a single, shared budget. This will ensure that funds can be accessed in the programs where they are needed the most. In some cases, a maximum annual allocation may be established for an individual program to prevent it from garnering a disproportionate amount of the shared funding. Where this is the case, the maximum annual allocation will be outlined in the program description included in the CIP.

At the end of a program year, any funds that were not committed and spent will be directed to the Town's CIP Development Improvement Fund. Monies in this fund can then be used at Council's discretion for improvements in any of the Town's CIP areas. For example, these funds may be used to rehabilitate Town-owned properties (including roads), acquire key strategic parcels (either for public purposes or for conveyance at an appropriate time), undertake capital projects which support the goals and objectives of the CIPs, and/or participate in public/private partnerships to rehabilitate publicly or privately held land in the CIP areas.

Commented [MS19]: Added to provide further direction on general budget allocation, program-specific allocations, and unused funds at the end of the program year.

2.0 Downtown Community Improvement Plan - Program Parameters

2.1 Municipal Property Acquisition, Investment and Partnership Program

2.1.1 Description

The *Municipal Property Acquisition, Investment and Partnership Program* is a general program of Town property acquisition, investment and involvement in public/private partnerships to clean-up and/or rehabilitate properties in the Community Improvement Project Area. Property acquisition under this program may be pursued by the Town either through the marketplace, as a regular real-estate transaction, or through the Town exercising its powers under Section 28 of the *Planning Act*. Any lands that the Town acquires under the *Municipal Property Acquisition, Investment and Partnership Program* may subsequently be conveyed by the Town (including the sale of lands at below market value), if the sale of the land assists the Town in achieving any of its goals with respect to the Downtown CIP.

2.1.2 Program Funding

Funding for this program shall be obtained from two sources:

~~- allocating 20% of the value of building permit fees collected for all new residential and office/commercial construction in the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area pertaining to properties participating in the Planning and Development Fees Grant; unspent CIP funds budgeted annually by Town Council that have not been committed via its grant programs; and~~

- other direct municipal contributions, at Council's discretion.

~~For the comprehensive development of lands on Priority Sites identified under Section 1.2.1.1, the~~

Commented [MS20]: Removed since the Planning & Development Fees Rebate program will be discontinued, and as such, building permit fees will not be available for allocation to this program budget.

Commented [MS21]: Added to reflect that unused funds from each annual CIP allocation will be redirected to this program. This action will ensure that this program remains funded and that unspent funds are redirected back into the CIP area to help achieve outlined goals and objectives.

~~owner will be granted back 100% of the building permit fees collected under the Planning and Development Fees Grant Program, in accordance with criteria within Section 2.2.3 of this Plan.~~

~~For all other sites, the property owner is granted back up to 80% of building permit fees collected under the Planning and Development Fees Grant Program, and the Town will allocate the balance of the value of the building permit fee(s). [These monies shall be obtained from managed within the CIP Development Improvement Reserve. As funds accrue in this account, the Town can use these funds to rehabilitate properties (including roads) that it already owns, acquire key strategic parcels (either for public purposes or for conveyance at an appropriate time), undertake capital projects which support the goals and objectives of this CIP, and/or participate in public/private partnerships to rehabilitate publicly or privately held land in the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area. Grants from this fund may also be issued, at Council's discretion, to provide assistance to any other level of government for any purpose which supports the goals and objectives of this CIP.~~

The CIP Development Improvement Reserve will function as a revolving fund with any profits from rehabilitation deposited back into the fund (e.g., parking revenue). These funds are not intended for transfer to general revenues.

2.1.3 Program Duration

This program will commence on the day following the date of final approval of the Plan by ~~the Town of Ajax Council and is anticipated to be available until December 31, 2027. When the Rehabilitation Grant Program ends with the last grant payment paid out possibly as late as December 31, 2025, the Municipal Property Acquisition, Investment and Partnership Program will also end.~~

2.1.4 Eligibility for Program Participation

Unlike other programs contained in the Downtown CIP, the *Municipal Property Acquisition, Investment and Partnership Program* is a program developed to facilitate direct participation by the Town as an active player in Downtown rehabilitation projects. Consequently, private landowners/developers are unable to make direct application to participate in this program. Participation in this program is limited to the Town itself, unless by invitation of or agreement with the Town, a landowner/developer enters into a partnership arrangement with the Town. In the case of a partnership arrangement, participation by the landowner/developer in terms of the program is indirect in nature, with the Town playing the lead role through exercising its powers under Section 28 of the *Planning Act*.

Given that direct participation is limited to the Town, no eligibility criteria are required (the Town cannot disqualify itself). The rehabilitation projects chosen to benefit from the *Municipal Property Acquisition, Investment and Partnership Program* shall be at the sole discretion of the Town. However, the *Municipal Property Acquisition, Investment and Partnership Program* may only be used by the Town for purposes within the Community Improvement Project Area which contribute to achieving the goals of the Downtown CIP.

2.1.5 Program Administration

The Planning and Development Services Department and the Finance Department will administer the CIP Development Improvement Reserve, in consultation with other departments and divisions as necessary. The Town may then draw on this account to acquire property or rehabilitate property it already owns, or to participate in public/private partnerships to rehabilitate improve ~~publically~~publicly or privately held land, but said properties must be in the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area.

Commented [MS22]: Removed since the Planning & Development Fees Rebate program will be discontinued.

Commented [MS23]: Modified since the CIP will now be reconsidered on a four-year basis, initiated on the year following the election of a new municipal council.

Authority under this program would be exercised in order that rehabilitation of land or buildings may occur in conformity with this Plan, subject to Council approval. All activities under the *Municipal Property Acquisition, Investment and Partnership Program*, and all expenditures from the DIA, shall be subject to Council approval. At such time as there are sufficient funds in the DIA, an additional report may be prepared and forwarded to Council, to provide further details with respect to the implementation of this program.

2.2 Commercial Property Accessibility and Beautification Grant Program

2.2.1 Description

The Commercial Property Accessibility and Beautification Grant Program will provide property owners a financial incentive to undertake renovations that improve accessibility and/or improve the general visual appearance of their properties.

Accessibility improvements will generally take the form of physical upgrades to building entrances but may also include physical upgrades to the layout of interior areas that are utilized by business customers, clients and/or members of the public.

Improvements to the visual appearance of a property may include general aesthetic upgrades to building facades (painting, cladding upgrades, etc.) and/or hard landscaping (walkways, retaining walls, addition of permanent planters, etc.), visible from the street/public areas. Note that the nature of upgrades to be funded under this program are cosmetic, rather than structural.

The Commercial Property Accessibility and Beautification Grant Program is open to any property within the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area that operates or is proposed to operate a commercial business. Residential properties are not eligible for the program.

The process for evaluating and awarding grants will depend upon the timing of the application each calendar year, as follows:

- Applications received between January 1 and March 15 will be held and evaluated concurrently to determine priority. If there are not sufficient funds to award all applications, priority will be given based on the significance of the project(s) in improving the accessibility and the appearance of the area. Priority will typically be given to accessibility projects over beautification projects.
- Applications will continue to be accepted after March 15, subject to availability of funding. These applications will be evaluated and awarded on a first come, first serve basis (no prioritization applies). Decisions on applications will be made within one month of submission.

2.2.2 Program Funding

A proposed budget up to \$30,000 per year, subject to budget approval, will be made available to be shared amongst the Downtown Community Improvement Plan programs, including the Commercial Property Accessibility and Beautification Grant Program.

The following financial incentives shall be available subject to availability of funding:

Commented [MS24]: Added to outline the basis for the Commercial Property Accessibility and Beautification Grant Program.

Commented [MS25]: Added to reflect general eligibility requirements, grant prioritization strategy and application process. These provisions have been structured to generally follow the format of existing grant programs operated under the Pickering Village CIP.

(a) A grant equal to 50% of the eligible costs (pre-tax) to a maximum of \$5,000 per property for commercially zoned and operated properties to improve building accessibility.

(b) A grant equal to 50% of the eligible costs (pre-tax) to a maximum of \$2,500 per property for commercially zoned and operated properties to undertake upgrades to building facades and/or hard landscaping, visible from the street/public areas.

Where accessibility and beautification upgrades occur together on a single property, the maximum grant is equal to \$7,500.

2.2.3 Program Duration

This program will commence on the day following the date of final approval of the Plan by Town of Ajax Council and run until December 31, 2027. The Town may, at any time and without formal notice or amendment to the Downtown Community Improvement Plan, discontinue this program. However, all applications submitted prior to the program's closing will still be considered by the Town.

2.2.4 Eligibility for Program Participation

Applicants for the *Commercial Property Accessibility and Beautification Grant Program* must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Applicants must be the registered owner(s) of the property, which shall be located within the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area. If the applicant is not the owner, the applicant must provide written consent from the owner(s) of the property to make the application.
- Property owners who are in arrears of property taxes or who have outstanding liens against the property are not eligible to apply until such time as all taxes owing are paid or cancelled, and all liens lifted.
- Properties with outstanding work orders and/or requests to comply from Planning and Development Services, By-law, or any other departments, are not eligible to apply until such time as the orders/requests have been satisfactorily addressed.
- Applicants must submit a completed CIP application form to the Town prior to the commencement of any works to which the financial incentive applies. If Planning applications (Zoning By-law Amendment, Site Plan, Minor Variance, etc.) are required to facilitate the proposed works, a completed CIP application form must be submitted to the Town prior to or at the time of the Planning application submission(s). Grants will not be retroactively applied to any works commenced prior to the approval of the CIP application.

2.2.5 Program Requirements

The *Commercial Property Accessibility and Beautification Grant Program* is subject to the following requirements:

(a) The program does not apply to new construction projects or to work that has been completed without receiving prior approval from the Town.

Commented [MS26]: Added to reflect the funding format for the CIP whereby funding will be shared amongst multiple grant programs. Grant values have been limited to \$5,000 for accessibility projects and \$2,500 for beautification projects. The \$5,000 maximum grant for accessibility is equal to the maximum grant currently available under the Pickering Village CIP. The \$2,500 maximum grant for beautification projects is very modest compared to the maximum \$15,000 Façade Improvement Grant available under the Pickering Village CIP. This difference in value is based on the fact that investments in Pickering Village are generally directed at long-term conservation projects for buildings that the Town wishes to see preserved. In the Downtown, these funds are aimed primarily at superficial projects that help to "clean up" the image of a property for an interim period before it is redeveloped.

Commented [MS27]: Added to reflect that the CIP will now be reconsidered on a four-year basis, initiated on the year following the election of a new municipal council. This section also clarifies that the Town may discontinue the program, provided that all applications received prior to discontinuation are still processed.

Commented [MS28]: Added to outline eligibility requirements. These provisions have been structured to generally follow the format of existing grant programs operated under the Pickering Village CIP.

(b) Any property owner/business owner(s) wishing to be considered for a grant under this program must submit a completed application form to the Town along with any supporting documentation (e.g. design concept, architectural renderings, colour scheme), as deemed necessary by the Town.

(c) Applicants must not have benefitted from an approved Commercial Property Accessibility and Beautification Grant registered on the subject property within the past five years (exceptions may be granted at the discretion of the Town).

(d) The applicant is required to submit a minimum of two quotes for works outlined on the application form. All quotes must provide a detailed outline of the work to be undertaken, broken down by type of project if multiple works are being proposed by the same contractor.

(e) The following types of accessibility projects on commercial properties are considered eligible for a grant under this program:

- i) Installation of ramps for accessibility purposes;
- ii) Widening of doorways and entranceways;
- iii) Installation of automated/push button door-opening systems; and
- iv) Other similar repairs/improvements which the Town, in its sole discretion, determines are important to incorporate as an integral part of accessible design.

(f) The following types of beautification projects on commercial properties are considered eligible for a grant under this program:

- i) Cleaning/painting of facades visible from adjacent streets and public walkways;
- ii) Repair/replacement of decorative entrance/façade treatments such as awnings, canopies, shutters and similar features;
- iii) Repair/replacement of façade cladding materials;
- iv) Replacement of storefront window/door assemblies;
- v) Addition of decorative lighting/upgrading of existing fixtures on exterior façade and in entrance and storefront display areas;
- vi) Hard landscaping such as walkways, permanent planters, pavers for entranceways, and decorative/ornamental fencing; and
- vii) Other similar repairs/improvements which the Town, in its sole discretion, determines are important to incorporate as an integral part of site beautification.

(g) The following types of projects are ineligible to receive a grant:

- i) Improvements to areas not visible from the street or a public area (exceptions may apply for accessibility improvements);
- ii) Interior improvements (exceptions may apply for accessibility improvements);
- iii) Structural repairs to any building element;
- iv) Roof repairs/replacement;
- v) Signage improvements/upgrades; and
- vi) Driveway or parking lot paving/improvements (exceptions may apply for accessibility improvements).

(h) Approved grant projects must be completed by **November 30** of the calendar year in which they were awarded. All invoices must be paid and submitted to the Town and the final inspection must be completed by **December 15** of the calendar year in which the grant was

Commented [MS29]: Added to outline general program requirements. These provisions have been structured to generally follow the format of existing grant programs operated under the Pickering Village CIP.

Commented [MS30]: Added to outline eligible accessibility projects. These projects generally reflect the list of accessibility project types eligible under the Pickering Village CIP.

Commented [MS31]: Added to outline eligible beautification projects. These projects are generally limited to superficial improvements capable of improving the aesthetics of a property as viewed from the public realm.

Commented [MS32]: Added to outline ineligible projects. These projects include improvements that are unlikely to improve the accessibility or the aesthetics of a property as viewed from the public realm.

awarded. The grant will expire if the work has not been completed, invoices have not been paid or final inspection has not been signed off. Any extension beyond these deadlines requires the applicant to submit a written letter to the Town outlining the reasons for the requested extension and anticipated time of completion of the project. Approval of any such extension shall only be granted by the Director of Planning and Development Services or designate. This written confirmation will outline a revised completion date for the project.

(i) The application must conform to the Town's Site Plan Manual, specifically including the Town's tree preservation requirements.

(j) Where applicable, improvements made to buildings and/or land shall be made pursuant to a Building Permit and constructed in accordance with the *Ontario Building Code* and all applicable zoning requirements and approvals. The work to be undertaken shall likewise conform to the intent of the goals, objectives and policies of the Town's Official Plan, including all policies/guidelines dealing with urban design and the built form vision for the Downtown Central Area.

2.2.6 Program Administration

Staff from the Planning and Development Services Department will administer the *Commercial Property Accessibility and Beautification Grant Program*, in consultation with other departments and divisions as necessary.

Before accepting any application, Planning and Development Services staff will screen the application. If the application is not within the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area or the application clearly does not meet the program requirements and terms specified in this Plan, the application will not be accepted. Acceptance of the application by the Planning and Development Services Department in no way implies approval.

An application that satisfies all eligibility and program requirements is not necessarily entitled to receive a grant. The Town may, at its discretion, determine cases where an application that meets all program requirements should not receive a grant.

All recommendations on grant applications and grant prioritization are to be made by the Application Review Team and are subject to the approval of the Director of Planning and Development Services or designate and/or Council. There is no appeal mechanism for applicants who do not receive a grant.

All applicants that are approved to receive a grant will be required to enter into an Agreement with the Town of Ajax outlining the terms and conditions of the grant, including such terms as the total amount of the grant or rebate to be provided.

Grants approved under this program shall be provided to property owners/business owners following the submission of the final invoices for the work completed, indicating that the suppliers/contractors have been paid in full, and once final Building Inspection has been signed off by the Town.

Commented [MS33]: Added to outline general program requirements. These provisions have been structured to generally follow the format of existing grant programs operated under the Pickering Village CIP.

Commented [MS34]: Added to outline how the program will be administered. These provisions have been structured to generally follow the format of existing grant programs operated under the Pickering Village CIP. Note the provision stating that the Town may use its discretion to determine which projects it wishes to support. If a project meets all eligibility requirements for a CIP program but is not viewed by the Town as desirable, the Town is not required to process or approve the associated CIP application. Further, this section makes it clear that there is no means of appeal for CIP-related decisions.

2.3 Patio Grant Program

2.3.1 Description

Section 3.2.2.1 of the Town of Ajax Official Plan outlines a desire to develop pedestrian-scaled streetscapes through the Downtown that connect public areas and gathering spaces. In this regard, the Official Plan sets a vision for the Downtown to become:

- A highly desirable, urban, intensive, pedestrian-oriented and transit-supportive mixed use area;
- A distinct urban centre – a true Downtown – where people live, work, shop and play; and
- An interconnected network of sidewalks and urban squares that create active and vibrant gathering spaces.

The construction of patio space in the Downtown serves to help achieve all of the above priorities. Accordingly, the *Patio Grant Program* is designed to incentivize the provision of patios in the Downtown by providing funds to facilitate construction of new permanent patios and the repair and/or upgrade of existing ones.

The *Patio Grant Program* is open to any property within the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area that operates as the following use:

- Restaurant; and/or
- Retail Store (where food and refreshments are sold – bakeries, coffee shops, etc.)

The process for evaluating and awarding grants will depend upon the timing of the application each calendar year, as follows:

- Applications received between **January 1 and March 15** will be held and evaluated concurrently to determine priority. If there are not sufficient funds to award all applications, priority will be given based on the significance of the project(s) in improving the overall vitality of the Downtown.
- Applications will continue to be accepted **after March 15**, subject to availability of funding. These applications will be evaluated and awarded on a first come, first serve basis (no prioritization applies). Decisions on applications will be made within one month of submission.

2.3.2 Program Funding

A proposed budget up to \$30,000 per year, subject to budget approval, will be made available to be shared amongst the Downtown Community Improvement Plan programs, including the *Patio Grant Program*. Grants are limited to 50% of the eligible costs (pre-tax) of a project to a maximum of \$10,000.

2.3.3 Program Duration

This program will commence on the day following the date of final approval of the Plan by Town of Ajax Council and run until December 31, 2027. The Town may, at any time and without formal notice or amendment to the Downtown Community Improvement Plan, discontinue this program. However, all applications submitted prior to the program's closing will still be considered by the Town.

Commented [MS35]: Added to outline the basis for the Patio Grant Program.

Commented [MS36]: Added to reflect general eligibility requirements and application process. These provisions have been structured to generally follow the format of existing grant programs operated under the Pickering Village CIP. Note that eligible uses are limited to restaurants and retail stores where food and refreshment are served, since these are the permitted uses that align most closely with the need for a patio.

Commented [MS37]: Added to reflect the funding format for the CIP whereby funding will be shared amongst multiple grant programs. The maximum grant value of \$10,000 was established to match the grants available through other similar CIP programs in other municipalities (e.g. Chatham-Kent).

Commented [MS38]: Added to reflect that the CIP will now be reconsidered on a four-year basis, initiated on the year following the election of a new municipal council. This section also clarifies that the Town may discontinue the program, provided that all applications received prior to discontinuation are still processed.

2.3.4 Eligibility for Program Participation

Applicants for the *Patio Grant Program* must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Applicants must be the registered owner(s) of the property, which shall be located within the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area. If the applicant is not the owner, the applicant must provide written consent from the owner(s) of the property to make the application.
- Property owners who are in arrears of property taxes or who have outstanding liens against the property are not eligible to apply until such time as all taxes owing are paid or cancelled, and all liens lifted.
- Properties with outstanding work orders and/or requests to comply from Planning and Development Services, By-law, or any other departments, are not eligible to apply until such time as the orders/requests have been satisfactorily addressed.
- Applicants must submit a completed CIP application form to the Town prior to the commencement of any works to which the financial incentive applies. If Planning applications (Zoning By-law Amendment, Site Plan, Minor Variance, etc.) are required to facilitate the proposed works, a completed CIP application form must be submitted to the Town prior to or at the time of the Planning application submission(s). Grants will not be retroactively applied to any works commenced prior to the approval of the CIP application.

2.3.5 Program Requirements

The *Patio Grant Program* is subject to the following requirements:

- (a) Any property owner/business owner(s) wishing to be considered for a grant under this program must submit a completed application form to the Town along with any supporting documentation (e.g. design concept, architectural renderings, colour scheme), as deemed necessary by the Town.
- (b) Applicants must not have benefitted from an approved Patio Grant registered on the subject property within the past five years (exceptions may be granted at the discretion of the Town).
- (c) The applicant is required to submit a minimum of two quotes for works outlined on the application form. All quotes must provide a detailed outline of the work to be undertaken, broken down by type of project if multiple works are being proposed by the same contractor.
- (d) The following types of projects are considered eligible for a grant under this program:
 - i) Design-related fees;
 - ii) Materials and labour for constructing a new permanent patio;
 - iii) Materials and labour for repairing and/or expanding an existing permanent patio;
 - iv) New and or improved outdoor lighting; and
 - v) Building alterations to accommodate or improve access to/from a patio (installation of rolling or folding doors, etc.).
- (e) The following types of projects are ineligible to receive a grant:

Commented [MS39]: Added to outline eligibility requirements. These provisions have been structured to generally follow the format of existing grant programs operated under the Pickering Village CIP.

Commented [MS40]: Added to outline general program requirements. These provisions have been structured to generally follow the format of existing grant programs operated under the Pickering Village CIP.

- i) Application/Permit fees;
- ii) Any expense relating to a temporary patio;
- iii) Purchase and/or installation of outdoor appliances, cooking and/or service equipment; and
- iv) Purchase of outdoor furniture and/or furnishings.

(f) Approved grant projects must be completed by **November 30** of the calendar year in which they were awarded. All invoices must be paid and submitted to the Town and the final inspection must be completed by **December 15** of the calendar year in which the grant was awarded. The grant will expire if the work has not been completed, invoices have not been paid or final inspection has not been signed off. Any extension beyond these deadlines requires the applicant to submit a written letter to the Town outlining the reasons for the requested extension and anticipated time of completion of the project. Approval of any such extension shall only be granted by the Director of Planning and Development Services or designate. This written confirmation will outline a revised completion date for the project.

(g) The application must conform to the Town's Site Plan Manual, specifically including the Town's tree preservation requirements.

(h) Where applicable, improvements made to buildings and/or land shall be made pursuant to a Building Permit and constructed in accordance with the *Ontario Building Code* and all applicable zoning requirements, engineering standards and approvals. The work to be undertaken shall likewise conform to the intent of the goals, objectives and policies of the Town's Official Plan, including all policies/guidelines dealing with urban design and the built form vision for the Downtown Central Area.

(i) Patio grants may support patios proposed or constructed anywhere on private property (front yard, side yard, rear yard, courtyard or rooftop), provided they meet all local requirements. Grants may also support patios on public property where the business owner has entered into the necessary agreements with the corresponding public authority.

2.3.6 Program Administration

Staff from the Planning and Development Services Department will administer the *Patio Grant Program*, in consultation with other departments and divisions as necessary.

Before accepting any application, Planning and Development Services staff will screen the application. If the application is not within the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area or the application clearly does not meet the program requirements and terms specified in this Plan, the application will not be accepted. Acceptance of the application by the Planning and Development Services Department in no way implies approval.

An application that satisfies all eligibility and program requirements is not necessarily entitled to receive a grant. The Town may, at its discretion, determine cases where an application that meets all program requirements should not receive a grant.

All recommendations on grant applications and grant prioritization are to be made by the Application Review Team and are subject to the approval of the Director of Planning and Development Services or designate and/or Council. There is no appeal mechanism for applicants who do not receive a grant.

All applicants that are approved to receive a grant will be required to enter into an Agreement with the

Commented [MS41]: Added to clearly delineate the types of costs eligible and not eligible for the grant. Eligible costs are generally limited to labour and materials for permanent improvements that will also benefit subsequent property owners/tenants. Ineligible costs are those that are operational or unlikely to benefit subsequent property owners/tenants.

Commented [MS42]: Added to outline general program requirements. These provisions have been structured to generally follow the format of existing grant programs operated under the Pickering Village CIP. Note the last provision stating that patios of all forms, not just those adjacent to the street, are eligible since they are capable of contributing benefits to the community. Clarification is also provided in this provision to ensure that patios on public property may be considered for a grant.

~~Town of Ajax outlining the terms and conditions of the grant, including such terms as the total amount of the grant or rebate to be provided.~~

~~Grants approved under this program shall be provided to property owners/business owners following the submission of the final invoices for the work completed, indicating that the suppliers/contractors have been paid in full, and once final Building Inspection has been signed off by the Town.~~

~~2.2 Rehabilitation Grant Program~~

~~2.2.1 Description~~

~~The Rehabilitation Grant Program is intended to provide financial relief in the form of tax grants to property owners who undertake rehabilitation/improvement of their properties in the Community Improvement Project Area that results in a re-valuation and tax increase on these properties, for eligible residential and/or commercial/office development. This program addresses a serious financial impediment to rehabilitation and redevelopment efforts, namely the large tax increase that results when a property is rehabilitated/improved. By granting back a portion of the Town's taxes attributable to the increased assessment over an extended period, this program encourages development by not immediately "penalizing" property owners who undertake improvements resulting in tax increases.~~

~~2.2.2 Program Funding~~

~~To minimize cost and financial risk to the Town, the Rehabilitation Grant Program is structured as a "pay-as-you-go" program. In this regard, the owner will be responsible for the entire cost of the rehabilitation project, and the Town may subsequently reimburse the owner for the eligible cost of improvements in the form of an annual tax grant. The owner will initially pay all property taxes owing for each year in full for the entire year prior to the Town reimbursing the owner in the form of an annual grant. The amount of the annual grant will be equal to 80% of the increase in the Town's portion of property taxes.~~

~~2.2.3 Program Duration~~

~~Council's ability to activate this program will be effective on the day following the date of final approval of the Plan by the Town of Ajax and run until December 31, 2025. All grant payments will cease:-~~

- ~~(a) when total grant payments provided under this program equal the total value of work done under "eligible program costs" (See Section 2.2.5(f)) that resulted in the re-valuation; or,~~
- ~~(b) after ten (10) years.~~

~~The Town may, at any time and without formal notice or amendment to the Downtown Community Improvement Plan, discontinue this program, or extend the program for Priority Sites as identified under Section 1.2.1.1 for proposals which meet the following criteria:~~

- ~~(a) Comprehensive development consisting of a mix of high density residential uses and/or office uses, with ground floor retail uses at a minimum density of 2.5 FSI;~~
- ~~(b) Private parking supply consisting of a minimum of 80% underground or structured parking.~~

~~However, participants in the program prior to its closing will continue to receive the grants as~~

Commented [MS43]: Added to outline how the program will be administered. These provisions have been structured to generally follow the format of existing grant programs operated under the Pickering Village CIP. Note the provision stating that the Town may use its discretion to determine which projects it wishes to support. If a project meets all eligibility requirements for a CIP program but is not viewed by the Town as desirable, the Town is not required to process or approve the associated CIP application. Further, this section makes it clear that there is no means of appeal for CIP-related decisions.

Commented [MS44]: This entire program has been removed due to the difficulty in predicting financial impacts, the scale of incentives awarded under the program, the complexity of administering the program, and the long-term (10 years) implications of awarding financial incentives under the program.

~~determined through their Redevelopment Agreement (see Section 2.2.5(h)) with the Town. The Redevelopment Agreement may include, at the Town's discretion, a clause which "grandfathers" eligibility for participation in the program for phases planned to be constructed after the closing of the program, for a specified time.~~

~~Grants will be issued over a ten year period with Year 1 of the program defined as the first full calendar year in which taxes are paid after an eligible building has been completed and re-assessed. For example, if an eligible building is completed and re-assessed effective October 1, 2005, Year 1 of the grant schedule would be 2006. The first annual grant would be provided at the end of 2006 based upon 12 months (i.e., January to December).~~

~~The Rehabilitation Grant Program will only be applied to developments where a building permit is issued after the commencement of the program. The program will not be retroactively applied to developments where building permits were issued prior to the commencement of the program.~~

~~2.2.4 Eligibility for Program Participation~~

~~The applicants for the Rehabilitation Grant Program must be the registered owner(s) of the property, which shall be located within the Community Improvement Project Area. Owners must undertake improvements to their buildings and/or property, which shall be of sufficient size and cost to result in a re-assessment of the property. Owners' eligibility to apply for the Rehabilitation Grant is subject to the program requirements outlined in Section 2.2.5 below. Property owners who are in arrears of property taxes or who have outstanding liens against the property are not eligible to receive the Rehabilitation Grant.~~

~~2.2.5 Program Requirements~~

~~(a) Any property owner wishing to be considered for a grant under this program must complete and submit an application form to the Planning and Development Services Department prior to the commencement of any works shown on a building permit for new building construction. The application shall include a copy of the Building Permit application (and any related Demolition Permit application) for the proposed new building construction, including drawings detailing the proposed work expected to result in an increase in assessment. Building permits issued for purposes other than new building construction (e.g., some forms of environmental remediation) will not be considered sufficient to trigger an application, but if they are related to processes listed under Section 2.2.5(f), they may be submitted with the building permit for the proposed new building construction as documentation of eligible program costs.~~

~~Participants in the program will be limited to proposals which at a minimum shall consist of the following elements:~~

- ~~(i) a gross site development area in excess of 0.5 hectares; or,~~
- ~~(ii) a minimum of 1,000 square metres of new commercial/office Gross Floor Area.~~

~~(b) As a condition of the application, the Town may require the applicant to submit a business plan acceptable to the Town.~~

~~(c) If the rehabilitation/improvement of the property does not result in an increase in assessment, no grant will be provided.~~

~~(d) Notwithstanding any administrative rules governing this and other CIP programs, the Town will~~

~~not issue an annual grant which exceeds the Town portion of the property tax collected in any year on the increased assessed value.~~

~~(e) The total combined value of the annual grants provided over the life of the program shall not exceed the total cost of rehabilitating the land and buildings under eligible program costs, as indicated in Section 2.2.5(f) below.~~

~~(f) Aside from the work indicated on the building permit application, eligible program costs include the costs of:~~

~~(i) environmental studies;~~

~~(ii) environmental remediation;~~

~~(iii) development, redevelopment, construction and reconstruction of lands and buildings for rehabilitation purposes or for the provision of energy efficient uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements or facilities;~~

~~(iv) site preparation including construction/improvement of on-site public works, e.g., water services, private sanitary and storm drains and/or private sewers; and,~~

~~(v) demolition.~~

~~(g) Actual costs for any or all of the items in (f) above may be subject to independent audit, at the expense of the property owner.~~

~~(h) All participating property owners will be required to enter into a Redevelopment Agreement with the Town which will specify the terms of the grant. Any Rehabilitation Grant represents a percentage of increased taxes payable resulting from the improvements. By comparing the total value of the work completed (as documented/verified to the Town's satisfaction for all eligible costs as noted in Section 2.2.5(f) above) with the amount of the Town's portion of the taxes paid prior to and after rehabilitation, the Town can monitor the combined value of the annual grants to ensure that they do not exceed the total cost of rehabilitating the land and buildings.~~

~~The amount of municipal taxes ("base rate") will be determined before commencement of construction of an eligible building at the time a Rehabilitation Grant application is submitted. The increase in the municipal portion of real property taxes (or "municipal tax increment") will be calculated as the difference between the base rate and the amount of municipal taxes levied as a result of re-valuation by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) following completion of an eligible building.~~

~~(i) All Rehabilitation Grant Applications must be approved by Council. Specifically, the Application Review Team will be responsible for evaluating and then recommending applications for approval in a report to Council. As part of the same report, the Application Review Team will recommend that Council authorize the Team to prepare and enter into an appropriate Redevelopment Agreement with the applicant, to be executed by the applicant to the satisfaction of the Town.~~

~~(j) The annual grant is based upon changes in property taxes as a result of construction and improvement. The program does not exempt property owners from an increase/decrease in municipal taxes due to a general tax rate increase/decrease, a change in assessment, changes in tax legislation, or for any other reason. The annual grant is not based upon occupancy or changes in occupancy.~~

~~If the amount of annual property taxes owing on a property decreases for any reason (such as~~

~~through a general reassessment), the annual Rehabilitation Grant will continue to be provided but will not exceed the amount of the Town portion of the taxes collected on the increased assessed value.~~

- ~~(k) The subject property shall not be in a position of tax arrears or be subject to outstanding liens. All taxes owing shall be paid or cancelled, and all liens lifted, prior to the disbursement of any grant money.~~

~~All property taxes owing for each year must be fully paid for the entire year prior to the provision of any annual grant amount under this program. If a property tax installment is missed or a payment is late, the Town will have the option, without notice and at its own discretion, to terminate all future grants.~~

- ~~(l) If a building erected under this program is demolished before the program period expires, the remainder of the monies to be paid out as annual grants shall be forfeited for the building in question as of the date of issuance of the demolition permit.~~

- ~~(m) The improvements made to buildings and/or land shall be made pursuant to a Building Permit, and constructed in accordance with the Ontario Building Code and all applicable zoning requirements and approvals. The work to be undertaken shall likewise conform to the intent of the goals, objectives and policies of the Town's Official Plan, including all policies/guidelines dealing with urban design and the built form vision for the Downtown Central Area.~~

- ~~(n) Outstanding work orders and/or requests to comply from the Planning and Development Services, By-law, or any other departments must be satisfactorily addressed prior to the issuance of any grants.~~

- ~~(o) If the property is conveyed, in whole or in part, before the original grant period lapses, the subsequent owner is not entitled to future grant payments. Notwithstanding this previous sentence:~~

- ~~(i) A conveyance to an entity which is a "related" entity, as such term is defined in Section 251(2) of the Income Tax Act, R.S.C. 1985, c. 1, as amended, shall be deemed not to be a conveyance for the purpose of this provision; and,~~

- ~~(ii) Where property is conveyed, in whole or in part, before the original grant period lapses, the Town may make alternative accommodations for the previous owner which, at the Town's sole and absolute discretion, serve the objectives of this Plan.~~

- ~~(p) In the case of sites that are already vacant or cleared at the time of the program's commencement, rehabilitation proposals for such sites that are received after the date of the program start shall have as a starting point for the program or base rate, the amount of annualized taxes levied upon the property as it existed on the date of Building Permit issuance.~~

~~Properties that are cleared or partially cleared after the date of the program start, and left undeveloped for a period greater than two (2) years prior to participating in the program for any phase, shall have as a starting point for the program or base rate, the amount of taxes levied as of the day prior to any clearances.~~

~~2.2.6 Program Administration~~

~~The Planning and Development Services Department and the Finance Department will administer the Rehabilitation Grant Program, in consultation with other departments and divisions as necessary.~~

~~A property owner shall register their intent to participate in the program by filing a Rehabilitation Grant Application with the Town for its consideration. Applications to participate in the program shall be submitted to the Planning and Development Services Department. The application will include a copy of the Building Permit application (and any related Demolition Permit application) as well as drawings detailing the proposed work expected to result in an increase in assessment. This may require drawings to be prepared by a certified Professional Engineer or Architect.~~

~~Before accepting an application, Planning and Development Services staff will screen the application. If the application is not within the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area or the application clearly does not meet the program requirements and terms specified in this Plan, the application will not be accepted. Acceptance of the application by the Planning and Development Services Department in no way implies approval.~~

~~Once accepted, the application will be evaluated by the Application Review Team. The Team will be responsible for evaluating and recommending applications for approval based on the program requirements specified in this Community Improvement Plan and any other requirements of the Town. The Team will record the current assessment of the property (i.e., the "base rate") and determine the amount of the Town taxes payable. The applicant will be provided a copy by correspondence for their records.~~

~~All Rehabilitation Grant Applications must be approved by Council. In addition, at the time applications are presented to Council for approval, the Team will seek Council's direction to prepare an appropriate Redevelopment Agreement, to be executed by the applicant to the satisfaction of the Town. The Application Review Team will then prepare the required Redevelopment Agreement for applicants participating in the program. The Redevelopment Agreement will specify the terms of the grants (such as the total combined amount of the grants), the duration of the program, the owner's obligations should the owner default on the Agreement, and any other requirements specified by the Town.~~

~~The applicant shall co-operate with the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) to facilitate a post-improvement assessment of the property following completion of an eligible building. Alternatively, the post-improvement assessment may be undertaken by a certified quantity surveyor satisfactory to the Town if MPAC is unable to undertake a post-improvement assessment in a timely fashion. If a quantity surveyor provides an assessment, the surveyor's assessment (and any agreement based on the assessment) will be adjusted as necessary in accordance with the results of MPAC's assessment, once it is completed.~~

~~Using the results of the post-improvement assessment, the Team shall determine the difference between the amount of Town taxes prior to the improvements and the amount of Town taxes to be paid after the improvements. The difference is known as the "municipal tax increment" and shall be the portion eligible for a partial grant under this program. Subsequent increases in assessed value or increases to the tax rate are not eligible to be used to determine the amount of the grant(s).~~

~~The actual component costs of the work done, as identified under eligible program costs in Section 2.2.5(f) above, will be provided to the Town by the applicant upon completion of an eligible building. Any and all of these costs may be subject to an independent audit, at the expense of the property owner. Finalization of the Redevelopment Agreement will occur pending the Town's review and satisfaction with all reports and documentation submitted outlining the full scope and cost of the work completed, and final building inspection and sign-off by the Building Division.~~

~~Prior to the issuance of any annual grant, the Town will verify that all requirements of the program to date have been met.~~

~~2.3 — Planning and Development Fees Grant Program~~

~~2.3.1 — Description~~

~~The Planning and Development Fees Grant Program is intended to stimulate new investment in the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area through the provision of a grant to offset, in whole or in part, the cost of specific planning and development fees for residential and/or commercial/office (re)development in the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area.~~

~~2.3.2 — Program Funding~~

~~The Planning and Development Fees Grant Program is structured as a rebate at the time of application approval for planning applications and at the time of final inspection for building permit fees.~~

- ~~(a) Full grants will be issued for Official Plan Amendments, rezonings, minor variances, consents, site plans, site plan amendments, plans of subdivision/condominium, exemptions from part lot control, sign permits, and demolition permits relating to residential and/or commercial/office redevelopment/rehabilitation;~~
- ~~(b) Building Permit Fees for new residential and/or commercial/office construction will be granted back in an amount equal to 80% of the eligible Building Permit fees. On Priority Sites identified in Section 1.2.1.1, building permit fees for new residential and/or commercial office construction will be granted back in the amount of 100% of the eligible building permit fees subject to the for proposals which include at a minimum, the following:
 - ~~a. Comprehensive development consisting of a mix of high density residential uses and/or office uses, with ground floor retail uses at a minimum density of 2.5 FSI;~~
 - ~~b. Private parking supply consisting of a minimum of 80% of parking spaces as underground or structured parking.~~~~

~~Any grant issued under this program will be provided as a one-time grant to the registered owner of the property, regardless of who pays the fee. However, in no case will the total amount of the grant provided under this program exceed the cost of rehabilitating the land and buildings, in accordance with Section 28(7.1) of the Planning Act.~~

~~This program does not apply to any required performance securities or maintenance guarantees (i.e., Letters of Credit) posted by the applicant, required professional studies, or expenses (including expenses incurred by the applicant because of the Town's participation at the Ontario Municipal Board or Court proceedings).~~

~~2.3.3 — Program Duration~~

~~This program will commence on the day following the date of final approval of the Plan by the Town of Ajax and concludes on December 31, 2025.~~

Commented [MS45]: This entire program has been removed due to the scale of incentives awarded and changes in the landscape of how application fees are administered. Under the Province's Bill 109, the Town faces the potential of having to provide full or partial refunds on application fees for applications that have not been processed according to new, shortened timelines. Given the new threat to retaining these fees, there is no appetite to host a CIP program that would provide grants on the fees that have been retained by the Town.

~~The Town may, at any time and without formal notice or amendment to the Downtown Community Improvement Plan, discontinue this program. However, all applications submitted prior to the program's closing will still be considered by the Town.~~

~~The *Planning and Development Fees Grant Program* will only be applied to Planning or Permit applications received for developments after the commencement of the program. The program will not be retroactively applied to cover Planning or Permit applications received for developments prior to the commencement of the program.~~

~~2.3.4 Eligibility for Program Participation~~

~~The applicants for the *Planning and Development Fees Grant Program* must be the registered owner(s) of the property, which shall be located within the Community Improvement Project Area. Owners' eligibility to apply for the Planning and Development Fees Grant is subject to the program requirements outlined in Section 2.3.5 below. Property owners who are in arrears of property taxes or who have outstanding liens against the property are not eligible to receive the Planning and Development Fees Grant.~~

~~2.3.5 Program Requirements~~

~~(a) Only fees paid for the Town's portion of the following types of applications are eligible:~~

- | | |
|---|--|
| (i) Official Plan Amendment; | (ii) Zoning By-law Amendment; |
| (iii) Minor Variance; | (iv) Consent; |
| (v) Site Plan; | (vi) Site Plan Amendment; |
| (vii) Plan of Subdivision; | (viii) Plan of Condominium; |
| (ix) Sign Permit; | (x) Demolition Permit; |
| (xi) Building Permit. | (ix) Part Lot Control Exemptions. |

~~Only the Town's component of the fees required as part of the above noted applications is eligible for grant purposes.~~

~~(b) Any property owner wishing to be considered for a grant under this program must apply to the Planning and Development Services Department at the same time application is made for any Planning approval(s) or permit application(s) whose fees are eligible to be granted back.~~

~~(c) The subject property shall not be in a position of tax arrears or be subject to outstanding liens. All taxes owing shall be paid or cancelled, and all liens lifted, prior to the disbursement of any fee-related grant money.~~

~~(d) The improvements made to buildings and/or land shall be made pursuant to a Building Permit, and constructed in accordance with the Ontario Building Code and all applicable zoning requirements and approvals. The work to be undertaken shall likewise conform to the intent of the goals, objectives and policies of the Town's Official Plan, including all policies/guidelines dealing with urban design and the built form vision for the Downtown Central Area.~~

~~(e) Outstanding work orders and/or requests to comply from the Planning and Development Services, By-law, or any other departments must be satisfactorily addressed prior to the issuance of any fee-related grant.~~

~~(f) If the property is sold, in whole or in part, before the eligible fees are granted back, the subsequent owner shall be entitled to the fee-related grant.~~

~~2.3.6 Program Administration~~

~~The Planning and Development Services Department and the Finance Department will administer the *Planning and Development Fees Grant Program*, in consultation with other departments and divisions as necessary.~~

~~Any owner of property within the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area may register their intent to participate in the program by filing a Planning and Development Fees Grant Application with the Town at the time of making an application(s) for a Planning or Permit approval. Applications to participate in the program shall be submitted to the Planning and Development Services Department.~~

~~Before accepting an application, Planning and Development Services staff will screen the application. If the application is not within the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area or the application clearly does not meet the program requirements and terms specified in this Plan, the application will not be accepted. Acceptance of the application by the Planning and Development Services Department in no way implies approval.~~

~~Once accepted, the application will be evaluated by the Application Review Team. The Team will be responsible for evaluating applications based on the program requirements specified in this Community Improvement Plan and any other requirements of the Town. Upon final approval of any application completed under this program (other than a building permit application, and in the case of a building permit application, upon final inspection of an eligible building by the Chief Building Official), the Application Review Team will ensure that all eligibility requirements have been met. In the case of Planning Fees, (all applications under the Planning and Development Fees Grant Program) reimbursement or exemption to the owner of a phased project will likewise be undertaken in phases. In this regard, any portion of a planning application fee which represents a "flat fee" will be divided by the number of phases, and refunded in equal increments as each phase receives final approval. Any portion of a planning application fee which is calculated on the basis of numbers of dwelling units and/or GFA shall be refunded in an amount which relates directly to the number of dwelling units and/or GFA built in each particular phase. Building permit fees, by virtue of already being "phase specific" (i.e., they are applied for on a phase-by-phase basis, or building-by-building basis as the case may be, rather than all at once from the onset), will *de facto* be granted back as each phase is approved for occupancy under the *Building Code Act*.~~

~~2.4 Development Charge Exemption / Grant Program~~

~~2.4.1 Description~~

~~The *Development Charge Exemption / Grant Program* is intended to encourage higher density, more intensive development in Ajax's Downtown area. The program will offer development charge exemptions or reductions for all eligible residential and/or commercial/office (re)development proposals within the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area. The effect of the program is to essentially provide a 'grant' by either:~~

Commented [MS46]: This entire program has been removed due to the scale of incentives awarded under the program. Further, attempts to maintain the program and redesign it as an incentive used exclusively for the provision of affordable housing have been made obsolete by the Province's Bill 23, which requires the Town to waive Development Charges for affordable housing.

~~(i) approving a full or partial exemption of development charges at the time of building permit application to the owner of land who applies for a building permit to undertake an eligible development project; or,~~

~~(ii) collecting all applicable development charges up front at the time of building permit application, and then issuing a grant equivalent to the eligible exemption to the owner of land who initiates and completes an eligible development project through to final inspection and sign-off by the Town.~~

~~To facilitate the implementation of this program via alternative (i) above, changes to the Town's Development Charges By-law are required. Because the Town's Development Charges By-law is outside the scope of the *Planning Act*, the implementation of this aspect of the program does not fall within the parameters of Section 28(7) of the *Planning Act*. Instead, a separate recommendation to undertake the necessary changes to the Development Charges By-law will be brought forward for Council's consideration, in tandem with the Downtown CIP.~~

~~As an alternate method of implementing this program, the Town may offer a "Development Charge Equivalency Grant" (i.e., alternative (ii) above), whereby a grant equivalent to the amount of the eligible exemption (either full or partial) is drawn from the Town's tax based reserves and issued to the owner.~~

~~2.4.2 Program Funding~~

~~Depending on which mechanism is used to administer the 'grant' (which shall be left solely to the Town's discretion), the *Development Charge Exemption / Grant Program* is structured such that either a straight exemption is approved at the time of building permit issuance, or, the applicant is required to pay all applicable development charges at the time of Building Permit application, with reimbursement (in the form a grant) being issued upon satisfactory final inspection of the completed project by the Town's Building Section. In either instance, the amount of the eligible exemption is dependent upon the type of redevelopment/ rehabilitation, i.e.:-~~

~~(a) Full exemption of development charges for office development consisting of two or more storeys of office uses in a building or hotels of at least six storeys;~~

~~(b) Full exemption of development charges for commercial development provided:-~~

~~(i) the retail/personal service component is located in a non-residential mixed use building having two or more storeys of offices, and the Gross Floor Area of the retail/personal service component does not exceed that of the office component; or,~~

~~(ii) the commercial development is located in a residential mixed use building 6 storeys in height or greater, and the Gross Floor Area of the commercial uses does not exceed an amount equal to 30% of the total residential Gross Floor Area;~~

~~(c) Full exemption of residential development charges for all eligible high density residential development (i.e., residential development equal to or greater than 90 units per net hectare, calculated on a block-by-block basis); and,~~

~~(d) Development charges for all eligible medium density residential development (i.e., residential~~

~~development equal to or greater than 25 units per net hectare, but less than 90 units per net hectare, calculated on a block-by-block basis) will be partially exempt as follows:~~

- ~~(i) in an amount equal to 50% of the Town's development charges, for development which provides surface parking; or,~~
- ~~(ii) in an amount equal to 75% of the Town's development charges, for development which provides underground parking in a common area(s).~~

~~Any development charge equivalency grant issued under this program will be provided as a one-time grant to the registered owner of the property, regardless of who pays the development charges.~~

~~The program pertains only to the Town's portion of payable development charges. This program does not address development charges payable to other authorities including the Region of Durham, the Durham District School Board, and the Durham Catholic District School Board.~~

~~2.4.3 Program Duration~~

~~This program will commence on the day following the date of final approval of the Plan by the Town of Ajax and run until December 31, 2025. The Town may, at any time and without formal notice or amendment to the Downtown Community Improvement Plan, discontinue this program. However, all applications submitted prior to the program's closing will still be considered by the Town.~~

~~The *Development Charge Exemption / Grant Program* will only be applied to developments where a building permit is issued after the commencement of the program. The program will not be retroactively applied to developments where building permits were issued prior to the commencement of the program.~~

~~2.4.4 Eligibility for Program Participation~~

~~The applicants for the *Development Charge Exemption / Grant Program* must be the registered owner(s) of the property, which shall be located within the Community Improvement Project Area. Owners' eligibility to apply for a development charge exemption (full or partial) is subject to the program requirements outlined in Section 2.4.5 below. Property owners who are in arrears of property taxes or who have outstanding liens against the property are not eligible to participate in the program.~~

~~2.4.5 Program Requirements~~

- ~~(a) Any property owner wishing to participate in this program must complete and submit an application form to the Planning and Development Services Department prior to the issuance of a building permit. The application will include a copy of the Building Permit application detailing the work to be undertaken (including floor area calculations and the number/type of any proposed residential dwelling units) as well as an itemized breakdown of the development charges normally required to be paid by the applicant.~~
- ~~(b) The subject property shall not be in a position of tax arrears or be subject to outstanding liens. All taxes owing shall be paid or cancelled, and all liens lifted, prior to the disbursement of any grant money.~~
- ~~(c) The program shall apply to new construction only or the adaptive re-use of an existing structure where the payment of development charges would normally apply.~~

~~(d) — The improvements made to buildings and/or land shall be made pursuant to a Building Permit, and constructed in accordance with the Ontario Building Code and all applicable zoning requirements and approvals. The work to be undertaken shall likewise conform to the intent of the goals, objectives and policies of the Town's Official Plan, including all policies/guidelines dealing with urban design and the built form vision for the Downtown Central Area.~~

~~(e) — Outstanding work orders and/or requests to comply from the Planning and Development Services, By-law, or any other departments must be satisfactorily addressed prior to development charges being reduced or exempted.~~

~~2.4.6 Program Administration~~

~~The Planning and Development Services Department and the Finance Department will administer the Development Charge Exemption / Grant Program, in consultation with other departments and divisions as necessary.~~

~~Any owner of property within the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area may register their intent to participate in the program by filing a Development Charge Exemption / Grant Application with the Town prior to the issuance of a building permit. Applications to participate in the program shall be submitted to the Planning and Development Services Department. The application will include a copy of the Building Permit application as well as drawings detailing the work to be undertaken (including floor area calculations and the number/type of any proposed residential dwelling units). This may require drawings to be prepared by a certified Professional Engineer or Architect. In addition, an itemized breakdown of the development charges normally required to be paid by the applicant shall be submitted.~~

~~Before accepting an application, Planning and Development Services staff will screen the application. If the application is not within the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area or the application clearly does not meet the program requirements and terms specified in this Plan, the application will not be accepted. Acceptance of the application by the Planning and Development Services Department in no way implies approval.~~

~~Once accepted, the application will be evaluated by the Application Review Team. The Team will be responsible for evaluating and approving applications based on the program requirements specified in this Community Improvement Plan and any other requirements of the Town.~~

~~Depending on which mechanism is used to administer the 'grant', the Application Review Team may either:~~

~~(a) — approve the application prior to the issuance of a building permit, in which case the amount of development charges due prior to the building permit being issued will be reduced by the amount of the eligible exemption (either full or partial, depending on the type of development), or,~~

~~(b) — approve the application upon final inspection of the completed project, ensuring that all eligibility requirements have been met, and then instruct the Finance Department to issue the development charge equivalency grant.~~

~~3.0 Other Downtown Assistance Initiatives~~

~~3.1 Reduced Parkland Dedication Requirements Program~~

Commented [MS47]: This entire program has been removed due to the scale of incentives awarded and changes in the landscape of how parkland contributions are calculated. Under the Province's Bill 23, the rates for parkland contribution have already been significantly reduced. Given this reduction, there is no appetite for hosting a CIP program that would further reduce parkland contribution.

~~3.1.1 Description~~

~~The *Reduced Parkland Dedication Requirements Program* is intended to provide relief, in the form of a reduction in parkland dedication requirements (either land or cash-in-lieu requirements) to property owners who undertake improvement projects involving the provision of additional eligible residential dwellings units in the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area. The program will offer parkland dedication reductions for all eligible residential (re)development proposals within the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area.~~

~~The Downtown Community Improvement Project Area, like the rest of the Town, is subject to the parkland dedication requirements specified under By-law 31-90. In cases of new residential development or redevelopment, parkland dedication is collected according to the greater of the following two formulae:~~

- ~~• five percent (5%) of the land area or appraised value of the land; or,~~
- ~~• one hectare of parkland (or its appraised monetary equivalent) for every 300 dwelling units.~~

~~In some cases, a combination of land and cash-in-lieu of parkland may be required, at the Town's discretion.~~

~~For eligible residential developments in the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area, requirements for parkland dedication, either in land area or as cash-in-lieu (or a combination of both), will be collected according to the lesser of the two above-noted formulae (which in all cases in the Downtown Central Area, will be the 5% formula). Eligible residential development consists of the following:~~

- ~~(a) all high density residential development (i.e., residential development equal to or greater than 90 units per net hectare, calculated on a block-by-block basis); and,~~
- ~~(b) all medium density residential development (i.e., residential development equal to or greater than 25 units per net hectare, but less than 90 units per net hectare, calculated on a block-by-block basis) which provides underground parking in a common area(s).~~

~~Given that the *Reduced Parkland Dedication Requirements Program* only requires that amendments be made to the Town's parkland by-law (By-law 31-90), and does not rely on Section 28 of the *Planning Act* for implementation, it does not form part of the Downtown Community Improvement Plan. Instead, it has only been referenced in the context of the Downtown CIP as an initiative to promote redevelopment in Ajax's Downtown area. Authority to exercise either of the two above-noted formulae derives from Section 42 of the *Planning Act*.~~

~~3.1.2 Program Funding~~

~~The *Reduced Parkland Dedication Requirements Program* is structured such that any developer of eligible residential development shall dedicate parkland in an amount equal to 5% of the land area where land is needed for park purposes. Any difference between the amount of land dedicated by a developer (if any) and the total amount of parkland dedication required shall be paid by the owner as cash-in-lieu (i.e., if only a portion of the required 5% parkland dedication is contributed as land, the owner will be required to pay cash-in-lieu for the remainder; or, if no parkland is required by the Town, the owner shall pay cash-in-lieu equivalent to the full 5% of the land area). In instances where the amount of parkland collected by the Town under the 5% formula is less than the actual amount of~~

~~parkland proposed by the applicant, credit for the proponent's "over-dedication" will not be issued. In fact, to conform to the intent of urban design policies contained in the Official Plan and other applicable urban design criteria established for the Downtown (and thus be considered eligible for participation in the *Reduced Parkland Dedication Program*), the Town may require developments to provide parkland in excess of what is strictly required under the lesser formula.~~

~~Parkland dedication for all non-residential development shall continue to be collected at the regular rate of 2% of the land area. Parkland dedication for all residential development that is not eligible to participate under the program will be subject to standard parkland dedication requirements (i.e., the higher of the two above noted formulae for residential development, which in all cases in the Downtown Central Area shall be 1 hectare of parkland for every 300 residential dwelling units).~~

~~All required cash-in-lieu shall be paid either prior to registration, in the case of a draft plan of subdivision/condominium, or prior to the issuance of a Building Permit, if the development initially proceeds by way of a site plan application.~~

~~3.1.3 Program Duration~~

~~This program will commence on the day following the date of final approval of the Downtown Community Improvement Plan by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and run until December 31, 2025. Development proposals within the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area which require the proponent to dedicate parkland or pay cash-in-lieu of parkland dedication for new high density residential development or medium density residential development featuring underground parking shall be eligible for consideration.~~

~~The Town may, at any time and without formal notice, discontinue this program. However, all proposals submitted prior to the program's closing will still be considered by the Town.~~

~~The *Reduced Parkland Dedication Requirements Program* will not be retroactively applied to developments where a site plan was submitted or a proposed draft plan of subdivision/condominium was received prior to the commencement of the program, with the exception of eligible developments on identified priority sites within the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area. Where a site plan application or proposed draft plan of subdivision/condominium has been received after July 1, 2004, for lands identified as a priority site in the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area, the development may be considered for program participation, at Council's discretion. The date of July 1, 2004 has been chosen given that a proposed draft plan of residential subdivision was received by the Town shortly after July 1, 2004, to develop a priority site in Ajax's Downtown (i.e., Sundial Village, on the vacant Verona lands). In anticipation of this Downtown Assistance Initiative, the applicant has worked closely with staff to ensure that all eligibility criteria have been met.~~

~~3.1.4 Eligibility for Program Participation~~

~~Participants in the *Reduced Parkland Dedication Requirements Program* must be the registered owner(s) of the property, which shall be located within the Community Improvement Project Area. Owners' eligibility to apply for this program is subject to the program requirements outlined in Section 2.5.5 below. Property owners who are in arrears of property taxes or who have outstanding liens against the property are not eligible to participate in the program.~~

~~3.1.5 Program Requirements~~

~~(a) Assistance will be in the form of a reduction in the parkland dedication requirements for eligible~~

~~developments within the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area.~~

- ~~(b) Any property owner wishing to participate under this program must complete and submit an application form to the Planning and Development Services Department at the time application is made for site plan approval or for a proposed draft plan of subdivision/condominium.~~
- ~~(c) The subject property shall not be in a position of tax arrears or be subject to outstanding liens. All taxes owing shall be paid or cancelled, and all liens lifted, prior to eligibility to participate in the program being approved.~~
- ~~(d) The improvements proposed to land shall be made in accordance with all applicable zoning requirements and approvals. The work to be undertaken shall likewise conform to the intent of the goals, objectives and policies of the Town's Official Plan, including all policies/guidelines dealing with urban design and the built form vision for the Downtown Central Area.~~
- ~~(e) Outstanding work orders and/or requests to comply from the Planning and Development Services, By-law, or any other departments must be satisfactorily addressed prior to eligibility to participate in the program being approved.~~

~~3.1.6 Program Administration~~

~~The Planning and Development Services Department and the Finance Department will administer the Reduced Parkland Dedication Requirements Program, in consultation with other departments and divisions as necessary.~~

~~Any owner of property within the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area may register their intent to participate in the program by filing a Reduced Parkland Dedication Requirements Application with the Town at the time of making an application(e) for either:~~

- ~~(i) a proposed draft plan of subdivision/condominium; or,~~
- ~~(ii) a site plan application.~~

~~Applications to participate in the program shall be submitted to the Planning and Development Services Department.~~

~~Before accepting an application, Planning and Development Services staff will screen the application. If the application is not within the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area or the application clearly does not meet the program requirements and terms specified in this Plan, the application will not be accepted. Acceptance of the application by the Planning and Development Services Department in no way implies approval.~~

~~Once accepted, the application will be evaluated by the Application Review Team. The Team will be responsible for evaluating applications based on the program requirements specified in Section 3.1.5 above and any other requirements of the Town. Immediately prior to site plan approval or, in the case of proposed draft plans of subdivision/condominium, prior to draft plan approval and final approval, the Application Review Team will ensure that all eligibility requirements have been met, and then advise the Planning (Development) section of the same.~~

~~3.2 Exemption from Parking Requirements Program~~

~~3.2.1 Description~~

~~Reducing parking requirements for developments in the Downtown Central Area is a significant incentive by minimizing the hard costs associated with the provision of on-site parking in areas where higher levels of transit usage exist or are planned. The Exemption from Parking Requirements Program provides relief in the form of a reduction in the number of parking spaces required, to property owners who undertake improvement projects.~~

~~Significant portions of the Downtown Central Area are currently subject to standard parking requirements applied on a broad basis throughout the Town by the comprehensive Zoning By-law (By-law No. 95-2003). These standards are generally reflective of suburban forms of development, and are viewed as inappropriate for the form of urban, transit-supportive, pedestrian oriented, mixed used development envisaged for the Downtown Central Area. In recognition of this, reduced parking standards for appropriate forms of development in Ajax's Downtown will be considered by staff on a site-by-site basis as planning applications are received.~~

~~Given that the Exemption from Parking Requirements Program only requires that amendments/variances be made to comprehensive Zoning By-law 95-2003, and does not rely on Section 28 of the Planning Act for implementation, it does not form part of the Downtown Community Improvement Plan. Instead, it has only been referenced in the context of the Downtown CIP as an initiative to promote redevelopment in Ajax's Downtown area.~~

~~3.2.2 Eligibility for Program Participation~~

~~All property owners within the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area will automatically be eligible upon submission of a zoning by-law amendment or minor variance application, subject to the program requirements outlined in Section 3.2.3 below. A separate application will not be required. The participants in the Exemption from Parking Requirements Program must be the registered owner(s) of the property, which shall be located within the Community Improvement Project Area.~~

~~3.2.3 Program Requirements~~

- ~~(a) Assistance will be in the form of a reduction in the parking requirements, to be established on a site-by-site basis through an amendment to the Zoning By-law or a minor variance, where there are related improvements to a property within the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area. Reduced parking standards shall apply only to commercial development, office development, and medium and high density rental and condominium-based residential development.~~
- ~~(b) The improvements proposed to land shall be made in accordance with all applicable zoning requirements and approvals. The work to be undertaken shall likewise conform to the intent of the goals, objectives and policies of the Town's Official Plan, including all policies/guidelines dealing with urban design and the built form vision for the Downtown Central Area.~~
- ~~(c) All projects will be considered subject to the availability and distribution of parking spaces within the Downtown Central Area, as determined by the Town.~~

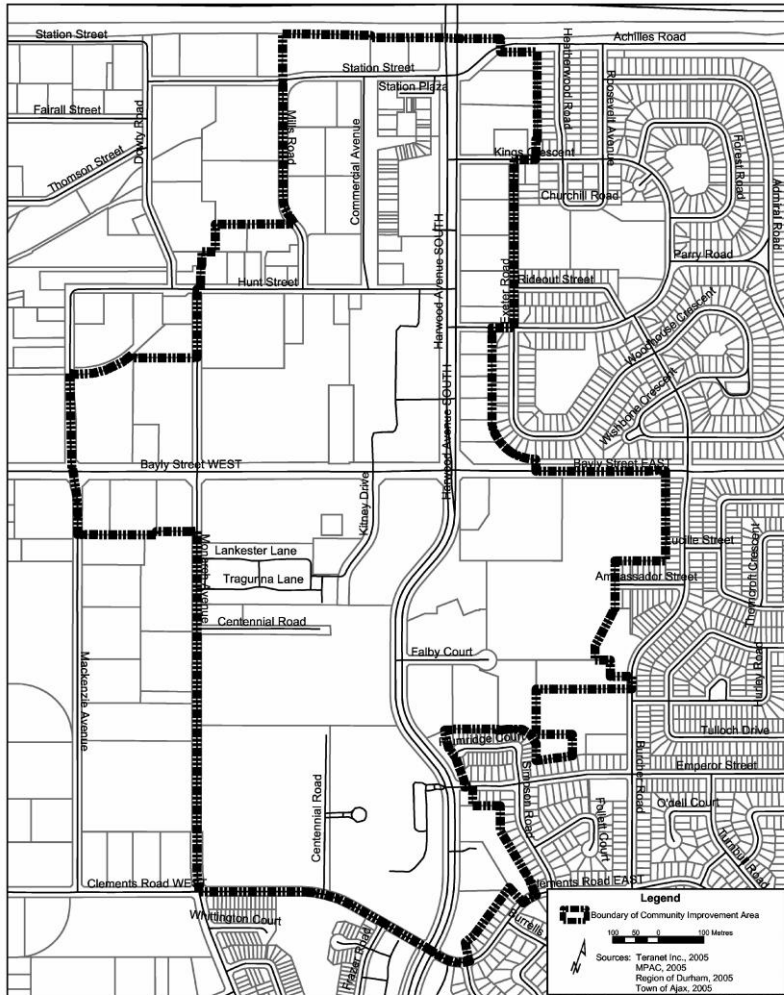
~~3.2.4 Program Administration~~

Commented [MS48]: This entire program has been removed due to it not providing any true form of incentive. Parking requirements can already be reduced by way of a cash-in-lieu contribution (for non-residential uses) or a Minor Variance application (for residential uses), so this program is not necessary for reducing parking requirements in the Downtown CIP area.

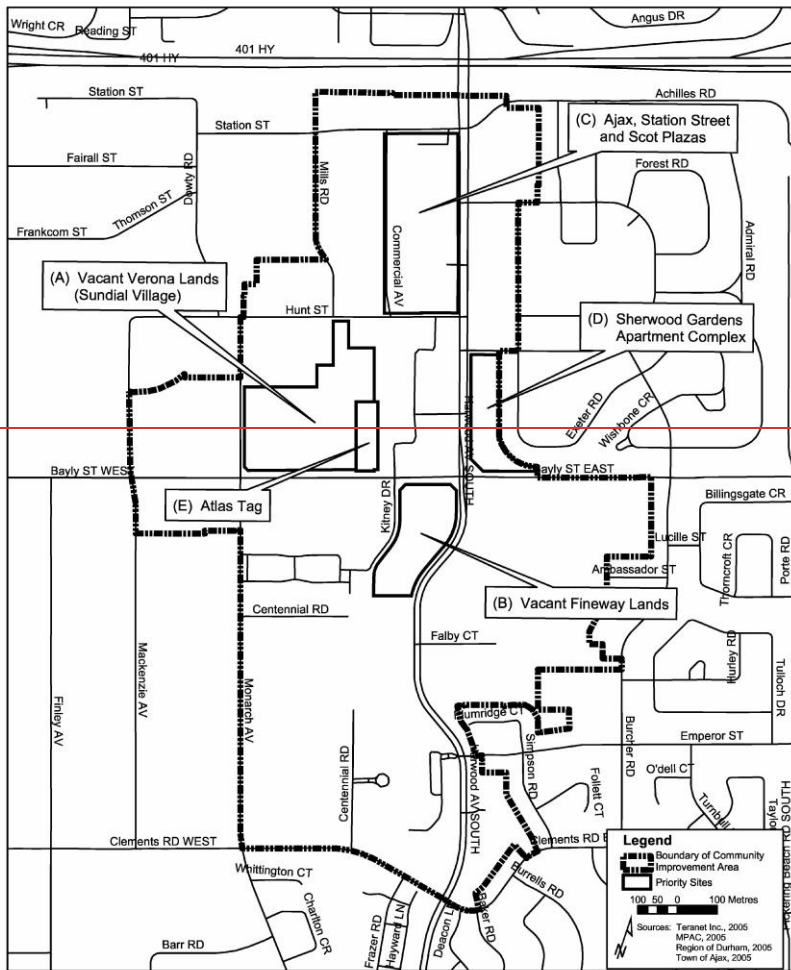
~~The Planning and Development Services Department will administer the *Exemption from Parking Requirements Program*, in consultation with other departments and divisions as necessary. Property owners who undertake improvement projects and require relief from the number of parking spaces required shall submit a minor variance or Zoning By-law amendment application to the Planning and Development Services Department.~~

~~Any rezoning application or minor variance which includes a proposed reduction in the number of required parking spaces will be processed by Planning and Development Services staff in the regular manner. The assigned development planner, in consultation with Planning Policy staff, will be responsible for evaluating all such applications based on the program requirements specified in Section 3.2.3 above and any other requirements of the Town. If the application is not within the Downtown Community Improvement Project Area or the application is not considered by staff to fully meet the program requirements, the requested reduction in parking spaces will not be accepted. Any amendment to the Zoning By-law will be drafted in such a way as to ensure that the type of development proposed in conjunction with the reduced parking requirement is realized, including the potential application of a Holding provision (H), to be removed upon Site Plan approval of the proposed development. Similarly, in the case of a minor variance application, appropriate conditions shall be prepared to accomplish the same.~~

**SCHEDULE A - AREA BOUNDARIES FOR THE
DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT AREA**



SCHEDULE B - PRIORITY SITES
TOWN OF AJAX DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

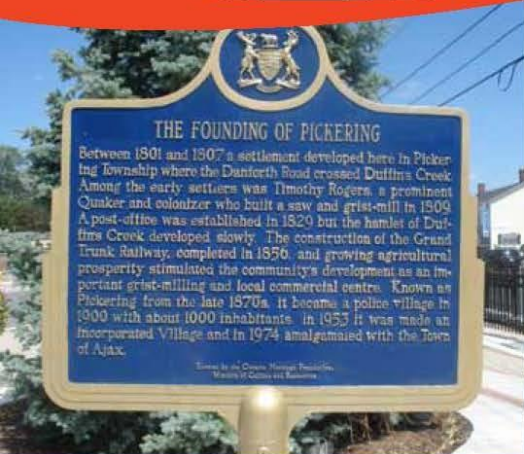


Commented [MS49]: Removed since there is no longer a need to label some properties as "Priority Properties" within the CIP. All previous programs with criteria specific to Priority Properties have been discontinued.

Pickering Village

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

2023



Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan

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Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The Town of Ajax initiated the *Pickering Village Land Use Planning and Urban Design Study* in 2007 to establish a long-term vision and plan for improving this historically significant ~~part-area~~ of Ajax. The Town retained a consultant team led by GHK International (Canada) Ltd., and assisted by Young + Wright Architects Inc., TSH Associates, and AREA Architects Ltd., to conduct the study.

~~This Plan brings forward the recommendations from the consultants' report entitled *Recommendations on a Community Improvement Plan for Pickering Village*, dated November, 2007 and formulates programs appropriate to the Village.~~

The Town of Ajax wishes to stimulate investment in Pickering Village, but within a framework which will preserve the positive attributes that make it a unique place within the larger community. The *Pickering Village Land Use Planning and Urban Design Study*, through background research and public consultation, generated a unified Vision for Pickering Village and a list of recommended actions. ~~A~~ It was determined that establishing a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) would further entrenches the Vision of Pickering Village, and provides the tools that will act as a stimulus for necessary to stimulate local landowners to do their part in its implementation.

Upon its initial completion, this Plan brought forward the recommendations from a November 2007 consultants' report entitled *Recommendations on a Community Improvement Plan for Pickering Village* and implemented programs appropriate to the Village. However, the programs offered as part of this Plan have been modified over time to reflect changes in the Town's

development priorities and as a result of legislative changes that have impacted the Town's capacity to offer financial incentives.

1.2 Legislative Authority

Section 106 of the *Municipal Act, 2001* and Section 28 of the *Planning Act* allows municipalities to prepare Community Improvement Plans.

1.2.1 Community Improvement Defined

Under Section 28(1) of the *Planning Act*, community improvement generally refers to the planning, design, development, redevelopment, construction, or rehabilitation of a community improvement project area.

A community improvement project area is defined as a "municipality or an area within a municipality, the community improvement of which in the opinion of the council is desirable because of age, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement, unsuitability of buildings or for any other environmental, social or community economic development reason."

1.2.2 Community Improvement Plans

Once Council has designated a Community Improvement Project Area by by-law, and a Community Improvement Plan has been prepared for that area, the municipality may:

- a) Acquire, hold, clear, grade or otherwise prepare land (Section 28(3));
- b) Construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on land acquired or held by the municipality (Section 28 (6));
- c) Sell, lease or dispose of any lands and buildings acquired or held by the municipality (Section 28(6));

Commented [MS2]: Added to provide context to the current version of the CIP.

Commented [MS3]: Removed to ensure consistency with other references to legislation.

Commented [MS1]: Removed since the amended CIP now differs from the 2007 report recommendations, which initiated the original CIP.

Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan

- d) Make grants or loans to owners and tenants of land and buildings within the community improvement project area to help them pay for the cost of rehabilitating their lands or building (Section 28(7)).

Section 28 (7.3) of the *Planning Act* states that the total of the grants and loans made for a property and its buildings shall not exceed the cost of rehabilitating the land and buildings.

Section 28 (10) of the *Planning Act* specifies that as conditions of sale, no land acquired and no building constructed by the municipality in the community improvement project area shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of unless a written agreement is entered into with the municipality that the person will keep and maintain the land and building in conformity with the community improvement plan.

Planning strategies to promote the revitalization and appropriate redevelopment in Pickering Village through financial incentives program must be facilitated through a Community Improvement Plan.

Section 106 of the *Municipal Act* prohibits municipalities from assisting any manufacturing, industrial or commercial businesses either directly or indirectly through the granting of bonuses. Prohibited actions include: giving or lending money or municipal property; leasing or selling any municipal property at below fair market value; guaranteeing borrowing; and giving a total or partial exemption from any levy, charge or fee. However, the *Municipal Act* does provide exceptions to this rule for municipalities using powers under Section 28 of the *Planning Act* or Section 365.1 of the *Municipal Act* related to brownfield tax assistance. Section 111(2) of the *Municipal Act* authorizes lower-tier municipalities in Durham Region to promote the land within the municipality for any purpose by the collection and dissemination of information.

1.3 Enabling Official Plan Policies

Section 7.1.6 of the Town of Ajax Official Plan contains policies specific to the establishment of Community Improvement Plans. This section indicates that in order to designate locations within the Town as a Community Improvement Project Area, at least one of the following criteria must be met:

- Infrastructure are deficient or have deteriorated and are below the municipal standard;
- Community and recreational facilities are deficient or have deteriorated;
- Incompatible land uses that result in conflict;
- The buildings and structures are in need ~~or of~~ rehabilitation;
- There are parking or loading space deficiencies; and/or
- There is a high vacancy rate in commercial or industrial buildings.

Section 2.6.2.5.1 of the Official Plan identifies Pickering Village as an “area with significant cultural heritage resources.” As such the Town shall consider preparing a Community Improvement Plan (concurrent with a Heritage Conservation District Plan) to provide financial incentive programs to assist landowners to implement the Town’s vision for the area. Further information on the Heritage Conservation District Plan for Pickering Village can be found in Section 1.5 of this document.

In accordance with Section 28(2) of the *Planning Act*, the municipality must designate by by-law a Community Improvement Project Area. Pickering Village ~~has already been~~ identified on Schedule ‘A-1’ of the Ajax Official Plan as a Community Improvement Project Area. The boundary of the Community Improvement Project Area ~~includes~~ ~~encompasses~~, ~~but is not limited to~~, Old Kingston Road, Church Street (from ~~Sherwood Memorial Park~~ to Highway 401), Kingston Road West

Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan

(from Elizabeth Street to Rotherglen Road) Sherwood Road, and part of Elizabeth Street (south of ~~Cameron Street~~ Kearny Drive). ~~The Community Improvement Plan as it applies to this document reflects a slightly modified boundary than that on Schedule 'A-1' of the Ajax Official Plan. Therefore, the Town's Official Plan has been amended and a new by-law passed to include a slightly larger Community Improvement Project Area inclusive of the Memorial Park lands on Church Street North and Elizabeth Street up to Kearney Drive.~~

1.4 Regional Revitalization Program

The Regional Revitalization Program (RRP) is a partnership between the Region of Durham and participating area municipalities and aims to target Regional investment towards key areas within Durham Region that advance the goals of the Regional Official Plan and achieve positive economic and community objectives.

The RRP was created on the premise that the general public will benefit from municipalities, such as Ajax, by providing financial support to appropriate redevelopment and intensification projects that otherwise would not be initiated without municipal financial assistance.

The RRP targets new Community Improvement Plan (CIP) projects as recommended by area municipalities for financial incentives to those who participate in the program. Program eligibility is determined through the submission of an application, including a business case, by the supporting area municipality, to the Region's Commissioner of Finance.

Eligible projects must entail significant and substantial revitalization and development/construction such as new construction, addition to existing, redevelopment or brownfield redevelopment and the project cannot already be underway.

Eligible CIP programs must be supported by the area municipality. In addition, the participating area municipality must provide a significant financial contribution to the project, pursuant to the CIP. Regional assistance will not be greater than the area municipality's financial contribution.

The participating area municipalities are required to provide relevant project information for all qualified projects approved through the RRP on an annual basis for the five years after substantial occupancy of each project. Funding is provided through the Regional Revitalization Reserve Fund.

1.5 Pickering Village Heritage Conservation District Plan

The Pickering Village Heritage Conservation District (HCD) ~~Study was undertaken~~ ~~was designated~~ pursuant to Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, ~~R.S.O. 1990, Chapter O.18~~ and was adopted by Council on ~~March 25~~ ~~November 25, 2013, via By-law 102-2013~~. The ~~Study provided the supporting data necessary to effect the designation of a Heritage Conservation District for a~~ ~~Pickering Village HCD portion~~ ~~spans the central core of~~ Pickering Village, generally along Old Kingston Road, and portions of Elizabeth Street and Church Street North. A Heritage Conservation District Plan, in conformance with Section 41.1 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* has been prepared that includes:

- a) a statement of the objectives to be achieved in designating the area as a heritage conservation district;
- b) a statement explaining the cultural heritage value or interest of the heritage conservation district;
- c) a description of the heritage attributes of the heritage conservation district and of properties in the district;
- d) policy statements, guidelines and procedures for achieving the stated objectives and managing change in the heritage conservation district; and

Commented [MS4]: Removed since the discrepancy between the CIP and OP was addressed nearly ten years ago.

Commented [MS5]: Modified since the reference should be to the designation by-law, not the study that led to the designation.

Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan

- e) a description of the alterations or classes of alterations that are minor in nature and that the owner of a property in the heritage conservation district may carry out or permit to be carried out on any part of the property, without obtaining a heritage permit.

The Pickering Village Heritage Conservation District (HCD) is a distinct and unique area in the Town of Ajax, characterized by a wealth of heritage buildings and landscapes. The ~~District-area~~ is representative of the development and growth of an Ontario milling and commercial village, with associated residential areas, dating from the mid-19th through the early 20th centuries, with largely compatible modern development. Particular elements worthy of preservation are:

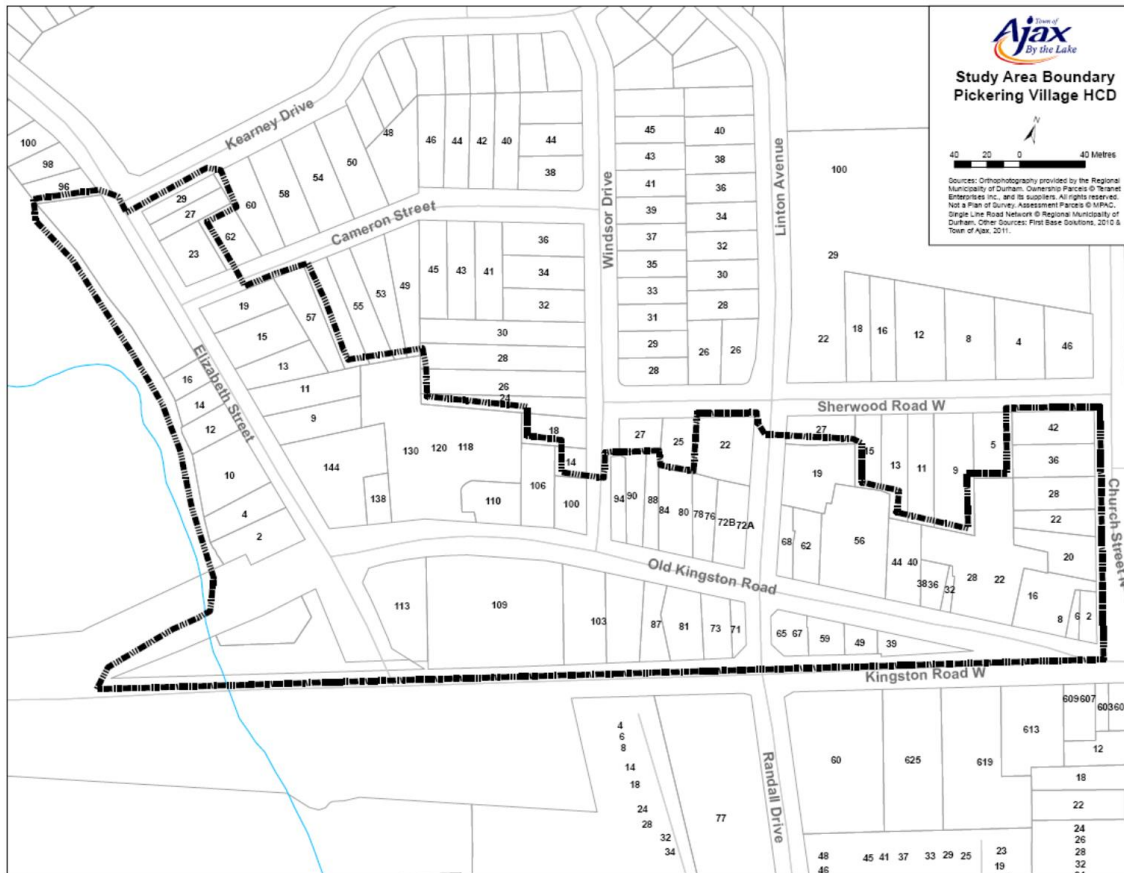
- a) A wide range of historic architectural styles within a compact area.

- b) A high percentage of heritage buildings that remain largely intact.
- c) A village-like character enhanced by the curve of Old Kingston Road, and the presence of mature trees in both commercial and residential areas.
- d) The association of locally significant persons with many of the properties.

The Pickering Village HCD Plan contains a set of urban design guidelines specific to properties located within the HCD boundary (see Figure 1). Any development, redevelopment, construction, restoration, or rehabilitation must conform to the requirements within the HCD Plan. A copy of the HCD ~~Study and Plan~~ is available ~~on the project website~~ www.pvhcdproject.com on the Town of Ajax website.

Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan

Figure 1: Pickering Village Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Boundary



Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan

2.0 RATIONALE

Pickering Village contains a large number of the Town's designated heritage properties and other buildings identified as significant heritage resources through the Town's [Inventory of Non-Designated Heritage Inventory Properties](#). However, there have also been unsympathetic alterations to buildings and inappropriate signage that detract from the heritage character of the area.

Through the 2007 *Pickering Village Land Use Planning and Urban Design Study*, and Official Plan Amendment No. 30, a Vision was developed to guide the creation of design guidelines and a final implementation strategy. This Vision is as follows:

"The Village of Pickering has the potential to build on its unique wealth of heritage assets, its attractive buildings, abundance of mature trees, proximity to prominent natural features and intimate streetscape along Old Kingston Road to become the most significant historical and cultural centre in Ajax and one of the most significant such centres in Durham. The Village of Pickering will be an area where:

- *Heritage resources, both buildings and open spaces, are proudly restored and celebrated;*
- *There is a focus on cultural activities that provide a range of opportunities for all residents of Ajax and Durham;*
- *Old Kingston Road becomes a vibrant, thriving, beautiful shopping street filled with pedestrians at all times of the day;*
- *Streetscapes and sidewalks are attractive and inviting both for passersby and pedestrians;*
- *Natural features, including the canopy of mature trees, and connections to the regional trail systems are protected and enhanced; and*

- *Cyclists feel welcome and can safely travel on streets with links to the off-street path system."*

To more finely influence the development of action items, the Vision was translated into principles and evaluation criteria which are as follows:

1. Preserve and enhance the heritage character of the area as a distinct district within the larger Ajax community.
2. Create a destination/community focal point for Ajax and the region – arts, niche retail, access to trail system, special events.
3. Support commercial diversification by creating the conditions for small businesses to thrive, with Old Kingston Road as a focal point.
4. Rectify regional traffic and transit needs with those of the locality.
5. Create unity between sub-areas.
6. Improve the connections to the area's many parts and to surrounding neighbourhoods and amenities.
7. Beautify the area and improve public spaces.
8. Increase pedestrian friendliness.
9. Increase amenities for cyclists.
10. Preserve the integrity of the Duffins Creek natural heritage system and the mature urban forest canopy within the area.
11. Enhance connections to the trail system.
12. Respect the environmental sensitivity of low-lying areas associated with the Duffins Creek flood plain.
13. Address parking management.
14. Strengthen the area's identity in people's minds.

Pickering Village is envisioned as the arts and culture hub of Ajax through Official Plan Policies, the Town's [2011–2014 past and present](#) Community Action Plan adopted by Council, and the [Recreation, and Parks and Culture](#) Master Plan.

Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan

Commitment from the Town to this vision has taken place through a number of projects including:

- The purchase, restoration and conversion of the former St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church, into the Town's performing arts and cultural centre known as St. Francis Centre;
- The purchase, restoration and conversion of the former Quaker Meeting House into a venue for special events;
- Reconstruction of Old Kingston Road including new sidewalks, defined on-street parking spaces, improved landscaping, relocation of hydro services underground, decorative lighting, new benches and trash receptacles, new banners, and the installation of bike racks;
- The installation of cycling lanes along Church Street; and
- The redesign and retrofit of the Village Urban Square at the junction of Old Kingston Road and Kingston Road West.

The Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan (CIP) ~~will~~ provides the financial incentives necessary to encourage appropriate development to take place which is consistent with the Vision, including restoration work that will protect the valued cultural heritage resources within the village. The CIP ~~will~~ encourages greater diversity in businesses and ~~will-is designed~~ to attract new investment and visitors to the area while supporting municipal intensification and urban design objectives outlined in the *Pickering Village Heritage Conservation District Plan* and the *Pickering Village Land Use Planning and Urban Design Study*.

Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan

3.0 GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of the Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan is to provide positive direction for future development that offers incentives for focused improvement that is sympathetic to the historical character of the area, as expressed through the *Pickering Village Heritage Conservation District Plan* and the *Pickering Village Land Use Planning and Urban Design Study*. To achieve this goal, the objectives of this Plan are as follows:

- a) To encourage investment in private properties by providing programs to support rehabilitation of heritage buildings, and focused redevelopment where appropriate;
- b) To establish a range of local destinations that include restaurants, retail uses and the arts;
- c) To support commercial and small business development and/or redevelopment inclusive of retail and niche markets;
- d) To provide opportunities for redevelopment, infill, mixed-use and higher density development in suitable locations;
- e) To promote Pickering Village as a pedestrian oriented retail and residential destination;
- f) To preserve existing natural features wherever possible including mature trees;
- g) To improve the pedestrian experience including the provision of active building facades along streets, parks, squares and pedestrian routes, and to enhance trail linkages; and
- h) To demonstrate municipal leadership and commitment to community improvement.

Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan

4.0 COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN AREA

This Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan applies to properties as identified on Figure 2 (next page). This area includes properties within the Pickering Village Heritage Conservation District; properties along Church Street South to Highway 401, and the west side of Church Street North to Memorial Park; and properties along Kingston Road West from Elizabeth Street to Rotherglen Road.

This area contains ~~nearly 90~~ over 100 properties ~~either designated under the Ontario Heritage Act or featured in the Town's Inventory of Non-Designated Heritage Properties of Ajax Heritage Inventory. A section of the CIP area falls within the boundaries of the Pickering Village Business Improvement Area (BIA).~~ The CIP area can be described as follows:

Old Kingston Road

This area originally served as the main commercial corridor of Pickering Village dating back to the mid 1800s. Today the area contains predominantly professional offices and medical practitioner uses within a village setting. There are a handful of other commercial uses including restaurants and retail stores. Heights generally range from 1 – 2 storeys with brick dominating the exterior facades of most buildings.

Church Street

This area encompasses buildings from Highway 401 in the south to Memorial Park in the north. Commercial uses are more prevalent closer to Kingston Road, while residential uses in single detached dwellings dominate the southern and northern portions. The buildings generally range in height from 1 – 2 storeys with two apartment buildings, set back from the street, being the exception. St. Francis Centre, a former church that is

~~now~~ owned by the Town, has been transformed into a performing arts and culture centre for the community.

Kingston Road West

This area extends from Rotherglen Road in the east to Elizabeth Street in the west. East of Church Street, the majority of properties are single detached dwellings, ranging in height from 1 – 2 storeys, many of which have been converted to commercial / office uses. West of Church Street, the properties vary in built form with those closest to Church Street reflecting the street front pattern of Old Kingston Road, while those further west accommodate newer multi-unit commercial buildings further setback from the street. Building heights range from 1 – 2 storey's with parking provided at the rear in most cases.

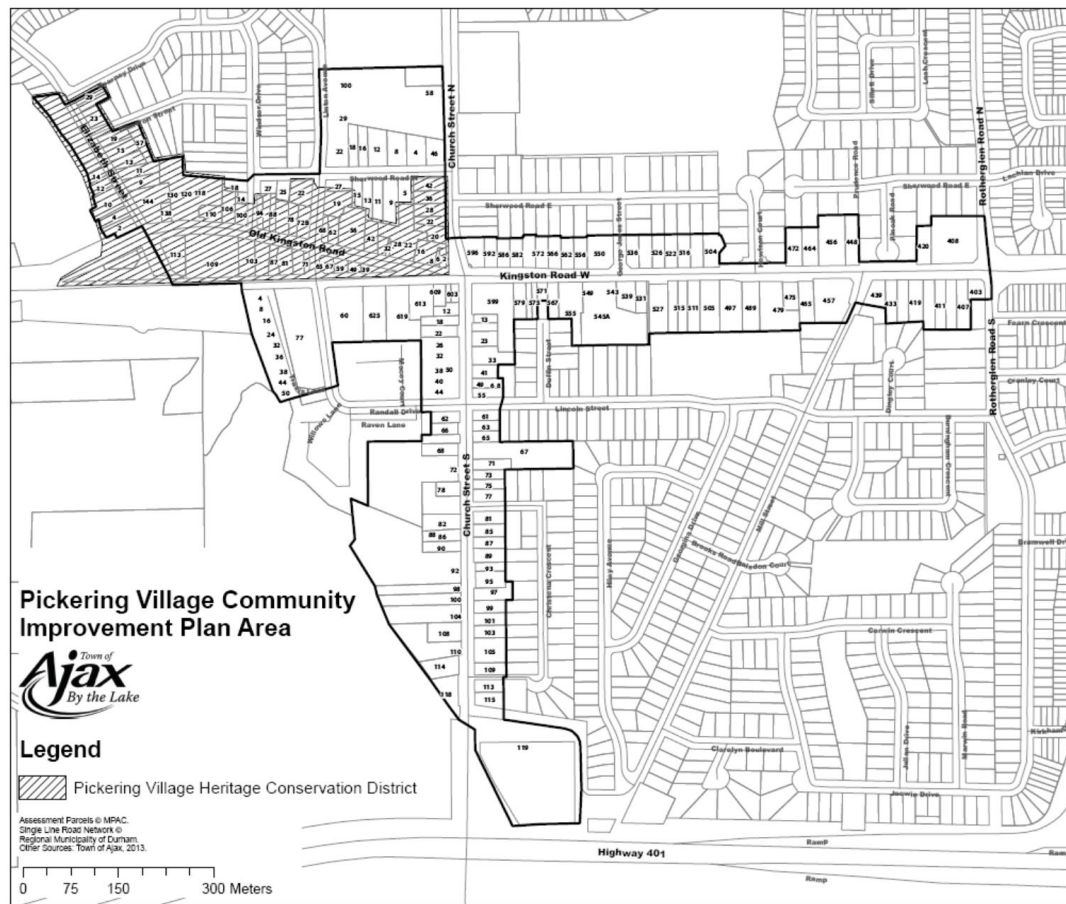
Elizabeth Street

This area extends from Kingston Road to Kearney Drive and is predominantly single detached residential properties, many of which ~~are listed on the Town's Heritage Inventory~~ possess heritage value. Several of the dwellings are of a similar architectural style, and most complement each other in terms of scale and form. Heights generally range between 1 – 2 storeys and mature trees define the streetscape. This section also contains the early Methodist cemetery and the trail head for Duffins Creek.

Commented [MS6]: Modified to accurately reflect current statistics and terminology, and to remove reference to the Pickering Village Business Improvement Area, which has now been dissolved.

Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan

Figure 2: Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan Area Boundaries



Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan

5.0 PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

5.1 Application Review Team

A dedicated group of staff comprised of representatives from individual Town departments/sections shall be responsible for administering the CIP and assessing applications. This team-based approach mirrors the administrative structure used across the Province by other municipalities with active CIP programs.

The 'Application Review Team' will consist of one member from each of the following departments/agencies:

- Planning and Development Services – Planning Section (Policy and Development);
- Planning and Development Services – Economic Development Team;
- Planning and Development Services – Building Section.

The Town's solicitor, Financial Services staff and Engineering staff will be requested to provide advice on applications, as needed.

The Application Review Team will work under the Manager of Planning, the Director of Planning and Development Services or designate. All decisions/recommendations of the Application Review Team shall be approved by the Director of Planning and Development Services or designate and/or Council. The composition of the Application Review Team may be modified without an amendment to the CIP.

The Application Review Team will be responsible for the following tasks (as modified from time to time without an amendment to the CIP):

- Meet and consult with applicants to review their proposal prior to submission of application;
- Attend formal Planning Pre-Consultation meetings for development applications where required;
- Review and evaluate all CIP incentive program applications and supporting material against program requirements;
- Present recommendations to the Director of Planning and Development Services or designate and/or Council for consideration and approval.

5.2 Application Submission

Applicants are required to pre-consult with Town of Ajax staff prior to filing an application under the Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan. All applicants shall submit an application form for the specific grant program(s) to the Town of Ajax and receive approval from the Town prior to project commencement.

Applications to participate in the program shall be submitted to Planning and Development Services. The application will include necessary permits, applications or drawings detailing the work to be undertaken. This may require drawings to be prepared by a certified Professional Engineer or Architect. In addition, an itemized breakdown of the charges normally required to be paid by the applicant shall be submitted.

Before accepting an application, Planning and Development Services staff will screen the application. If the application is not within the Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan Area or the application clearly does not meet the program requirements and terms specified in this Plan, the application will not be accepted. Acceptance of the application by Planning and Development Services in no way implies approval.

Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan

Once accepted, the application will be evaluated by the Application Review Team. The Team will be responsible for evaluating and approving applications based on the program requirements specified in this Community Improvement Plan and any other requirements of the Town.

All applicants that are approved to receive a grant/~~rebate~~ will be required to enter into an agreement with the Town of Ajax that will include the total amount of the grant/~~rebate~~ to be provided, any conditions associated with the grant/~~rebate~~, entitlement to the grant/~~rebate~~ if the property is sold or provisions to audit the work and the actual costs associated with the application.

Grants ~~and rebates~~ will be advanced by the Town upon full completion of the work and final inspection to the satisfaction of the Town.

5.3 Amendments to the Community Improvement Plan

Specific details regarding the programs (including description, funding, eligibility requirements, and administrative procedures) are outlined for each of the program sections that follow. The parameters, terms and conditions of any CIP program may be changed, altered, ~~amended~~ or modified by ~~the Town of Ajax Council resolution~~ without the necessity of an amendment to this Community Improvement Plan if they are minor in nature. Minor ~~amendments/modifications~~ consist of the following:

- changes to parameters identifying who is eligible to receive grants or loans, subject to the provisions of Section 28(7) of the *Planning Act*;
- changes to the type of works considered by the Town as elements contributing to the cost of rehabilitating lands and buildings, above and beyond the work indicated on the planning and/or Building Permit application;

- ~~changes to the annual budget for programs;~~
- changes to the duration of programs; ~~and~~
- discontinuation ~~and/or suspension~~ of any program;
- ~~the addition or removal of "Priority Properties" within the Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan Area, as shown in Figure 3;~~

Alterations to the boundary of the Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan Area, or the addition or increase in value of grants or loans of CIP programs permitted under Section 28 of the *Planning Act*, shall require an amendment to this Plan, to be approved by Council. This Plan has been prepared in accordance with and shall be deemed to conform to the Town of Ajax Official Plan.

This Plan shall be referred to as the Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan for the Town of Ajax. At such time as other Community Improvement Plans are prepared for this or other areas, this title may be modified for clarification purposes without requiring an amendment to this Plan.

5.4 Implementation

The Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan will be implemented through the provisions of Section 7.1.6 of the Town of Ajax Official Plan and Section 28 of the *Planning Act*.

The overall implementation of the CIP programs offered under the umbrella of Section 28 of the *Planning Act*, including liaison with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, shall be the responsibility of Planning and Development Services.

Commented [MS9]: Added to reflect the provisions of Section 5.5, which describe how Council can modify the annual budget for CIP programs as part of its Operating Budget process, and the existing parameters for each CIP program, which state that annual funding is subject to Council approval..

Commented [MS10]: Added reference to the "suspension" of a program, which is a more minor revision than the discontinuation of a program.

Commented [MS11]: Removed since there is no longer a need to label some properties as "Priority Properties" within the CIP. All previous programs with criteria specific to Priority Properties have been discontinued.

Commented [MS7]: All references to "rebate" throughout the CIP have been removed since none of the programs operate as true "rebate" programs.

Commented [MS8]: Modified to specify that minor modifications require a Council resolution.

Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan

5.5 Funding

Funding for the Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan will be allocated each year as part of the Town's Operating Budget. While the program descriptions included in this CIP provide reference to the intended budgets, Council may, at its discretion, change the level of funding when necessary.

Rather than providing an annual budget for each separate program operating under the CIP, funding will be conveyed as a single, shared budget. This will ensure that funds can be accessed in the programs where they are needed the most. In some cases, a maximum annual allocation may be established for an individual program to prevent it from garnering a disproportionate amount of the shared funding. Where this is the case, the maximum annual allocation will be outlined in the program description included in the CIP.

At the end of a program year, any funds that were not spent will be directed to the Town's CIP Development Improvement Fund. Monies in this fund can then be used at Council's discretion for improvements in any of the Town's CIP areas. For example, these funds may be used to rehabilitate Town-owned properties (including roads), acquire key strategic parcels (either for public purposes or for conveyance at an appropriate time), undertake capital projects which support the goals and objectives of the CIPs, and/or participate in public/private partnerships to rehabilitate publicly or privately held land in the CIP areas.

Commented [MS12]: Added to clarify Council's role in determining annual funding and to outline the intention for funds that go unspent. Ensuring that unspent funds are redirected back into the CIP areas will help facilitate the Town in achieving the goals and objectives of its CIPs.

Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan

6.0 GENERAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

6.1 Requirements Applicable to all CIP Programs

All of the financial incentive programs contained within the Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan (CIP) are subject to the following general requirements as well as the individual requirements contained within each program (see Section 7.0). The Town reserves the right to include other requirements and conditions as deemed necessary on a property specific basis.

- a) A completed application form for any of the financial incentive programs listed within the CIP must be submitted to the Town prior to any works being commenced to which the financial incentive applies. If Planning applications (Zoning By-law Amendment, Site Plan, Minor Variance, etc.) are required to facilitate the proposed works, a completed CIP application form must be submitted to the Town prior to or at the time of the Planning application submission(s).
- b) The applicant must be the registered owner(s) of the property, which shall be located within the Community Improvement Plan Area. If the applicant is not the owner, the applicant must provide written consent from the owner(s) of the property to make the application.
- c) The existing and proposed land uses and development must be in conformity with applicable policies and provisions in the Town of Ajax Official Plan, the Zoning By-law and any other requirements and approvals at the local, regional or provincial level.
- d) All proposed works approved under the financial incentive programs must conform to the goals, objectives, policies and design guidelines of the *Pickering Village Heritage*

Conservation District Plan (where applicable), and the *Pickering Village Land Use Planning and Urban Design Guidelines*.

- e) All improvements made to buildings and/or land shall be made pursuant to a Building Permit and/or other required permits, and constructed in accordance with the *Ontario Building Code*.
- f) An application for any financial incentive program contained in the CIP must include plans, drawings, estimates, contracts, reports and other relevant information applicable to the project application as required by the Town in order to fulfill the CIP and satisfy the Town.
- g) An application for any financial incentive program that satisfies all eligibility and program requirements is not necessarily entitled to receive a grant. The Town may, at its discretion, determine cases where an application that meets all program requirements should not receive a grant. Further, there is no appeal mechanism for applicants who do not receive a grant.
- g)h) All applicants that are approved to receive a grant ~~or rebate~~ will be required to enter into an Agreement with the Town of Ajax outlining the terms and conditions of the grant ~~or rebate~~ including such terms as the total amount of grant ~~or rebate~~ to be provided.
- h)i) Property owners who are in arrears of property taxes or who have outstanding liens against the property are not eligible to receive any of the financial incentive programs being offered through this CIP, until such time as all taxes owing are paid or cancelled, and all liens lifted.

Commented [MS13]: Added since the required timing for CIP application submission was not previously clear. This revision clearly states that all CIP applications must be received at the time of or before the submission of a Planning application.

Commented [MS14]: Added to reinforce that the Town may use its discretion to determine which projects it wishes to support. If a project meets all eligibility requirements for a CIP program but is not viewed by the Town as desirable, the Town is not required to process or approve the associated CIP application. Further, this statement makes it clear that there is no means of appeal for CIP-related decisions.

Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan

~~h)j)~~ Outstanding work orders and/or requests to comply from Planning and Development Services, By-law, or any other departments must be satisfactorily addressed prior to eligibility to participate in the programs being approved.

~~Further, if any work order and/or request to comply is initiated by the Town in response to any works subject to CIP funding, the Town reserves the right to void/nullify the funding agreement at the time the order/comply is issued.~~

~~h)k)~~ The duration of a financial incentive program will commence on the day following the date of final approval of the Community Improvement Plan by the Town of Ajax and is anticipated to be available until December 31, ~~2025~~2027.

~~h)l)~~ The Town may, at any time and without formal notice or amendment to the Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan, discontinue a financial incentive program. However, all applications submitted prior to the program's closing will still be considered by the Town subject to available funding.

~~h)m)~~ Grants/~~rebates~~ will only be applied to projects issued after the CIP has been adopted by Council. The programs will not be retroactively applied to developments ~~where Building Permits were issued prior to pre-dating the commencement of the program or without receiving unless the Town had previously expressed, in writing, that the project would be eligible for future CIP funds written approval from the Town prior to any work being undertaken.~~

~~h)n)~~ Due to the limited funds available in any given year and the inability to predict the level of participation, the Town may suspend any program(s) if, over the course of a given year, the number of applications and/or the magnitude of the projects proposed for the CIP exceed available funds for that year. Applications received that have been approved prior to a program being suspended, will continue to be

processed unhindered. All other applications received but not yet approved prior to program suspension, will be put in a queuing sequence and reviewed if and when the program is reactivated.

~~h)o)~~ The Town reserves the right to nullify any program application(s) which has been approved but which does not result in any building activity within 6 months of the issuance of an associated Building Permit (Building Permits are valid for ~~6-six~~ months). Extensions of this timeframe may be permitted provided an extension of the Building Permit is also granted.

~~h)p)~~ Properties and/or buildings designated under Part IV (individual property designation) and/or Part V (heritage conservation district designation) may be required to ~~acquire a Heritage Permit, complete a Heritage Impact Statement and/or complete a Heritage Conservation Plan~~ for any proposed ~~significant~~ change that would impact the character of the building / property in accordance with ~~Section 5.0 e) and Sections 2.6.2.1 e)2.6 and 5.0~~ of the Town of Ajax Official Plan.

~~h)q)~~ The Town reserves the right to audit the costs of any and all works that have been approved by the municipality for any of the financial incentive programs, at the expense of the applicant.

~~h)r)~~ Town staff shall inspect any property that is the subject of an application for any of the financial incentive programs offered by the Town.

~~h)s)~~ For properties located within the 'Special Policy Area' as shown on Schedule 'A-1' of the Ajax Official Plan, which regulates properties within the flood plain, no financial incentives shall be used to intensify development within the 'Special Policy Area'.

Commented [MS15]: Added to clarify that the Town will not pay out grants to projects/applicants that are not able to conform with general development-related rules and regulations.

Commented [MS16]: Modified since the CIP will now be reconsidered on a four-year basis, initiated on the year following the election of a new municipal council.

Commented [MS18]: Modified to reflect the full range of potential requirements.

Commented [MS17]: Modified since there may be scenarios in the future where a program is temporarily suspended but the Town wishes to commit funding to a project if/when the program is reactivated.

Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan

6.2 Urban Design Principles

Principles that shall be followed when preparing plans for building improvements and/or redevelopment for construction include:

- Sensitivity to existing streetscape with respect to scale, proportions, materials, colour, signage and architectural detail;
- Preservation/restoration of original facade (i.e. windows, storefronts, doorways);
- Restoration of windows to original style;

- Replacement of windows using similar materials and profile;
- Use of original/authentic materials and historic colours, where feasible;
- Cleaning, repainting of painted surfaces and replacement of original ~~brick-cladding~~ as required;
- Preservation, restoration of architectural detail;
- Well-designed signage in proportion to building scale; and
- Sensitivity of the project to the appearance of the entire streetscape.

Developments that do not conform to these requirements would only be eligible for funding at the discretion of the Town of Ajax.

Commented [MS19]: Modified since brick is not the only cladding material that may need to be replaced.

Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan

7.0 INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

Incentive Programs will promote improvements to existing properties by providing grants to eligible property owners. These grants are intended to improve the appearance of existing building facades and signage, increase the utility of interior spaces, enhance outdoor spaces and attract desirable land uses to Pickering Village. To promote focused redevelopment and improvement in Pickering Village, this the Community Improvement Plan includes ~~five~~ six key programs, including:

- a) ~~Façade Improvement Grant Program~~ - a program to promote the sensitive redesign of existing building facades to enhance the existing image of the area;
- b) ~~Sign Grant Program~~ – a program to promote the establishment of new signage to improve the existing streetscapes of the area;
- c) ~~Interior Renovation Grant Program~~ - a program to promote the renovation of interior spaces in existing buildings to support eligible uses;
- d) ~~Patio Grant Program~~ – a program to promote the construction of permanent patios to enhance streetscape character and activity; and
- d) ~~Redevelopment Tax Rebate Program~~ – a program to provide tax rebates that would offset increases in municipal taxes that are the result of an increase in property assessment due to redevelopment;
- e) ~~Planning and Development Fees Rebate Program~~ – a program that provides rebates of various municipal application fees;

~~f) Development Charge Exemption/Reduction Program~~ – a program that waives or reduces development charges for appropriate forms of redevelopment; and

~~g)e) Reduced Parkland Dedication Requirements Program~~ – a program to provide relief in the form of a reduction in parkland dedication requirements for eligible residential development. ~~Cash-in-Lieu of Parking Equivalency Grant Program~~ – a program to provide grants equal in value to cash-in-lieu of parking payments for appropriate forms of redevelopment.

Provided all eligibility criteria and conditions are met for any particular program, participation in any given program does not preclude the owner from being eligible to participate in multiple programs offered under the Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan. However, under no circumstances may a property owner be eligible for grants that exceed the eligible costs of all financial incentive programs of the CIP [Section 28 (7.3) of the *Planning Act*].

~~The financial incentive programs can be grouped into two categories: Property Improvement Incentive Programs and Redevelopment Incentive Programs, described as follows:~~

~~Property Improvement Incentive Programs~~

~~Property Improvement Incentive Programs will promote improvements to existing buildings by providing grants to eligible property owners. These grants are intended to improve the appearance of existing building facades, signage and existing landscapes within Pickering Village. These programs include:~~

Commented [MS20]: Modified to reflect the full range of incentive programs being offered. New programs are described below and discontinued programs have been removed.

Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan

- ~~• Façade Improvement Grant Program~~
- ~~• Sign Grant Program~~

~~Redevelopment Incentive Programs~~

~~Redevelopment Incentive Programs are intended to stimulate new investment and/or redevelopment within Pickering Village for eligible properties. This will be achieved by providing financial relief in the form of tax rebates, exemptions and reductions of municipal fees associated with property redevelopment. These programs include:~~

- ~~• Redevelopment Tax Rebate Program~~
- ~~• Planning and Development Fees Rebate Program~~
- ~~• Development Charge Exemption/Reduction Program~~
- ~~• Reduced Parkland Dedication Requirements Program~~

All program details are outlined in the following sections.

Commented [MS21]: Removed since all programs will now be Property Improvement Incentive Programs and there will not be any Redevelopment Incentive Programs. As such, there is no need to distinguish between the two program types.

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7.1 Façade Improvement Grant Program

The *Façade Improvement Grant Program* will provide property owners a financial incentive to undertake restoration or upgrades to their building and property that may not otherwise occur due to cost premiums associated with these improvements.

The *Façade Improvement Grant Program* offers grants to eligible property owners for the following:

- improvement or restoration of front, exterior side yard and interior side yard building facades visible from adjacent streets or public walkways/spaces;
- exterior accessibility upgrades;
- structural or weather/water proofing repairs that may be required to maintain overall building integrity.

The main focus is on improvements to the building streetscape that are visible from the street or public spaces. The Town encourages applicants to restore original building features and storefronts, including windows and decorative elements such as fascia, trim, cornices, parapets, etc.

The Façade Improvement Grant Program will only be made available for the following properties in order of priority:

1. Properties designated under Part IV (individual designation) of the *Ontario Heritage Act* within the CIP Area and properties within the Pickering Village Heritage Conservation District, designated under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*; and

2. Properties listed on the Town of Ajax Inventory of Non-Designated Heritage Inventory-Properties within the CIP Area.

~~The Town will accept applications for the process for evaluating and awarding Façade Improvement Grants Program from will depend upon the timing of the application January 15 to March 15 each calendar year, as follows:~~

- ~~Applications received between January 1 and March 15 will be held and evaluated concurrently to determine priority. If there are not sufficient funds to award all applications, priority will be given based on the significance of the project(s) in conserving the property's heritage attributes. Priority will typically be given to properties designated under Part IV and V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* over properties listed on the Town's Inventory of Non-Designated Heritage Properties for properties designated individually (Part IV) or within the Pickering Village Heritage Conservation District (Part V) will be processed on a first come, first serve basis within this application window (January 15 – March 15) upon receipt of a completed application.~~
- ~~Properties listed in the Town of Ajax Heritage Inventory within the CIP Area are subject to the application deadline (March 15) and will be processed and evaluated after the March 15 deadline.~~
- ~~Subject to availability of funding, applications will continue to be accepted after the March 15 deadline, subject to availability of funding. and These applications will be evaluated and awarded on a first come, first serve basis (no prioritization applies).~~

Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan

~~Decisions on applications will be made within one month of submission. Applications will be awarded within 1 month of submission.~~

7.1.1 Program Funding

~~A proposed budget up to \$75120,000 per year, subject to budget approval, will be made available for the Façade Improvement and Signage Grant Programs (i.e. both programs would be drawn from the same pool of funds) to be shared amongst the CIP's six grant programs, including the Façade Improvement Grant Program.~~

The following financial incentives shall be available subject to availability of funding:

- a) ~~A grant equal to 50% of the eligible costs (pre-tax) to a maximum of \$4015,000 per building-property for façade improvements to building components visible from the street/public spaces including and/or structural or weather/water proofing repairs to the front, exterior side yard and interior side yards visible from the street/public spaces.~~
- b) ~~A grant equal to 50% of the eligible costs (pre-tax) to a maximum of \$5,000 per building-property for structural or weather/water proofing repairs that may be required to maintain overall building integrity and/or for commercially zoned and operated properties, for to improve exterior building accessibility—accessibility upgrades to access building entrances for interior side yards and rear yards not visible from the street/public spaces.~~
- c) ~~A grant equal to 50% of the eligible costs (pre-tax) to a maximum of \$30,000 per building-property for buildings~~

~~containing two or more multiple-commercial storefronts or properties with frontage on more than one streetfrontages (i.e. south side of Old Kingston Road). The majority of the funding shall be devoted to front and exterior side yard improvements building components visible from the street/public spaces, unless funding is for structural or weather/water proofing repairs that may be required to maintain overall building integrity, then funding can be distributed according to the Town's discretion.~~

~~d) Where major restoration projects are being undertaken (i.e. >\$60,000 eligible project value (pre-tax) for properties with single buildings or >\$120,000 eligible project value (pre-tax) for properties with buildings containing two or more commercial storefronts or properties with frontage on more than one street), the Director of Planning and Development Services has discretion to approve Façade Grants up to double the typical value outlined above.~~

7.1.2 Program Requirements

All property owners/business owners are eligible to apply for funding under this grant program, subject to the following requirements, and the availability of funding as approved by Council.

- a) ~~The Façade Improvement Grant Program does not apply to new construction projects or to work that has been completed without receiving prior approval from the Town.~~
- b) Any property owner/business owner(s) wishing to be considered for a grant under this program must submit a completed Application Form to the ~~Town-between January~~

Commented [MS22]: Modified to streamline the eligibility requirements, revise the application start date from January 15 to January 1, and more clearly articulate how grants will be prioritized.

Commented [MS26]: Modified to clarify funding eligibility criteria for this category of grants.

Commented [MS23]: Modified to provide a new, shared funding format for the CIP. Rather than each program having its own budget, a single budget will be applied to all six programs. This will maximize the Town's ability to fund deserving projects, regardless of which program they fall under.

Commented [MS27]: Added to help incentivize larger conservation projects by offering larger grants to projects that meet minimum requirements. Over the last several years, several large restoration projects have been cancelled because the Town was unable to provide the level of funding needed to support these projects. This new provision enables the Town to provide additional funding to large projects that are capable of initiating major transformations in Pickering Village.

Commented [MS24]: Modified to increase the maximum grant size from \$10,000 to \$15,000, which accommodates inflation since 2013 and the increase in the cost of building materials. Further, reference to these costs as being "pre-tax" has been added for clarity.

Commented [MS25]: Modified to limit eligibility for the additional \$5,000 in grant funding to accessibility projects. Note that structural, weather-proofing and building integrity projects are already eligible for \$15,000 in funding under subsection a).

Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan

- ~~15 and March 15 of each calendar year. If one of these dates falls on a weekend, applications must be submitted the next business day.~~
- c) The Application Form must be submitted with supporting documentation include a (e.g. design concept, architectural renderings, (where necessary) and colour scheme), as necessary, and must be submitted to the Town for review and approval prior to the start of the project ~~for review and approval by the Town.~~
- d) The Town may refuse applications for Buildings buildings must not have where there has been an approved Façade Grant registered on the property approved within the past five years (exceptions may be granted at the discretion of the Town). Where an application is accepted by the Town for a building that has received a Façade Grant within the past five years, funding priority will generally be given to applications for buildings that have not received a Façade Grant within the past five years.
- e) The applicant is required to submit a minimum of two quotes for ~~estimated~~ works ~~with outlined on~~ the Application Form. All quotes must provide a detailed outline of the work to be undertaken, broken down by type of project if multiple works are being proposed by the same contractor.
- f) The following types of facade restoration and improvement works on commercial, institutional, residential and mixed use buildings are considered eligible for a grant under this program:
- I. Restoration and/or sensitive replacement of original details including windows, doors, storefronts, cornices, eaves, trim, shutters, parapets and/or other architectural features;
 - II. Structural/safety replacement and repair for exterior facade;
 - III. Repair/replacement of awnings;
 - IV. Addition of decorative lighting/upgrading of existing fixtures on exterior façade and in entrance and storefront display areas;
 - V. Cleaning/painting of facades visible from adjacent streets and public walkways;
 - VI. Entrance modifications, including the installation of ramps for accessibility purposes;
 - VII. Hard landscaping such as walkways, permanent planters, pavers for entranceways, entrance features, decorative/ornamental fencing;
 - VIII. Water/flood/weather proofing;
 - IX. Structural repairs to exterior walls, foundations, porches, balconies; and,
 - X. Other similar repairs/improvements which the Town, in its sole discretion, determines are important to incorporate as an integral part of the total façade improvement design.
- g) The following types of projects are ineligible to receive a *Façade Improvement Grant*:
- I. Roof repairs / replacement (unless considered a ~~decorative element~~heritage attribute of the building, at the discretion of the Town)
 - II. Insulation
 - III. Renovation or restoration of building interiors
 - IV. Security systems
 - V. Sandblasting and high-pressure water blasting ~~of brick~~(unless appropriate for the material type)
 - VI. Painting of historic masonry
 - VII. Driveway paving / widening for parking areas

Commented [MS28]: Removed given that this content is covered in Section 7.1.

Commented [MS29]: Modified to clarify program requirements.

Commented [MS30]: Modified to retain the intent of the original provision but make it more clear that the frequency of receiving funding is at the Town's discretion. This revision helps to enable larger projects that will be carried out over multiple years.

Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan

- h) Approved Façade Grant work must be completed by **November 30** of the calendar year for which it is applied in. All invoices must be paid and submitted to the Town and the final inspection must be completed by **December 15** of the calendar year for which the grant was applied in. The grant will expire if the work has not been completed, invoices have not been paid or final inspection has not been signed off. Any extension beyond these deadlines requires the applicant to submit a written letter to the Town outlining the reasons for the requested extension and anticipated time of completion of the project. Approval of any such extension shall only be granted by the Director of Planning and Development Services or designate. This written confirmation will outline a revised completion date for the project.
- i) The Applicant is responsible to consult with the Town's Heritage Advisory Committee, where required, prior to Application ~~submission~~approval.
- j) The application must conform to the Town's Site Plan Manual, specifically including the Town's tree preservation requirements.

7.1.3 Program Administration

All applications for this program will be considered subject to the availability of funding. The Application Review Team will review all applications to determine priority and ensure compatibility with eligibility criteria. The Application Review Team will process and ~~approve~~make decisions on applications within one month of submission of a completed application.

Grants approved under this program ~~would~~shall be provided to property owners/business owners following the submission of the final invoices for the ~~renovation~~ work completed, indicating

that the suppliers/contractors have been paid in full, and once final Building Inspection has been signed off by the Town.

Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan

7.2 Sign Grant Program

Signage plays a major role in a neighbourhood's distinctive identity and character. Many of the store fronts along Old Kingston Road survived from the 19th and early 20th century and there is opportunity to revive some of this original character through appropriate signage. Furthermore, new signage is being erected along Kingston Road West and Church Street with the conversion of many detached dwellings to commercial uses. Therefore, it is important to showcase these historic buildings and create attractive streetscapes within Pickering Village through appropriate signage.

~~The Town of Ajax will review and revise its Sign By-law under the provisions of the Municipal Act, 2001 as it relates to Pickering Village. The By-law will provide regulations for new signs that will implement a consistent design palette to complement the heritage character of the area.~~

The Sign Grant Program will only be made available for commercial and institutional zoned properties in the Community Improvement Plan Area in order of priority, as follows:

1. Properties designated under Part IV (individual designation) of the *Ontario Heritage Act* within the CIP Area and properties within the Pickering Village Heritage Conservation District, designated under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*;
2. Properties listed on the Town of Ajax ~~Heritage Inventory of Non-Designated Heritage Properties~~ within the CIP Area; and
3. All other commercial and institutional zoned properties within the CIP Area

The Town will accept applications for the Sign Grant Program from ~~January 15 to March 15~~ each calendar year, as follows:

- Applications ~~received between January 1 and March 15 will be held and evaluated concurrently to determine priority. If there are not sufficient funds to award all applications, priority will be given based on property type (as established above) and then on the desirability of the project (as determined at the sole discretion of the Town)~~for properties designated individually (Part IV) or within the Pickering Village Heritage Conservation District (Part V) will be processed on a first come, first serve basis within this application window (January 15 – March 15) upon receipt of a completed application.
- ~~Properties listed in the Town of Ajax Heritage Inventory within the CIP Area and all other commercial and institutional zoned properties are subject to the application deadline (March 15) and will be processed and evaluated after the March 15 deadline in order of priority as indicated above.~~
- ~~Subject to availability of funding, a~~Applications will continue to be accepted after the ~~March 15~~ deadline, ~~subject to available funding. and~~These applications will be evaluated and awarded on a first come, first serve basis (no prioritization applies).

7.2.1 Program Funding

A proposed budget up to ~~\$75120~~,000 per year, subject to budget approval, will be made available ~~for to be shared amongst the CIP's six grant programs, including the Sign Grant Program~~the Façade Improvement and Signage Grant Programs

Commented [MS31]: Removed since the Town's Sign By-law does not currently have provisions specific to Pickering Village.

Commented [MS32]: Modified to streamline the eligibility requirements and revise the application start date from January 15 to January 1.

Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan

~~(i.e. both programs would be drawn from the same pool of funds).~~

~~For commercial and institutional zoned properties in the Community Improvement Plan Area, the following financial incentives shall be available:~~

~~A grant Grants equal to 50% of the eligible costs (pre-tax) to a maximum of \$2,000,500 are available for commercially and institutionally-zoned properties in the Community Improvement Plan Area.~~

7.2.2 Program Requirements

All property owners/business owners are eligible to apply for funding under this grant program, subject to the following requirements, and the availability of funding as approved by Council.

- a) The following types of projects are eligible to receive a Sign Grant:
- I. Costs for design, fabrication and/or installation of appropriate new signs or improvements to existing signs in accordance with the ~~Pickering Village~~ Sign By-law;
 - II. Decorative lighting improvements associated with the signage, such as goose neck lighting.
- b) The Sign Grant is available per each commercial/institutional storefront on a property. However, if there are multiple businesses on the same property, the Town encourages the use of one sign to advertise all businesses, where opportunity exists. ~~Some exceptions may apply at the discretion of the Town.~~

- c) ~~The Sign Grant is initially intended available as a one-time grant per commercial/institutional operator. However, for a subsequent replacement sign by a new owner/operator for an operator previously awarded under the program, a subsequent~~the sign grant will be equal to 50% of the eligible costs to a maximum of \$1,000,250.
- d) Any property owner/business owner(s) wishing to be considered for a grant under this program must submit a completed Application Form to the Town ~~between January 15 and March 15 of each calendar year. If one of these dates falls on a weekend, applications must be submitted the next business day.~~
- e) ~~The Application Form must be submitted with supporting documentation (e.g. design concept, renderings, colour scheme), as necessary, and must be submitted to the Town for review and approval prior to the start of the project.~~
- ~~e) An applicant participating in the Façade Improvement Grant Program is also eligible to receive the Sign Grant.~~
- f) The owner/applicant must apply to the Town for a Sign Permit through the Town's Building Section and the proposed sign must conform with the requirements of the Town's Sign By-law (By-law 027-2009).
- g) All work must be completed within six months of the approved Sign Permit application (sign permits are valid for 6-six months).
- h) All approved Sign Grants must be completed by **November 30** of the calendar year for which they are applied in. All invoices must be paid and submitted to the Town and the

Commented [MS33]: Modified to provide a new, shared funding format for the CIP. Rather than each program having its own budget, a single budget will be applied to all six programs. This will maximize the Town's ability to fund deserving projects, regardless of which program they fall under.

Commented [MS36]: Modified to clarify when this subsection is to be applied and to increase the maximum funding amount to align with the new maximum sign grant amount.

Commented [MS34]: Modified to clarify eligibility requirements and increase the maximum grant size from \$2,000 to \$2,500, which accommodates inflation since 2013 and the increase in the cost of building materials. Further, reference to these costs as being "pre-tax" has been added for clarity.

Commented [MS37]: Removed to eliminate extraneous information.

Commented [MS38]: Added to clarify eligibility requirements and ensure consistency with other programs.

Commented [MS39]: Removed to eliminate extraneous information. There is nothing in the CIP to suggest that an applicant cannot participate in multiple programs.

Commented [MS40]: Added to reinforce the requirement that the proposed sign conforms to the requirements of the Sign By-law.

Commented [MS35]: Removed since there is no hard requirement in this subsection that necessitates exceptions by the Town.

Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan

final inspection must be completed by **December 15** of the calendar year for which the grant was applied in.

- i) Guidelines for appropriate heritage signage shall include the following:
 - I. Signs should not block architectural features;
 - II. Signs should be placed in traditional locations such as above the storefront or a stand-alone ground sign;
 - III. Use of traditional materials such as wood or canvas are encouraged, while modern plastics or vinyl shall be avoided;
 - IV. Use of appropriate font or letter styles;
 - V. Use of frosted glass or tasteful window signs;
 - VI. Prohibition of obsolete or internally illuminated signs; and
 - VII. Replacement of internally illuminated signs is not permitted.

7.2.3 Program Administration

All applications for this program will be considered subject to the availability of funding. Program eligibility will be determined by the Application Review Team in consultation with the Town's Heritage Advisory Committee (where required).

Grants approved under this program ~~would~~ shall be provided to property owners/business owners following the submission of the final invoices for the work completed, indicating that the suppliers/contractors have been paid in full, and once final Building Inspection has been signed off by the Town.

Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan

7.3 Interior Renovation Grant Program

Section 3.2.3.10 of the Town of Ajax Official Plan states that Pickering Village is to be the heritage, arts and culture hub of the Town. It also states that the Town should make efforts “to create a complete, balanced community, with local opportunities to live, work, shop and play.” In this regard, the Town shall promote:

- Increased retail diversity and commercial opportunities, with an appropriate mix of service commercial, office and retail uses;
- Niche retail, specialty stores, boutiques, and galleries, and
- Smaller scale general retail establishments, including retail uses that serve the day-to-day needs of local residents, businesses, and employees.

While Pickering Village does contain a strong mix of commercial, office, arts and culture uses, these uses do not currently exist in the desired ratio. For example, a large proportion of the existing ground floor commercial space in the Village is currently utilized for office uses, particularly dental offices. By contrast, uses such as restaurants, retail, and art galleries are generally underrepresented.

The Interior Renovation Grant Program is designed to incentivize the establishment of desirable and/or underrepresented uses in Pickering Village by providing funds to facilitate necessary interior retrofitting projects. Accordingly, the Interior Renovation Grant Program is designed to assist property owners to convert ground floor space for the following uses:

- Art Gallery;
- Museum;

- Restaurant; and/or
- Retail Store.

The Interior Renovation Grant Program will be made available for commercially-zoned properties in the Community Improvement Plan Area in order of priority, as follows:

1. Properties designated under Part IV (individual designation) of the *Ontario Heritage Act* within the CIP Area and properties within the Pickering Village Heritage Conservation District, designated under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*;
2. Properties listed on the Town of Ajax Inventory of Non-Designated Heritage Properties within the CIP Area; and
3. All other commercially-zoned properties within the CIP Area.

The Town will accept applications for the Interior Renovation Grant Program each calendar year, as follows:

- Applications received between **January 1** and **March 15** will be held and evaluated concurrently to determine priority. If there are not sufficient funds to award all applications, priority will be given based on property type (as established above) and then on the desirability of the project (as determined at the sole discretion of the Town).
- Applications will continue to be accepted after **March 15**, subject to available funding. These applications will be evaluated and awarded on a first come, first serve basis (no prioritization applies).

Commented [MS42]: Added to restrict eligibility to only the most desired uses in Pickering Village. These are the four uses that the Town is most interested in attracting to help establish the area as an urban, lively community that functions as the Town's "arts and culture" hub.

Commented [MS41]: Added to outline the basis for the program.

Commented [MS43]: Added to reflect the same prioritization strategy and application process as existing programs.

Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan

7.3.1 Program Funding

A proposed budget up to \$120,000 per year, subject to budget approval, will be made available to be shared amongst the CIP's six grant programs, including the Interior Renovation Grant Program. Grants are limited to 50% of the eligible costs (pre-tax) to a maximum of \$15,000.

7.3.2 Program Requirements

All property owners/business owners are eligible to apply for funding under this grant program, subject to the following requirements, and the availability of funding as approved by Council.

a) The following types of interior renovations are considered eligible for a grant under this program:

- I. Structural/safety repairs;
- II. Accessibility improvements;
- III. Mechanical system replacements and/or upgrades;
- IV. Installation/renovation of washroom facilities;
- V. Electrical/plumbing upgrades;
- VI. Modifications to interior layouts;
- VII. Painting;
- VIII. Installation of new flooring, wall coverings and/or ceiling coverings; and
- IX. Construction of permanent fixtures and fittings.

b) The following types of projects are ineligible to receive an Interior Renovation Grant:

- I. Application/Permit fees;
- II. Purchase/rental of standard furniture;
- III. Purchase/rental of appliances;

IV. Purchase/rental of any chattels or non-permanent fittings and fixtures; and

V. Installation of security systems.

c) The Interior Renovation Grant Program does not apply to new construction projects or to work that has been completed without receiving prior approval from the Town.

d) Any property owner/business owner(s) wishing to be considered for a grant under this program must submit a completed Application Form to the Town.

e) The Application Form must be submitted with supporting documentation (e.g. design concept, architectural renderings, colour scheme), as necessary, and must be submitted to the Town for review and approval prior to the start of the project. Where a Building Permit is required to complete the proposed works, the application form must be completed at or before the time that the Building Permit application is submitted.

f) The Town may refuse applications for buildings where there has been an Interior Renovation Grant approved within the past five years. Where an application is accepted by the Town for a building that has received an Interior Renovation Grant within the past five years, funding priority will generally be given to applications for buildings that have not received an Interior Renovation Grant within the past five years.

g) The applicant is required to submit a minimum of two quotes for works outlined on the Application Form. All quotes must provide a detailed outline of the work to be undertaken, broken down by type of project if multiple works are being proposed by the same contractor.

Commented [MS45]: Added to clearly delineate the types of renovations eligible and not eligible for the grant. Eligible projects are generally limited to permanent improvements that will also benefit subsequent property owners/tenants. Ineligible costs are those that are operational or unlikely to benefit subsequent property owners/tenants.

Commented [MS44]: Added to reflect the new, shared funding format for the CIP. The maximum grant value of \$15,000 was established to match the maximum grant typically available for exterior works under the Façade Improvement Grant Program.

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h) All approved Interior Renovation Grants must be completed by **November 30** of the calendar year for which they are applied in. All invoices must be paid and submitted to the Town and the final inspection must be completed by **December 15** of the calendar year for which the grant was applied in.

7.3.3 Program Administration

All applications for this program will be considered subject to the availability of funding. The Application Review Team will review all applications to determine priority and ensure compatibility with eligibility criteria. The Application Review Team will process and make decisions on applications within one month of submission of a completed application.

Grants approved under this program shall be provided to property owners/business owners following the submission of the final invoices for the work completed, indicating that the suppliers/contractors have been paid in full, and once final Building Inspection has been signed off by the Town.

Commented [MS46]: Added to reflect the same eligibility requirements and application process as existing programs.

Commented [MS47]: Added to reflect the same administration requirements as existing programs.

Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan

7.4 Patio Grant Program

Section 3.2.3.10 of the Town of Ajax Official Plan outlines a desire to develop pedestrian-scaled streetscapes through Pickering Village and amenities that blend the transition from public to private spaces. In this regard, the Official Plan sets the following priorities for Pickering Village:

- Provide urban design and built form that is scaled to, and accommodates the needs of, the pedestrian in the public realm;
- Provide widened sidewalks and pedestrian amenity spaces between the curb and street-facing building facades; and
- Promote appropriately designed public and private spaces that will provide a range of cultural activities and events to attract people, boost tourism and increase business trade.

The construction of patio space serves to achieve all of the above priorities. Patios are a unique amenity in that they are as valuable to consumers as they are to business owners. For consumers, patios offer an opportunity to enjoy the fresh air in good weather, provide an opportunity for a safer dining experience in the case of public health events, and allow for pet-friendly accommodation. For businesses, they offer additional capacity for customers (and revenue generation), provide for an enhanced customer experience, and serve as an advertisement or a means to entice passersby.

The Patio Grant Program is designed to incentivize the provision of patios in Pickering Village by providing funds to facilitate construction of new permanent patios and the repair and/or upgrade of existing ones. Accordingly, the Patio Grant Program is designed to assist property and business owners for the following uses:

- Restaurant
- Retail Store (where food and refreshments are sold – bakeries, coffee shops, etc.)

The Patio Grant Program will be made available for commercially-zoned properties in the Community Improvement Plan Area in order of priority, as follows:

1. Properties designated under Part IV (individual designation) of the *Ontario Heritage Act* within the CIP Area and properties within the Pickering Village Heritage Conservation District, designated under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*;
2. Properties listed on the Town of Ajax Inventory of Non-Designated Heritage Properties within the CIP Area; and
3. All other commercially-zoned properties within the CIP Area.

The Town will accept applications for the Patio Grant Program each calendar year, as follows:

- Applications received between **January 1** and **March 15** will be held and evaluated concurrently to determine priority. If there are not sufficient funds to award all applications, priority will be given based on property type (as established above) and then on the desirability of the project (as determined at the sole discretion of the Town).
- Applications will continue to be accepted after **March 15**, subject to available funding. These applications will be evaluated and awarded on a first come, first serve basis (no prioritization applies).

Commented [MS49]: Added to clearly delineate the types of uses eligible for the grant. Eligible uses are limited to restaurants and retail stores where food and refreshment are served, since these are the permitted uses that align most closely with the need for a patio.

Commented [MS48]: Added to outline the basis for the program.

Commented [MS50]: Added to reflect the same prioritization strategy and application process as existing programs.

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7.4.1 Program Funding

A proposed budget up to \$120,000 per year, subject to budget approval, will be made available to be shared amongst the CIP's six grant programs, including the Patio Grant Program. Grants are limited to 50% of the eligible costs (pre-tax) to a maximum of \$10,000.

7.4.2 Program Requirements

All property owners/business owners are eligible to apply for funding under this grant program, subject to the following requirements, and the availability of funding as approved by Council.

a) The following costs are considered eligible for a grant under this program:

- I. Design-related fees;
- II. Materials and labour for constructing a new permanent patio;
- III. Materials and labour for repairing and/or expanding an existing permanent patio;
- IV. New and or improved outdoor lighting; and
- V. Building alterations to accommodate or improve access to/from a patio (installation of rolling or folding doors, etc.).

b) The following costs are ineligible to receive a Patio Grant:

- I. Application/Permit fees;
- II. Any expense relating to a temporary patio;
- III. Purchase and/or installation of outdoor appliances, cooking and/or service equipment; and
- IV. Purchase of outdoor furniture and/or furnishings.

c) The *Patio Grant Program* is intended to support outdoor patios located anywhere on private property (front yard, side yard, rear yard, courtyard or rooftop). Grants may support patios on public property where the business owner has entered into the necessary agreements with the corresponding public authority.

d) Any property owner/business owner(s) wishing to be considered for a grant under this program must submit a completed Application Form to the Town.

e) The Application Form must be submitted with supporting documentation (e.g. design concept, architectural renderings, colour scheme), as necessary, and must be submitted to the Town for review and approval prior to the start of the project. Where applications to the Town (Site Plan Amendment, Building Permit, etc.) are required to complete the proposed works, the application form must be completed at or before the time that these applications are submitted.

f) To be eligible for a grant, applicants must not have been approved for a Patio Grant within the previous five years.

g) The applicant is required to submit a minimum of two quotes for works outlined on the Application Form. All quotes must provide a detailed outline of the work to be undertaken, broken down by type of project if multiple works are being proposed by the same contractor.

h) All approved Interior Renovation Grants must be completed by **November 30** of the calendar year for which they are applied in. All invoices must be paid and submitted to the Town and the final inspection must be completed by

Commented [MS51]: Added to reflect the new, shared funding format for the CIP. The maximum grant value of \$10,000 was established to match the grants available through other similar CIP programs in other municipalities (e.g. Chatham-Kent).

Commented [MS53]: Added since patios of all forms, not just those adjacent to the street, are capable of contributing benefits to the community. Clarification is also provided to ensure that patios on public property may be considered.

Commented [MS52]: Added to clearly delineate the types of costs eligible and not eligible for the grant. Eligible costs are generally limited to labour and materials for permanent improvements that will also benefit subsequent property owners/tenants. Ineligible costs are those that are operational or unlikely to benefit subsequent property owners/tenants.

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December 15 of the calendar year for which the grant was applied in.

7.4.3 Program Administration

All applications for this program will be considered subject to the availability of funding. The Application Review Team will review all applications to determine priority and ensure compatibility with eligibility criteria. The Application Review Team will process and make decisions on applications within one month of submission of a completed application.

Grants approved under this program shall be provided to property owners/business owners following the submission of the final invoices for the work completed, indicating that the suppliers/contractors have been paid in full, and once final Building Inspection has been signed off by the Town.

Commented [MS54]: Added to reflect the same eligibility requirements and application process as existing programs.

Commented [MS55]: Added to reflect the same administration requirements as existing programs.

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7.6 Cash-in-Lieu of Parking Equivalency Grant Program

The *Cash-in-lieu of Parking Equivalency Grant Program* is intended to provide relief, in the form of an equivalency grant, to property owners who have chosen to provide a cash contribution in lieu of providing actual parking spaces for their development. It is designed to incentivize the establishment of desirable and/or underrepresented uses within existing buildings in Pickering Village that may not otherwise be permitted due to lack of space for new parking stalls.

Pickering Village is one of two priority areas highlighted in the Town of Ajax Cash-in-lieu of Parking By-law (By-law 60-2019). This By-law establishes a framework for the Town to accept cash-in-lieu of parking spaces in accordance with Section 40 of the *Planning Act* and sets out the costs for providing parking by way of a cash contribution. There are slight differences in the boundaries of the Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan area and the Town's Cash-in-lieu of Parking By-law, however, these two project areas generally overlap.

Since new developments can be designed in a way that accommodates new parking (underground, structured, etc.), they are not eligible for an equivalency grant under this program. Instead, the Cash-in-lieu of Parking Equivalency Grant Program is designed specifically to accommodate new uses in existing buildings or scenarios where new space is being added on a lot where existing buildings are being retained.

Further, since the Cash-in-lieu of Parking Equivalency Grant Program is designed to incentivize the establishment of desirable and/or underrepresented uses in Pickering Village, the grant can only be applied for the following uses:

- Art Gallery;

- Museum;
- Restaurant; and/or
- Retail Store.

7.9.1 Program Funding

Equivalency grants will be available as follows:

- a) The grant will be exclusive to developments that meet all of the eligibility requirements, including:
 - I. The subject property is located within the boundaries of both the Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan area and the Town's Cash-in-lieu of Parking By-law;
 - II. The use for which parking is required is an art gallery, museum, restaurant and/or retail store use;
 - III. The use for which parking is required will be contained within an existing building or within a newly constructed building added to a lot where an existing building is being retained; and
 - IV. Parking requirements on the subject property are being accommodated by way of a cash-in-lieu payment.
- b) A proposed budget up to \$120,000 per year, subject to budget approval, will be made available to be shared amongst the CIP's six grant programs, including the Parking Equivalency Grant Program.
- c) Equivalency grants will cover the full cost of cash-in-lieu parking contributions to a maximum of \$20,000. In no case shall the total amount of the grant exceed the cost of

Commented [MS57]: Added to restrict eligibility to only the most desired uses in Pickering Village. These are the four uses that the Town is most interested in attracting to help establish the area as an urban, lively community that functions as the Town's "arts and culture" hub.

Commented [MS58]: Added to clearly delineate the eligibility requirements for the grant.

Commented [MS56]: Added to outline the basis for the program.

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rehabilitating the land and buildings, in accordance with Section 28 (7.1) of the *Planning Act*.

7.9.2 Program Requirements

- a) Any property owner wishing to be considered for an equivalency grant under this program must complete and submit an application form to Planning and Development Services at the time of the initial Planning application(s) or at the time of Building Permit submission if no Planning applications are applicable. A letter of application acceptance will be issued by the Town to the owner/applicant within one month of the application form submission.
- b) The program shall apply to situations where there is a change of use and/or new construction where the provision of additional parking spaces would normally apply.
- c) If the property is sold, in whole or in part, before the completion of the eligible project, the subsequent owner shall be entitled to any approved equivalency grant.

7.9.3 Program Administration

All applications for this program will be considered subject to the availability of funding. The Application Review Team will review all applications to determine priority and ensure compatibility with eligibility criteria. The Application Review Team will process and make decisions on applications within one month of submission of a completed application.

Grants approved under this program shall be provided to property owners following substantial completion of the construction project, once the Building Permit file has been closed.

Commented [MS59]: Added to reflect the new, shared funding format for the CIP. The maximum grant value of \$20,000 was established to cover the cost of approximately five parking spaces (using 2024 rates) in the most common contextual scenario (new development, redevelopment, additions and changes in use on a property identified as a Heritage Property). Since cash-in-lieu parking rates are subject to a 3% annual inflation rate, the number of spaces that can be accommodated by the maximum grant will decrease over time. To ensure compliance with Section 28 (7.1) of the Planning Act, the applicant must also demonstrate that they have made improvements to the property equal in value or greater than the amount of the grant.

Commented [MS60]: Added to reflect the same eligibility requirements and application process as existing programs. Note that an additional provision has been added to clarify that a grant will still be processed if a property is sold prior to the completion of the eligible project.

Commented [MS61]: Added to reflect the same administration requirements as existing programs.

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~~7.3 Redevelopment Tax Rebate Program~~

~~The *Redevelopment Tax Rebate Program* is intended to provide financial relief in the form of tax rebates to property owners who undertake rehabilitation/improvement of their properties in the Community Improvement Plan Area that results in a re-evaluation and tax increase on these properties, for eligible residential and/or commercial/office development.~~

~~Rebates will be issued over a ten year period with Year 1 of the program defined as the first full calendar year in which taxes are paid after an eligible building has been completed and re-assessed. For example, if an eligible building is completed and re-assessed effective October 1, 2015, Year 1 of the rebate schedule would be January 1, 2016. The first annual rebate would be provided at the end of 2016 based upon 12 months (i.e., January to December).~~

~~7.3.1 Program Funding~~

~~To minimize cost and financial risk to the Town, the *Redevelopment Tax Rebate Program* is structured as a “pay-as-you-go” program. In this regard, the owner will be responsible for the entire cost of the rehabilitation project, and the Town may subsequently reimburse the owner for the eligible cost of improvements in the form of an annual tax rebate. The owner will initially pay all property taxes owing for each year in full for the entire year prior to the Town reimbursing the owner in the form of an annual rebate. The amount of the annual rebate will be equal to 80% of the increase in the Town’s portion of property taxes.~~

~~7.3.2 Program Requirements~~

~~a) Any property owner wishing to be considered for a rebate under this program must complete and submit an application form to Planning and Development Services in advance of a Building Permit and prior to the commencement of any works shown on a Building Permit for new building construction. The application shall include a copy of the approved Building Permit application (and any related Demolition Permit application) for the proposed new building construction, including drawings detailing the proposed work expected to result in an increase in assessment.~~

~~Building Permits issued for purposes other than new building construction (e.g., some forms of environmental remediation) will not be considered sufficient to trigger an application, but if they are related to processes listed under Section (f) below, they may be submitted with the Building Permit for the proposed new building construction as documentation of eligible program costs. Participants in the program will be limited to proposals which at a minimum shall consist of the following elements:~~

- ~~I. A gross site development area in excess of 0.15 hectares (0.37 acres);~~
- ~~II. Ground floor comprised of any of the following uses: retail stores, restaurants, art gallery, place of entertainment, museum, convenience store, financial institution (bank only) as defined in Zoning By-law 95-2003;~~
- ~~III. A minimum 2 storey building; and~~
- ~~IV. A minimum of 60% of their required parking supply as underground parking and/or above ground deck parking that is appropriately designed to fit in with the proposed development and existing streetscape at the discretion of the Town.~~

Commented [MS62]: This entire program has been removed due to the difficulty in predicting financial impacts, the scale of incentives awarded under the program, the complexity of administering the program, and the long-term (10 years) implications of awarding financial incentives under the program.

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- ~~b) As a condition of the application, the Town may require the applicant to submit a business plan acceptable to the Town.~~
- ~~c) If the rehabilitation/improvement of the property does not result in an increase in assessment, no rebate will be provided.~~
- ~~d) Notwithstanding any administrative rules governing this and other CIP programs, the Town will not issue an annual rebate which exceeds the Town portion of the property tax collected in any year on the increased assessed value.~~
- ~~e) The total combined value of the annual rebates provided over the life of the program shall not exceed the total cost of rehabilitating the land and buildings under eligible program costs.~~
- ~~f) Aside from the work indicated on the Building Permit application, eligible program costs include the costs of:~~
- ~~I. environmental studies;~~
 - ~~II. environmental remediation;~~
 - ~~III. development, redevelopment, construction and reconstruction of lands and buildings for rehabilitation purposes or for the provision of energy efficient uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements or facilities;~~
 - ~~IV. site preparation including construction/ improvement of on-site public works, e.g., water services, private sanitary and storm drains and/or private sewers; and,~~
 - ~~V. demolition.~~
- ~~g) Actual costs for any or all of the items in (f) above may be subject to independent audit, at the expense of the property owner.~~
- ~~h) All participating property owners will be required to enter into a Redevelopment Agreement with the Town which will specify the terms of the rebate. Any Redevelopment Tax Rebate represents a percentage of increased taxes payable resulting from the improvements. By comparing the total value of the work completed (as documented/verified to the Town's satisfaction for all eligible costs as noted above) with the amount of the Town's portion of the taxes paid prior to and after rehabilitation, the Town can monitor the combined value of the annual rebates to ensure that they do not exceed the total cost of rehabilitating the land and buildings.~~
- ~~i) The annual rebate is based upon changes in property taxes as a result of construction and improvement. The program does not exempt property owners from an increase/decrease in municipal taxes due to a general tax rate increase/decrease, a change in assessment, changes in tax legislation, or for any other reason. The annual rebate is not based upon occupancy or changes in occupancy.~~
- ~~j) In the case of sites that are already vacant or cleared at the time of the program's commencement, rehabilitation proposals for such sites that are received after the date of the program start shall have as a starting point for the program or base rate, the amount of annualized taxes levied upon the property as it existed on the date of Building Permit issuance.~~
- ~~Properties that are cleared or partially cleared after the date of the program start, and left undeveloped for a period greater than two (2) years prior to participating in the program for any phase, shall have as a starting point for the program or base rate, the amount of taxes levied as of the day prior to any clearances.~~

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7.3.3 Program Administration

~~All Redevelopment Tax Rebate Program Applications must be approved by Council. In addition, at the time applications are presented to Council for approval, the Application Review Team will seek Council's direction to prepare an appropriate Redevelopment Agreement, to be executed by the applicant to the satisfaction of the Town. The Application Review Team will then prepare the required Redevelopment Agreement for applicants participating in the program. The Redevelopment Agreement will specify the terms of the rebates (such as the total combined amount of the rebates), the duration of the program, the owner's obligations should the owner default on the Agreement, and any other requirements specified by the Town.~~

~~The applicant shall co-operate with the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) to facilitate a post-improvement assessment of the property following completion of an eligible building. Alternatively, the post-improvement assessment may be undertaken by a certified quantity surveyor satisfactory to the Town if MPAC is unable to undertake a post-improvement assessment in a timely fashion. If a quantity surveyor provides an assessment, the surveyor's assessment (and any agreement based on the assessment) will be adjusted as necessary in accordance with the results of MPAC's assessment, once it is completed.~~

~~Using the results of the post-improvement assessment, the Team shall determine the difference between the amount of Town taxes prior to the improvements and the amount of Town taxes to be paid after the improvements. The difference is known as the "municipal tax increment" and shall be the portion eligible for a partial rebate under this program. Subsequent increases in assessed value or increases to the tax rate are not eligible to be used to determine the amount of the rebate(s).~~

~~The actual component costs of the work done, as identified under eligible program costs in Section (f) above, will be provided to the Town by the applicant upon completion of an eligible building. Any and all of these costs may be subject to an independent audit, at the expense of the property owner. Finalization of the Redevelopment Agreement will occur pending the Town's review and satisfaction with all reports and documentation submitted outlining the full scope and cost of the work completed, and final building inspection and sign-off by the Building Division.~~

~~Prior to the issuance of any annual rebate, the Town will verify that all requirements of the program to date have been met.~~

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7.4 Planning and Development Fees Rebate Program

The intent of this program is to stimulate new investment in Pickering Village through the provision of a rebate to offset the cost of specific planning and development fees. The rebate will apply to most municipal fees for planning and development applications. The rebate of these fees will be paid to the property owner, regardless of who pays the fee. All property owners within the Pickering Village CIP Area will be eligible for program participation, subject to program requirements.

This program does not apply to any required performance securities or maintenance guarantees (i.e. Letters of Credit) posted by the applicant, required professional studies, or expenses (including expenses incurred by the applicant because of the Town's participation at the Ontario Municipal Board or Court proceedings).

7.4.1 Program Funding

The ~~Planning and Development Fees Rebate Program~~ is structured as a rebate at the time of application approval for planning applications and at the time of final inspection for Building Permit fees.

(a) Full rebates of the Town's portion will be issued for the following Planning and Development fees and permits (see Table 1) that meet the requirements of the CIP (i.e. in terms of compliance with Pickering Village HCD and Land Use and Urban Design Guidelines):

Table 1: Eligible Planning & Development Fees

	Building alterations to properties designated under Part IV and V of the OHA	Building alterations to non-designated properties	New construction/ redevelopment on Priority Properties (see Figure 3)
Draft Plan of Condominium			✓
Zoning By-Law Amendment	✓		
Minor Variance	✓		✓
Land Division Application			✓
Site Plan Approval	✓	✓	✓
Site Plan Amendment	✓	✓	✓
Sign Permit	✓	✓	
Building Permit	✓	✓ ¹	✓

¹ For Residential-zoned properties, the Building Permit rebates are only eligible for substantial construction or reconstruction within the front or exterior side yards that complies with the Urban Design Principles listed within the CIP at the discretion of the Town.

(b) Building Permit Fees for new residential and/or commercial/office construction will be rebated in an amount equal to 80% of the eligible Building Permit fees. On Priority Sites as identified in Figure 3, Building Permit fees for commercial/office construction and/or new residential buildings as well as additions will be rebated in the amount of 100% of the eligible Building Permit

Commented [MS63]: This entire program has been removed due to the scale of incentives awarded and changes in the landscape of how application fees are administered. Under the Province's Bill 109, the Town faces the potential of having to provide full or partial refunds on application fees for applications that have not been processed according to new, shortened timelines. Given the new threat to retaining these fees, there is no appetite to host a CIP program that would provide grants on the fees that have been retained by the Town.

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~~fees subject to the proposal including at a minimum, a required parking supply of 60% of parking as underground parking and/or above ground deck parking that is appropriately designed to fit in with the proposed development and existing streetscape at the discretion of the Town.~~

~~(c) Building Permits for the following are ineligible for a financial incentive under this program:~~

- ~~• Decks~~
- ~~• Sheds~~
- ~~• Interior Renovation~~
- ~~• Plumbing / HVAC~~
- ~~• Sunrooms~~

~~Any rebate issued under this program will be provided as a one-time rebate to the registered owner of the property, regardless of who pays the fee. However, in no case will the total amount of the rebate provided under this program exceed the cost of rehabilitating the land and buildings, in accordance with Section 28 (7.1) of the *Planning Act*.~~

7.4.2 Program Requirements

~~All owners of properties within the Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan Area are eligible for rebates equivalent to the amount of qualifying planning and development fees under this program, subject to the following requirements, and availability of funding as approved by Council:~~

- ~~a) Only the Town's component of the fees required as part of the above noted applications is eligible for rebate purposes.~~
- ~~b) Any property owner wishing to be considered for a rebate under this program must apply to the Planning and Development Services Department at the same time~~

~~application is made for any Planning approval(s) or Building Permit application(s) whose fees are eligible to be rebated. A letter of application acceptance detailing the approved fee-related rebates will be issued by the Town to the owner/applicant.~~

- ~~e) If the property is sold, in whole or in part, before the eligible fees are rebated, the subsequent owner shall be entitled to the fee-related rebate.~~

7.4.3 Program Administration

~~Upon final approval of any application completed under this program (other than a Building Permit application, and in the case of a Building Permit application, upon final inspection of an eligible building by the Chief Building Official), the Application Review Team will ensure that all eligibility requirements have been met.~~

~~In the case of Planning Fees, (all applications under the *Planning and Development Fees Rebate Program*), reimbursement or exemption to the owner of a phased project will likewise be undertaken in phases. In this regard, any portion of a planning application fee which represents an "application base fee" will be divided by the number of phases, and refunded in equal increments as each phase receives final approval.~~

~~Any portion of a planning application fee which is calculated on the basis of numbers of dwelling units and/or Gross Floor Area (GFA) shall be refunded in an amount which relates directly to the number of dwelling units and/or GFA built in each particular phase. Building Permit fees, by virtue of already being "phase specific" (i.e., they are applied for on a phase-by-phase basis, or building-by-building basis as the case may be, rather than all at once from the onset), will be rebated as each phase is approved for occupancy under the *Building Code Act*.~~

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Figure 3: Individual Priority Properties for Development / Redevelopment within Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan Area



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7.5 Development Charge Exemption/Reduction

Program

The ~~Development Charge Exemption / Reduction Program~~ is intended to encourage more comprehensive development in Pickering Village. The program will offer development charge exemptions or reduction rebates for all eligible residential and/or commercial/office (re)development proposals within the Community Improvement Plan Area. The effect of the program is to essentially provide a 'rebate' by either:

- (i) ~~approving a full or partial exemption of the Town's development charges at the time of Building Permit application to the owner of land who applies for a Building Permit to undertake an eligible development project; or,~~
- (ii) ~~collecting all applicable development charges up front at the time of Building Permit application, and then issuing a rebate equivalent to the eligible exemption to the owner of land who initiates and completes an eligible development project through to final inspection and sign-off by the Town.~~

To facilitate the implementation of this program via alternative (i) above, changes to the Town's Development Charges By-law were implemented in September 2013 (By-law 81-2013). Because the Town's Development Charges By-law is outside the scope of the *Planning Act*, the implementation of this aspect of the program does not fall within the parameters of Section 28(7) of the *Planning Act*.

As an alternate method of implementing this program, the Town may offer a Development Charge equivalency rebate (i.e., alternative (ii) above), whereby a rebate equivalent to the amount of the eligible exemption (either full or partial) is drawn

from the Town's tax based reserves and issued to the owner.

7.5.1 Program Funding

The amount of the eligible exemption is as follows:

- a) ~~50% of the Town's development charges for all eligible new commercial/residential or commercial/office multi-storey development consisting of two or more storeys with the ground floor only comprised of any of the following uses: retail stores, restaurants, art gallery, place of entertainment, museum, convenience store, financial institution (bank only) as defined in Zoning By-law 95-2003.~~
- b) ~~50% of the Town's development charges, for development which provides a minimum of 60% of required on-site parking as underground parking and/or above ground deck parking that is appropriately designed to fit in with the proposed development and existing streetscape at the discretion of the Town.~~

Projects which satisfy both criteria a) and b) above, are eligible for a full exemption of the Town of Ajax Development Charges. Any development charge equivalency rebate issued under this program will be provided as a one-time rebate to the registered owner of the property, regardless of who pays the development charges.

The program pertains only to the Town's portion of payable development charges. This program does not address development charges payable to other authorities including the Region of Durham, the Durham District School Board, and the Durham Catholic District School Board.

Commented [MS64]: This entire program has been removed due to the scale of incentives awarded under the program. Further, attempts to maintain the program and redesign it as an incentive used exclusively for the provision of affordable housing have been made obsolete by the Province's Bill 23, which requires the Town to waive Development Charges for affordable housing.

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7.5.2 Program Requirements

- a) ~~Any property owner wishing to participate in this program must complete and submit an application form to Planning and Development Services prior to the issuance of a Building Permit. The application will include a copy of the Building Permit application detailing the work to be undertaken (including floor area calculations and the number/type of any proposed residential dwelling units, ground floor retail stores, restaurants, art gallery, place of entertainment, museum, convenience store, financial institution (bank only) as defined in Zoning By-law 95-2003) as well as an itemized breakdown of the development charges normally required to be paid by the applicant.~~
- b) ~~The program shall apply to new construction only or the adaptive re-use of an existing structure where the payment of development charges would normally apply.~~

7.5.3 Program Administration

~~The Town shall have sole discretion to determine which mechanism is used to administer the 'rebate'. The Application Review Team may either:~~

- a) ~~approve the application prior to the issuance of a Building Permit, in which case the amount of development charges due prior to the Building Permit being issued will be reduced by the amount of the eligible exemption (either full or partial, depending on the type of development); or~~
- b) ~~approve the application upon final inspection of the completed project, ensuring that all eligibility requirements have been met, and then instruct the Finance Department to issue the development charge equivalency rebate.~~

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~~7.6 Reduced Parkland Dedication Requirements Program~~

~~The *Reduced Parkland Dedication Requirements Program* is intended to provide relief, in the form of a reduction in parkland dedication requirements (either land or cash-in-lieu requirements) to property owners who undertake improvement projects involving the provision of additional eligible residential dwellings units in the Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan Area.~~

~~The Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan Area, like the rest of the Town, is subject to the parkland dedication requirements specified under By-law 79-2006. In cases of new residential development or redevelopment, parkland dedication is collected according to the greater of the following two formulae:~~

- ~~• five percent (5%) of the land area or appraised value of the land; or,~~
- ~~• one hectare of parkland (or its appraised monetary equivalent) for every 300 dwelling units.~~

~~For eligible residential developments, requirements for parkland dedication, either in land area or cash-in-lieu (or in some cases, a combination of both at the Town's discretion), will be collected according to the lesser of the two above-noted formulae.~~

~~The *Reduced Parkland Dedication Requirements Program* does not rely on Section 28 of the *Planning Act* for implementation; therefore it does not form part of the Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan. Instead, it has only been referenced in the context of the Pickering Village CIP as an initiative to promote redevelopment in Pickering Village. Authority to exercise either of the two above-noted formulae derives from Section 42 of the *Planning Act*.~~

~~7.6.1 Program Funding~~

~~The *Reduced Parkland Dedication Requirements Program* is structured such that any developer of eligible residential development shall dedicate parkland in an amount equal to 5% of the land area where land is needed for park purposes. Any difference between the amount of land dedicated by a developer (if any) and the total amount of parkland dedication required shall be paid by the owner as cash-in-lieu (i.e., if only a portion of the required 5% parkland dedication is contributed as land, the owner will be required to pay cash-in-lieu for the remainder; or, if no parkland is required by the Town, the owner shall pay cash-in-lieu equivalent to the full 5% of the land area).~~

~~In instances where the amount of parkland collected by the Town under the 5% formula is less than the actual amount of parkland proposed by the applicant, credit for the proponent's "over-dedication" will not be issued. In fact, to conform to the intent of urban design policies contained in the Official Plan and other applicable urban design criteria established for Pickering Village (and thus be considered eligible for participation in the *Reduced Parkland Dedication Program*), the Town may require developments to provide parkland in excess of what is strictly required under the lesser formula.~~

~~Parkland dedication for all non-residential development shall continue to be collected at the regular rate of 2% of the land area. Parkland dedication for all residential development that is not eligible to participate under the program will be subject to standard parkland dedication requirements (i.e., the higher of the two above-noted formulae for residential development, at one hectare of parkland for every 300 residential dwelling units).~~

~~All required cash-in-lieu shall be paid either prior to registration or prior to the issuance of a Building Permit, if the development initially proceeds by way of a site plan application.~~

Commented [MS65]: This entire program has been removed due to the scale of incentives awarded and changes in the landscape of how parkland contributions are calculated. Under the Province's Bill 23, the rates for parkland contribution have already been significantly reduced. Given this reduction, there is no appetite for hosting a CIP program that would further reduce parkland contribution.

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~~7.6.2 Program Requirements~~

- ~~a) Assistance will be in the form of a reduction in the parkland dedication requirements for eligible developments within the Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan Area.~~
- ~~b) Any property owner wishing to participate under this program must complete and submit an application form to Planning and Development Services at the time application is made for Site Plan Approval.~~

~~7.6.3 Program Administration~~

~~Any owner of property within the Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan Area may register their intent to participate in the program by filing a Reduced Parkland Dedication Requirements Application with the Town at the time of making an application for site plan approval.~~

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8.0 CONSULTATION

This document has been circulated to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing Municipal Services Office, The Region of Durham, ~~the Pickering Village Business Improvement Area~~, the Ajax-Pickering Board of Trade, the Town's Heritage Advisory Committee and other interested persons.

This Plan was discussed at a public meeting for public and stakeholder input on ~~June 20xxxxxxx, 2013-2023~~ and at a statutory public meeting on ~~November 18xxxxxxx, 2013-2023~~. In accordance with the *Planning Act*, Notice of the statutory meeting on ~~amendments to this~~ CIP was given 20 days prior to the meeting.

The *Planning Act* requires that the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing be consulted in the preparation of the plan in advance of a public meeting. ~~However,~~ Community Improvement Plans no longer require the approval of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Public input received through this process has been considered to be incorporated into the final CIP and forwarded to Council for adoption. Once a decision is made and there are no appeals within the 20 day appeal period, Council's decision is final.

Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan

9.0 IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

9.1 Marketing & Communication Strategy

A marketing and communication strategy shall be developed as part of the implementation of the amended Community Improvement Plan (CIP). Town staff expertise and support are key components for the promotion and success of potential programs.

The targeted audiences for the CIP Programs include:

- Property Owners
- Business Owners
- ~~Pickering Village Business Improvement Area (BIA)~~
- Ajax-Pickering Board of Trade
- Developers
- Investors
- Real Estate Agents
- The Condominium Corporation & Property Managers of 109 Old Kingston Road
- Heritage Advisory Committee

The following marketing and communication approaches shall be used to market and communicate the programs to build interest and support for the CIP:

- Website information and updates
- Brochures/pamphlets outlining the available programs ~~and details~~
- Workshops to target audiences
- ~~Advertising in local newspapers~~
- Partnership opportunities with community groups, local business associations and other levels of government to advertise programs

It is recommended that the Marketing and Communication Strategy be implemented as soon as possible after Council has activated any of the programs contained in the Pickering Village CIP. ~~Funding for marketing these programs should be at its highest during the first three years following approval of the CIP to ensure uptake and familiarity of programs with target audiences.~~

9.2 Program Monitoring

Programs will be monitored to determine, among other things:

- whether program uptake is satisfactory;
- if desired outcomes are being achieved;
- if participants are completing their commitments;
- the full benefits and costs of each program;
- the economic impact associated with each program (i.e. total value of construction projects, the increased assessed value of property).

Adjustments to programs may be necessary based on program uptake and feedback from staff and applicants. Measurable criteria relating to program goals may involve an assessment of the following:

- heritage property conservation and restoration;
- new businesses, specifically ~~targeting retail/commercial/restaurants, retail and arts and cultural business opportunities/facilities;~~
- mixed use (re) development projects;
- increases in ~~underground parking~~the number of patios;
- building accessibility for persons with disabilities;
- overall quality of streetscape and public realm improvements.

Commented [MS66]: Removed since the BIA has been dissolved.

Commented [MS68]: Modified to more directly outline targeted uses.

Commented [MS69]: Modified since there are no longer any CIP programs that incentivize underground parking.

Commented [MS67]: Removed to reduce marketing costs and since opportunities for website/digital have increased.

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The monitoring of funds dispersed through the CIP incentive programs will determine their relative success and may include feedback from grant applicants and the economic impact associated with projects taking advantage of the CIP incentives programs.

Monitoring of the incentive programs should be done periodically through a report to Council outlining program uptake and any recommended changes to program requirements.

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10.0 CONCLUSION

The Pickering Village Community Improvement Plan provides a variety of financial incentives to encourage appropriate restoration of existing heritage properties while guiding future development projects that are in keeping with the heritage character of the village. A CIP can also stimulate investment on private properties while aiming to diversify the types of businesses to the area and make improvements to the public realm and streetscapes.

~~Pickering Village is steeped in history and many significant heritage buildings and properties remain largely intact. The Property Improvement Incentive Programs including the Façade Improvement Grant Program and the Sign Grant Program, included in the CIP provide property owners a financial incentive to undertake restoration or upgrades to their buildings and property properties that may not otherwise occur due to cost premiums associated with these improvements. They also have potential~~

~~The Redevelopment Incentive Programs including the Redevelopment Tax Rebate Program, the Planning and Development Fees Rebate Program, the Development Charge Exemption/Reduction Program, and the Reduced Parkland Dedication Requirements Program are intended to stimulate new investment and redevelopment within Pickering Village for eligible properties by providing financial relief in the form of tax rebates, exemption and reduction of municipal fees associated with property redevelopment desired land uses.~~

All programs are aimed to provide opportunities for property and business owners and build upon the community improvement efforts already underway to revitalize and preserve the unique features of Pickering Village. The CIP demonstrates municipal

leadership and the Town's commitment to community improvement.

Commented [MS70]: Modified to reflect the new format and programs of the CIP.