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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CIP Grant Awarded to Optimist Club

*\$4,300 Grant Improves Safety at Youth Centre,
Secures Meeting Hall's Future as an Event Space*

THAMES CENTRE – The Municipality of Thames Centre has awarded a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) Grant to the North Dorchester Optimist Club for \$4,337.45.

This Community Improvement Plan grant was provided to help the Optimist Club make improvements to the fire suppression system in the kitchen of the North Dorchester Optimist Youth Centre at 1653 Richmond Street.

“We are grateful to our Municipality for making this important grant available to the community,” says Judy Andrigo, Treasurer of the Optimist Club. “This grant was critical to the continued use of our kitchen for our monthly breakfasts, fundraising events, and the rentals to community members and various groups who require a functional, up to fire code, and safe kitchen facility.”

The Thames Centre Community Improvement Plan encourages the revitalization and development of private property. It provides financial incentives, such as grants and loans, to eligible landowners and tenants for property improvements that benefit the community.

The Optimist Youth Centre's previous fire suppression system was installed in June 2007 and has since been assessed as obsolete.

"This investment will significantly improve fire safety at the Optimist Youth Centre," says Thames Centre Mayor Sharron McMillan. "Bringing the building up to modern fire code standards will also ensure that residents will continue to enjoy the various breakfast, lunch, and dinner events hosted here will be able to continue for years to come."

Thames Centre CIP Grants

CIP Grants are available for several types of projects, including improving accessibility, energy efficiency, landscaping, tourism diversification, and developing on-farm retail services.

The first round of 2026 CIP Grants applications will be reviewed in February 2026. The application deadline for the next intake of CIP Grant applications is **February 6, 2026**, and can be submitted to planning@thamescentre.on.ca for review.

For more information, including a more thorough explanation of CIP Grants available, please visit our website at <https://www.thamescentre.on.ca/CIP>.

Middlesex County is sharing the cost of the grant with the Municipality of Thames Centre.

"We recognize the importance of investing in communities," says Sue Clarke, Warden of Middlesex County. "We are working to strengthen collaboration with local municipalities and community partners across the County, making sure that Middlesex County is a great place to live, to work, and to invest in."

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