



# On Main Street

[www.mainstreetmiddlesex.ca](http://www.mainstreetmiddlesex.ca)

October / November 2007

A Newsletter From Main Street Middlesex, Canada First Program for Countywide Downtown Revitalization



## Front Street Building Restoration Uncovers True Gem

By Kim Gallant and Kelly Allistone



*Woods Pearson & Associates, 26 Front Street West in Strathroy after extensive renovations and assistance from a Main Street Middlesex Façade Grant.*

A local building has been given new life and a splash of colour thanks to some design vision, savvy business choices, the Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc and Main Street Middlesex.

Jane Williams, Project Coordinator for Mallick Williams Holdings and home stylist Theresa Elrafih, in her capacity as Colour Consultant, took on the challenge of transformation after the decision to partner with local chartered accountant Fred Hoffner at the newest Woods Pearson & Associates office, a former Standard Bank of Canada in downtown Strathroy.

The Main Street Middlesex Façade Grant Jane received allowed them to replace the historically accurate arched windows with newer versions of the same style, aiming for a 'restoration' rather than a 'renovation'. Jane was also successful in obtaining a grant from the Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc's 'About Face' program.

Theresa was initially taken with the original sun-bleached pink of the exterior bricks, so she opted for the existing colour in her design vision. While including pink wasn't an easy sell, eventually the owners agreed to trust her instincts. The result is an exterior that's classic and refined without looking stuffy - a building that stands out, but not excessively. The owners hope to set the tone for businesses who may wish to follow suit with their own buildings.

To achieve this classic look on the interior, muted green walls adorn the hallway and vestibule, while the trim is finished in a warm golden tone. When determining colour choices, the style of lighting must be taken into account; the office spaces had to incorporate fluorescent task lighting but the main hallway and vestibule could retain more of a traditional sense, adding to the vintage feel of the building and creating a softer, welcoming space.

At the start of the project the main floor had been reduced to one large room to accommodate the previous owners' needs. With the help of their knowledgeable general contractor, this area was thoughtfully separated into workspaces with an eye to making them look as if they had always been there; the ceilings were lowered to accommodate the installation of ductwork and give everything a feeling of proportion.

Ultimately, the extended renovation schedule and unforeseen extras have been viewed as an investment in the business and community, as Woods Pearson & Associates plan to remain part of the downtown Strathroy streetscape for many years.



## FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT GRANT



Main Street Middlesex is now pleased to announce the availability of another round of façade grants. The aim of this particular grant is to improve the appearance of the commercial core in an effort to make it more appealing to consumers and potential new business.

A Façade Improvement Grant may be used for a variety of building rehabilitations including painting, window or door repairs or replacements, cleaning and/or re-pointing of surface brick or stone, re-painting of brick, stone or cement in keeping with heritage, **removing paint from brick or stone (sandblasting will not be eligible), exterior lighting and/or removal of "modernization" efforts and/or inappropriate non-historic alterations/additions.**

Grants are available for up to 50% of the total cost of the improvement project to a maximum grant of \$2,500.00.

To apply, a Façade Improvement Grant application must be completed (applications/full guidelines are available online or from the office) and returned to the Main Street Middlesex office by 1:00 p.m. on October 15, 2007. Grant announcements will take place on October 31, 2007. Main Street Middlesex anticipates a greater demand than we will be able to accommodate; therefore, funding will be provided for those applications receiving the overall highest score until the grant fund is exhausted.

Business and property owners in our designated downtowns are invited to take advantage of this excellent opportunity as a means to improve the appearance of your property and the community as a whole. Please feel free to call the office at (519) 641-7190 or visit our web site at [www.mainstreetmiddlesex.ca](http://www.mainstreetmiddlesex.ca) if you have any questions regarding this program.

Tip: Only complete applications will be evaluated—please ensure you include all requested information.

# Provincial Government Invests in Thorndale Revitalization Project

## New Strategy to Upgrade the Look of Downtown Thorndale

At a ceremony on August 29, 2007, Steve Peters, MPP for Elgin-Middlesex-London, announced an investment of \$53,000 by the provincial government in the Thorndale Downtown Revitalization project. The declaration was made on behalf of Leona Dombrowsky, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.



*Elgin-Middlesex-London MPP Steve Peters announces a substantial provincial investment in the Thorndale Downtown Revitalization Project. This will allow the village to further enhance work the committee has already completed and possibly introduce a new park/arboretum in the near future.*

*"On behalf of the Ontario government, I am pleased to be a part of this very important project that will inject a new vitality into Thorndale's downtown," said Peters.*

*"The addition of trees, crosswalks and welcoming signage will help to create an inviting atmosphere not only for the community, but visitors as well."*

The provincial contribution provides a tremendous boost to the Thorndale Revitalization Committee and its partner, the Municipality of Thames Centre, to implement the Thorndale Downtown Revitalization initiative.

"The Thorndale Revitalization Committee would like to thank the Government of Ontario for their generous support of our downtown revitalization project," said Ralph Stephen, chair of the committee.

"The changes that we will make to our community's core will not only improve the look of it, but will also contribute to a more vibrant Thorndale that will help attract business and tourism to the area."

The Thorndale Revitalization Committee (TRC) is a not-for-profit coalition of local community service organizations including the Thorndale Horticultural Society, Communities in Bloom, Women's Institute, Tree West Nissouri, the Thorndale Business Association and the Municipality of Thames Centre.

The funds will be used to complement work the TRC has already completed by providing aesthetically pleasing elements along the main street, including trees along the boulevards, new gateway signs at both ends of the village and decorative streetlights to provide a greater degree of safety for Thorndale citizens. Additionally, a new reading garden will be constructed at the Thorndale Library and a park/arboretum will, pending approval, reside on the abandoned CNR property in the centre of the village.

To qualify for the grant, the TRC was required to generate matching funds locally. They raised a total of \$53,000: \$15,000 from the private sector; \$5,000 donated by the West Nissouri Historical Society; \$2,000 from the Municipality of Thames Centre and \$1,000 from Main Street Middlesex. The remaining \$30,000 was committed by the TRC, who recognize this as a real opportunity to create a friendly and welcoming environment, enticing the casual driver to stop and enjoy Thorndale's restaurants, boutiques and established businesses.

## October is Small Business Month

Inside this newsletter you will find a flyer promoting workshops and events taking place throughout the month. Small Business Month gives participants both an opportunity to learn about the business resources available throughout the community and a chance to network with their peers.

For tickets or further information, please call the Community Futures Development Corporation at (519) 641-6100.

## Main Street Middlesex Grants: Dispelling Some Common Myths

It was bound to happen: myths about the Main Street Middlesex grant program have begun their spread around our designated downtowns and throughout the land. It has been said it's a difficult procedure, there's a lengthy approval process and the application form is too confusing.

All applications are available for download from our web site at [www.mainstreetmiddlesex.ca](http://www.mainstreetmiddlesex.ca) and progressing through the steps of a Main Street Middlesex grant application could not be simpler. If you cannot access the Internet and would like a copy delivered to you, simply call the office to make alternate arrangements.



**When completing the application, please leave no question unanswered; if you're not sure about something, call the office and we will be glad to assist you.** The budget page is imperative and contrary to popular belief, we do **not** require all of your financial information, simply the budget for the project. All grants should include a written quotation supporting the listed budget amounts.

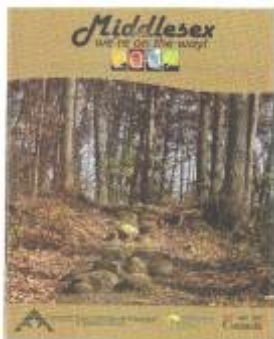
Completed applications must be submitted to our office no later than the last day of the month and, in the case of a Festival & Events and/or Retail Promotion Grant, 30 days prior to the scheduled event. This provides us with ample time to review the grant, ensure it meets requirements and gather any missing information before submission to the committee. Incomplete applications will not be presented to the committees for review—they will be held until they are complete.

Each downtown has four representatives sitting on one of the two committees with which Main Street Middlesex operates. A grant application will not be discussed at the appropriate committee meeting unless a representative from that downtown is in attendance. Upon committee recommendation, the application is forwarded to the General Manager for approval and the applicant is notified. A complete application has the potential for approval within 30 days of receipt at our office.

*If you find the process difficult or the application confusing, feel free to call the office -- we will be pleased to assist you in preparing a winning application!*

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## Middlesex . . . We're On The Way!



It's time to start preparing the Tourism Magazine for 2008.

Rate information will be available shortly.  
If you wish to advertise in the 2008 magazine, please call Bev at  
519.641.6100



## CFDC Office to Expand

The offices of the CFDC of Middlesex County are expanding to better serve our clients. In recent years our service area has experienced tremendous growth, so infrastructure must be renewed to meet our increased needs. This means knocking out walls and expanding into the office directly behind our current location in Kilworth.

The additional space will feature new offices and a larger boardroom, enabling the CFDC and Main Street Middlesex to host workshops such as those being held during Small Business Month in October. With this impressive new investment, we can continue our efforts to build relationships fostering small business success. The work will be completed in late September, when we invite you to drop by and visit our expanded facility.



### About Main Street Middlesex:

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#### In Your Downtown:

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-Newbury-

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-Southwest Middlesex-

Julie Khan (519) 287-5111

Marilyn McCallum (519) 289-2053

Todd Trojand (519) 693-0329

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Andrew Meyer (519) 245-0492

Velta Baumanis (519) 264-9271

-Thames Centre-

Bev Shulman (519) 268-3106

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## Downtown Basic Needs Survey

During August, you may have seen us chatting with residents in our 11 designated downtowns, gathering information for our newest project.

The Basic Needs Survey arose from an offhand comment by a resident claiming they could get everything they needed without leaving their downtown. Inspired, we took up the challenge, setting out to create a list of what could be considered 'basic needs'. Our Main Street committee members were urged to participate by providing suggestions. Watch our website at the end of October for a full rundown of the results!

Local residents spoke enthusiastically about their individual downtowns, and we were delighted to hear of the many readily-accessible amenities. In some instances, they were also keen to list the services and/or businesses that were not presently available, but would be readily welcomed.

**One aspect of the project that really stood out from the beginning was everyone's strong belief that each downtown possessed their own distinctive characteristics; it is our aim to build upon this individuality, helping visualize ways to make their communities unique, interesting and inviting as places to live and work.**



## Main Street Merchandise

Pewter ornaments displaying the Main Street Middlesex logo are now available - decorate for the holidays and show your community spirit at the same time!



For information on how to participate in this valuable business opportunity, contact our office at (519) 641-7190.

## What's New?

Watch our website for the introduction of the *Shop Main Street Middlesex portal*, connecting savvy shoppers with unique local businesses in our designated downtowns. Each organization's information will appear as it presently exists in our database. Please contact our office if you note any errors or omissions.

**Let's all support the great economic impact that results from choosing local independent shops!**