



Community Improvement Plan



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Section 1 Introduction / Background

1.1 Purpose

Community Improvement Plans (CIP) are one of the many sustainable community planning tools found in the *Planning Act*. They can help communities and municipalities address challenges that prevent optimization of areas that are currently underutilized. This tool provides a means of planning and financing development activities that effectively assist in the use, reuse and restoration of lands, buildings and infrastructure. The priority of the Plan is to improve community development and foster economic growth. Council of the Township of North Frontenac adopted the first CIP in 2016 and it has been determined the plan should be updated to include additional programs to provide additional opportunities to improve community development and economic growth.

A CIP is a document that identifies an area or areas of a municipality where, in the opinion of a Municipal Council, through consultation with the public, improvement is desirable because of age, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement, unsuitability of buildings or for any other environmental, social or community economic development reason (Section 28 (1) of the *Planning Act*). For a municipality to have the ability to approve a CIP, it must have policies in its Official Plan that set out where, what, and how these plans should be used.

A CIP is a way to allow municipalities to provide incentives in the form of financial assistance to property owners in defined areas to overcome shortfalls and barriers to improvement of these areas. A CIP also allows a municipality to acquire, rehabilitate and dispose of land and to provide grants to owners and tenants, as well as to undertake infrastructure and public space improvements. CIPs have been proven as an effective option for encouraging change and improvement using a focused approach that allows a municipality to be a partner with private sector property owners.

With recent changes to the *Planning Act*, CIPs can also be used to encourage redevelopment of vacant or abandoned brownfield properties.



Section 2 Introduction / Background

2.1 Background

In 2016, the first Community Improvement Plan (CIP) was implemented in North Frontenac. In preparation for the plan, an exercise was undertaken to determine each settlement area's appropriateness for a CIP. While Plevna was specifically evaluated for its potential, it was noted in the evaluation that, "The population and business community in Plevna is relatively small compared with other places in Frontenac County, so it may make more sense to have a Township-wide CIP for North Frontenac." As a result, the plan focused on Township-wide economic investment with the entirety of North Frontenac identified as the community improvement project area.

Since implementation, the Plan has seen modest uptake of existing incentive programs with the greatest investment occurring through the Façade Improvement Program and Commercial Space Funding initiative. The CIP reduced the costs of a variety of privately-driven projects ranging from permanent business signage, window and door replacement, to accessible washroom and ramp installation. Projects have been undertaken across the Township reaffirming the Township-wide community improvement area.

In July 2017, the County of Frontenac completed an Accommodation Review and Strategy for Growth. The review assessed existing accommodation across the County and provided direction for opportunities to expand accommodation. Section 2.2.2 Community Improvement Plans identified a CIP as an important municipal tool to leverage in supporting the creation of new accommodations in the region with the façade improvement program standing out as an opportunity to support existing accommodations. The amendments to programs contained in this document reflect opportunities for expansion of Recreational Commercial uses and reflect needs identified by the business community.

In 2019, North Frontenac Township Council underwent a strategic planning exercise resulting in the 2019-2022 North Frontenac Strategic Plan. The Plan sets the mission, vision and strategic goals and objectives for the Township with economic/community development identified as the first strategic goal of the Plan. The specific action items and owners identified within economic/community development include:

- Investigate incentive for business (CIP) – EDTF Chair



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- Tourism Expansion and Community Development – EDTF Chair
- Collaborate with North Frontenac Businesses to enhance our community – Mayor

In response to the Strategic Plan and through consultation with local businesses, the Township Economic Development Task Force (EDTF) initiated an update to the CIP in 2019. The EDTF reviewed CIP programs offered by comparable municipalities and identified a need to increase eligible funding to local businesses to further incentivize private investment. The amendments included in the document reflect direction received from local businesses and support business retention and expansion with an emphasis on tourism.

The Town of North Frontenac Community Improvement Plan is a significant step in achieving the Township's economic development goals and supporting a growing community of local businesses.

2.2 Public / Community Benefit

The County of Frontenac implemented an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP) which seeks to ensure growth and development across the County occurs in a sustainable manner respecting the natural environment while ensuring economic and social prosperity. The ICSP includes action items to pursue a sustainable future, of which one of the recommendations is to develop CIPs to promote revitalization. As a tool to achieve sustainability objectives, municipalities can utilize CIPs to provide funding to stimulate improvement of privately owned properties. The intention is to use CIPs to promote economic stimulation and regeneration across the County.

At the local level the County CIP program is intended to achieve improvements of privately owned properties. On a broader scale, the cumulative impacts of improvement across the County will provide benefits to local residents and visitors alike. The CIP program coupled with municipal capital improvements across the County allow for overall improvement within the region and assist in achieving sustainability objectives.



2.3 Public Consultation

The draft CIP was provided to the Economic Development Task Force at their meeting on October 21, 2020 for review and to provide recommendations on the draft. The comments were reviewed by Township Staff and County Planning Staff and incorporated into the document. The draft CIP was provided to Council of the Township of North Frontenac on December 11, 2020. An Open House was held on February 25, 2021 to receive comments from the public. These comments were reviewed by Township Staff and County Planning Staff and amendments were made to the document. A Public Meeting was held on April 16, 2021 to receive comments from the public and Council. The revised CIP was adopted by Township Council on _____, 2021.

2.4 Goal and Objectives

The goals and objectives for the CIP were developed through consultation processes held over the course of the CIP project, and further supplemented through consultation and the goals of the Official Plan.

Based on the consultation sessions, three broad goals were developed: enhancing the appearance of the community and promoting awareness of businesses, promoting commercial vitality to support and sustain the local economy, and increasing overall social equity and public communication.

Goals	Objectives
<p>To enhance the appearance of the community and promote awareness of businesses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop aesthetically pleasing and diverse commercial buildings that reflect the character of the Township and to foster an environment in which people wish to work and live; • To improve the appearance of facades and storefronts and to enhance property and business signage.

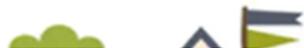


Goals	Objectives
<p>To promote commercial vitality to support and sustain the local economy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support new and existing businesses and offer residents a diverse range of employment opportunities; • To develop appealing destinations for residents and tourists; • To protect, rehabilitate, and enhance the Township’s natural features and heritage sites.
<p>To increase the level of social equity and public communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To foster community building; • To increase the number of accessible businesses in the Township in order to better serve all residents and visitors; • To increase the accessibility of the Township for individuals in all stages of their life.

2.5 Project Area Information

The *Planning Act* requires a municipality to have provisions in its Official Plan on the areas that a CIP can apply to, and requires that the municipality designate a community improvement project area through a bylaw. North Frontenac’s Official Plan allows any part of or the entire municipality to be designated as a community improvement project area.

The public consultation provided participants with an opportunity to identify the specific areas where improvement is required to address existing issues. There was a strong support for a Township-wide Community Improvement Plan to enhance the Township’s natural, cultural, social, and economic environments. It was recognized that the rural nature and large geography of the Township meant that focusing on a specific settlement area would not be as beneficial as a broader plan looking at businesses across the Township.



It is recommended that the Council of the Township of North Frontenac establishes the entire Township as a community improvement project area, and focuses on initiatives that strive towards promoting environmental sustainability, cultural vibrancy, and economic and social development. Eligibility of projects will be based on the criteria listed in this Plan.

Section 2.6 Financial Programs

2.6.1 General Program Requirements

All of the financial incentive programs contained within this CIP are subject to general program requirements as well as the individual requirements of each selected program. The following general conditions guide the administrative implementation of the CIP:

- a. If an Applicant received a grant under the original CIP program, it shall not prevent them from applying under the updated CIP for two additional approved applications per property commencing at the time of adoption of the updated Community Improvement Plan
- b. Prior to the commencement of any works to which the financial incentive program may apply and prior to Application for a building permit (if applicable), an Application for any financial incentive program contained in the CIP must be submitted to and approved by the Chief Administrative Officer of the Township of North Frontenac (CAO);
- c. If the Applicant is not the owner of the property, the Applicant must provide written consent from the owner of the property to make the Application;
- d. An Application for any financial incentive program contained in the CIP must include a detailed description (building size/type, number of stories, construction materials, etc.) of the proposed development, plans, estimates, contracts, reports, pictures and other details as required by the CAO with respect to costs of the project and must conform to the CIP as well as all municipal by-laws, policies, procedures, standards and guidelines, including applicable Official Plan and Zoning By-law requirements and approvals;
- e. Review and evaluation of an Application and supporting materials against program eligibility requirements will be completed by the Manager of Community Development (MCD), with input from the appropriate Manager(s)



- and/or the Building Department, who will then make a recommendation for consideration to the CAO for final approval, based on all criteria being met;
- f. As a condition of Application approval, the Applicant shall be required to enter into a grant agreement with the Township which shall be signed by the Applicant and the CAO. This agreement will specify the terms, duration and default provisions of the incentive to be provided;
 - g. Reimbursement will require original receipts;
 - h. The Township is not responsible for any costs incurred by an Applicant in relation to any of the programs, including without limitation, costs incurred in anticipation of a grant;
 - i. The Township may discontinue any of the programs contained in the CIP at any time, but Applicants with approved grants will still receive said grant, subject to meeting the general and program specific requirements;
 - j. Staff, officials, and/or agents of the Township may inspect any property that is the subject of an Application for any of the financial incentive programs offered by the Township;
 - k. Programs that apply to commercial buildings can also apply to other types of non-residential buildings such as industrial and institutional, unless otherwise stated;
 - l. None of the financial incentive programs will be offered retroactively to improvement projects occurring prior to the implementation of this CIP;
 - m. All Applicants shall be in good standing with regards to all municipal fees and property taxes liable on the property at the time of Application;
 - n. All Applicants shall have and provide a Business Registration or Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) Number;
 - o. In the case of Live/Work Units only costs which directly relate to the commercial portion of the unit are applicable (i.e. building requirements for commercial use not required for residential use);
 - p. This policy does not apply to mobile businesses (i.e. Refreshment Vehicle); and
 - q. This policy does not apply to non-commercial properties who rent structures for short-term accommodations.

2.6.2 Incentive Programs

The financial incentive programs described in this section have been included to specifically target revitalization and rehabilitation efforts appropriate for North Frontenac. These incentive programs can be used individually or in combination by the



landowner/Applicant, with certain restrictions on the maximum amount of funding available. For each of the possible funding programs, a rationale is established for their inclusion in the CIP. It is important to note that these municipal financial incentive programs could be augmented with other federal, provincial, municipal and private sector financial tools and program. Subsection 28(7.3) of the Planning Act provides “The total of the grants and loans made in respect of particular lands and buildings under subsections (7) and (7.2) and the tax assistance as defined in section 365.1 of the *Municipal Act, 2001* or section 333 of the *City of Toronto Act, 2006*, as the case may be, that is provided in respect of the lands and buildings shall not exceed the eligible cost of the community improvement plan with respect to those lands and buildings.”

Eligible Applicants can apply for any of the following incentive programs with the total combined matching grant amount paid by the Township under all programs not to exceed \$7,000 per application. A maximum of two approved applications are permitted per property commencing at the time of adoption of the updated Community Improvement Plan. A maximum of one successful grant application will be approved per property per calendar year. Funds provided are not to be used to pay for the same eligible cost under the separate programs.

1. Façade Improvement Program

Purpose: The Façade Improvement Program is intended to encourage the rehabilitation, repair and/or improvement of commercial buildings to improve the overall aesthetics and character of the community. The program consists of a grant for a portion of the defined eligible costs. As established by the eligibility criteria, improvements, in a broad sense, are activities that contribute to economic development, beautification, quality of life, aesthetic improvements, environmental sustainability, and the creation of a sense of place.

Description: The maximum amount of a grant is \$5,000 or 2/3 of the eligible project costs, whichever is lesser per application.

Eligible Projects: The following renovation/restoration projects will be considered to be eligible projects under this program:

- a. repair or replacement of exterior facades including cladding materials, windows, doors and replacement of roof



- b. repair or repointing of façade masonry and brickwork
- c. installation, repair or replacement of architectural details and features
- d. installation, repair or replacement of awnings or canopies
- e. façade restoration, including painting, cleaning or treatments to improve durability
- f. installation or repair of signage at the place of business in accordance with applicable Township By-laws (excluding portable signage)
- g. installation of lighting (must be consistent with the North Frontenac Lighting Policy)
- h. installation of landscaping
- i. the addition of exterior eating space (excluding portable fixtures)
- j. professional design services required to complete eligible work

Grants are provided once the work has been completed in accordance with the agreement with the Township.

2. Accessibility Enhancements

Purpose:

The purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 is to achieve accessibility for people with disabilities to services, facilities, employment, and buildings. The historic development of communities and buildings did not necessarily recognize the importance of accessible design as we consider it today. CIP funding is available to encourage commercial property owners to retrofit entranceways, other access points, washrooms, parking areas, etc. to ensure facilities and commercial outlets are accessible to all members of the community.

Description:

The maximum amount of a grant is \$5,000 or 2/3 of the eligible project costs, whichever is lesser per application.

Eligibility Projects:

The following renovation/restoration projects will be considered to be eligible projects under this program:

- a. Installation of new automatic doors
- b. Installation of new accessible ramps
- c. Widening of public entryways



- d. Levelling or repairs to pathways/accesses, stairs and parking areas
- e. Accessible signage and lining of parking areas
- f. Constructing accessible washrooms or redevelopment of a washroom to include accessible features
- g. Any combination of the above improvements

Eligible projects must demonstrate to the degree possible conformity with the Ontario Building Code with respect to accessible design.

3. Commercial Space Funding

Purpose: The program provides financial assistance to new or existing businesses for projects creating new commercial/employment opportunities within existing buildings or the expansion of existing buildings or uses on commercial properties. Some existing residential properties may also be desirable for conversion into new businesses to increase the overall business activity in the Township.

Description: The maximum amount of a grant is \$5,000 or 2/3 of the eligible project costs, whichever is lesser per application.

Eligible Projects: The following renovation/restoration projects will be considered to be eligible projects under this program:

- a. Conversion of existing residential uses to commercial uses
- b. Additions to commercial properties
- c. Redevelopment of vacant commercial space
- d. Installation of a commercial septic system for the purpose of expanding a business or bring the system into compliance with current legislation for a Recreational Commercial operation only
- e. New buildings within an existing Tourist Establishment (commercial use) for short-term accommodation
- f. Redevelopment of existing commercial spaces (i.e. reconstructing or renovating existing commercial uses)
- g. Professional service costs (i.e. professional planner, engineer, architect, etc.) required to complete eligible work (i.e. studies, plans, reports, engineering)



Equipment or other movable items are not eligible. The Township may consult with the Frontenac Community Futures Development Corporation (FCFDC) in deciding whether to award the grant.

4. Municipal Fees Grant Program

Purpose: In order to encourage development and rehabilitation of the existing building stock, the Municipal Fees Grant Program is intended to reduce the costs of development and/or rehabilitation that contribute to the quality of the community and support economic development.

Description:

- Application Fee Grant: The maximum amount of a grant is \$2,000 or 2/3 of the eligible municipal planning application and building and demolition permit fees, whichever is lesser per CIP application. A pre-application meeting is required with municipal planning or building staff prior to the application being submitted.
- Professional Services Grant: The maximum amount of a grant is \$5,000 or 2/3 eligible costs, whichever is lesser, to cover the costs of professional services for eligible projects. A pre-application meeting is required with municipal planning or building staff prior to the application being submitted.

Eligible projects:

- a. Conversions to existing residential uses to commercial uses, provided the conversion conforms with the Township's Official Plan and Zoning By-law
- b. Additions to commercial properties
- c. Redevelopment of vacant commercial space
- d. Professional service costs (i.e. professional planner, engineer, architect, etc.) required to complete eligible work (i.e. studies, plans, reports, engineering)
- e. Project eligible under Programs 1-3 if the applicant is required to obtain planning approvals or a building/demolition permit

Eligible Municipal Application fees include:

- a. Official Plan Amendments
- b. Zoning By-Law Amendments
- c. Minor Variance Applications
- d. Site Plan Approval
- e. Building Permit or Demolition Permit, including Sewage System Permits
- f. Review of Performance Level of an Existing On-Site Sewage System



This program may be applied to in conjunction with funding from Programs 1-3, or as a standalone application.

Under this program, all fees are paid upfront by the Applicant. Grants are provided once the work has been completed in accordance with the agreement with the Township, and are conditional upon the approval of the associated building permit or planning application. Should an application to this program be denied by the appropriate approval authority, it will not disqualify the applicant from receiving funding through programs 1, 2 or 3, nor will it prevent an applicant from re-applying to this program.

2.6.3 Other Economic Development Programs

The Frontenac Community Futures Development Corporation (FCFDC) is a non-profit organization funded by the Federal Government that provides a variety of programs and services to support community economic development and small business growth. The FCFDC's Access to Capital Program provides interest free loans for the development of vacant or under-utilized commercial properties, façade improvements and for the purchase and installation of renewable energy where the energy is used for the operation of the business; subject to available funds. The FCFDC will be delivering the Eastern Ontario Development Program should it be renewed by the federal government and businesses and non-profit organizations are encouraged to check the FCFDC's website for updates. For more information on the FCFDC and the services they offer, please visit [Frontenac Community Futures Development Corporation](#).

Other external funding sources may also be available from time to time to assist with community improvement.

Section 2.7 Program Implementation

Prior to submitting an Application, all Applicants shall have a pre-Application consultation with the MCD (in the MCD's absence the CAO) to evaluate the project's eligibility to access the financial programs. The Applicant should present the details of the work to be completed, an estimate of the associated costs to complete the work, a timeline for completion, and plans or drawings illustrating the details of the project. The



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MCD will provide comments to the CAO with respect to whether the project (or which components of the work) meets the objectives of the CIP and which incentive programs could be accessed. If a project is determined to be eligible, an Application will be accepted by the CAO. It should be noted that acceptance of the Application does not necessarily mean program approval.

Application submission materials will generally include a detailed work plan and estimated costs to complete the eligible work. However, at the discretion of the CAO, additional submission materials may be required to assist in the review of the Application. Applications that are determined to meet the objectives of the CIP will be recommended for approval by the MCD. A recommending report will be prepared by the MCD and submitted to the CAO for review and consideration. The Applicant will be advised regarding approval or non-approval within 15 business days of the receipt of a complete Application.

In the event of any dispute between the Applicant and Township staff with respect to approval or non-approval of the application, the completed works or the amount of grant to be paid the dispute shall be presented by the Applicant and Township staff to the Council of the Township of North Frontenac for resolution.

Upon approval an agreement will be enacted between the Township and the Applicant outlining the nature of the works to be completed and the details of the financial incentive(s) and timeframe. Generally the payments of grants will occur once the work has been completed as outlined in the agreement to the satisfaction of the CAO. Figure 2 illustrates the administrative steps involved in accessing the CIP program.

Figure 2: Community Improvement Plan Administrative Process



A	Pre consultation and Application Submission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant presents project to the MCD; • Staff provides comments regarding project eligibility and required application submission materials; • Applicant submits complete application.
2.	Application Review and Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MCD reviews application in relation to CIP objectives and recommends to the CAO approval or denial with reasons.
3.	Application Approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the application is approved by the Township’s CAO, upon approval, an agreement is executed between the Township and the applicant.
4.	Payment of Funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant demonstrates to the MCD that work has been completed as outlined in the agreement (original receipts will be required); • Funds are distributed to applicant.

Section 2.8 Municipally Initiated Projects

Based on the input received at the public consultations, it is recommended that the Township and its funding partners consider implementing the following types of projects:

- a. Enhancing signage across the Township and ensuring signage is consistent;
- b. Bridging communication gaps between the residents and the Township through additional marketing techniques. For example, business award programs or community building contests;
- c. Raising awareness about Township programs and events, and grant opportunities for businesses;
- d. Trail enhancement and increase amount of trail promotion (e.g. mapping);
- e. Supporting community projects that would enhance the Township’s natural and cultural heritage;
- f. Investigate the provision of seniors housing through the County’s Seniors Housing Task Force.



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In order to keep the momentum of the Plan going, potential projects will be discussed during the Township’s annual budget deliberations.

The Township may use its CIP to purchase and rehabilitate land, buildings and structures within the CIP area. This could include projects including but not limited to purchasing land for additional parking, rehabilitating dilapidated buildings, providing seniors housing, and building parkland or other municipal facilities.

Section 2.9 Budget

The total budget for this Community Improvement Plan is \$70,000 contributed from the County of Frontenac, which may be further supplemented by the Township. Funds will generally be directed to the incentive programs on a first come, first served basis, but may also be used for municipally initiated projects. The CIP will be reviewed by the Council of the Township of North Frontenac following a five year period or when all funds have been exhausted, whichever circumstance occurs first.

Section 2.10 Amendments to the CIP

As the CIP is implemented, the Plan may be refined to best achieve the objectives of the Plan. The individual financial incentive programs contained within this CIP can be altered at any time by the Council of the Township of North Frontenac without amendment to the Plan. An expansion of the CIP area or an increase to the value of the financial programs would require amendment of the Plan in accordance with Section 28 of the *Planning Act*. The County of Frontenac is to be consulted when making amendments.

Section 2.11 Marketing the CIP

The successful implementation of the CIP depends on the ability of the initiatives and funding opportunities to be effectively communicated to property owners, business owners, and community organizations. The Township and County will work together to ensure the success of the Plan.



Section 2.12 Monitoring the Plan

This CIP is intended to provide a proactive approach to the revitalization of the Township. As such the success of the program will be measured by the adoption of the programs by private property owners. In order to best meet the needs of potential program participants, the CIP is a flexible document responding to the needs of the participants and changing market conditions. Accordingly, a monitoring program is essential to receive feedback and refine elements of the Plan that would best achieve the objectives of the CIP. The following list provides potential qualitative and quantitative measures the CAO could track to monitor the effectiveness of the program and provide a basis for future amendments:

- a. Monitor the number of approved Applications by financial program type;
- b. Monitor the number of unsuccessful Applications and determine the reason for project ineligibility;
- c. Monitor the total value of funding allocated by financial program type;
- d. Monitor the additional square footage of commercial spaces created through the programs;
- e. Monitor the improvement of the visual appearance of the community as result of projects accessing the funding programs;
- f. Encourage program participants to submit comments based on their experience accessing program funding;
- g. Annually report on the success of the Plan.

Based on information from these monitoring procedures, required revisions to the CIP may become evident over time. Amendments to the Plan shall be approved by Council of the Township of North Frontenac; however the County of Frontenac is to be consulted regarding any proposed changes.

Conclusion

This CIP is a comprehensive framework specifically designed for the Township of North Frontenac to improve and provide economic and visual improvements. This Plan reflects the vision of the Council of the Township of North Frontenac and the community for the community improvement project area. The Plan establishes revitalization goals



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and priorities for action. Along with Township initiated project, it is anticipated that this Plan will provide a tool to stimulate private investment in revitalization efforts.

The approval of this Plan will provide the legislative basis and context for this comprehensive set of programs.



Appendix A

Legislative Authority and Policy Basis

Community improvement planning is intended to provide opportunities for municipalities to contribute financial incentives to private development projects which provide broader community benefits. The Provincial Policy Statement, *Municipal Act*, and *Planning Act* include provisions that work together to enable municipalities to direct financial incentives towards specific improvement projects. The following provides a review of the policy framework and enabling legislation for the allocation of municipal funds to support and encourage private community improvement projects.

A.1 Provincial Policy Statement, 2020

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) provides policy direction on matters of public interest related to land use and development. The PPS promotes efficient land use and development patterns that support strong, livable and healthy communities, protect the environment and public health and safety, and facilitate economic growth. In terms of the development of the CIP for North Frontenac, the PPS provides the following direction:

- a. Healthy, integrated and viable rural areas should be supported by:
 - Building upon rural character, and leveraging rural amenities and assets;
 - Promoting regeneration, including the redevelopment of brownfield sites;
 - Encouraging the conservation and redevelopment of existing rural housing stock on rural lands;
 - Using rural infrastructure and public service facilities efficiently;
 - Promoting diversification of the economic base and employment opportunities through goods and services, including value-added products and the sustainable management or use of resources; and
 - Providing opportunities for sustainable and diversified tourism, including leveraging historical, cultural, and natural assets; (Section 1.1.4.1).
- b. In rural areas, rural settlement areas shall be the focus of growth and development and their vitality and regeneration shall be promoted (Section 1.1.4.3).



- c. On rural lands, recreational, tourism and other economic opportunities should be promoted (Section 1.1.5.3) and development that is compatible with the rural landscape and can be sustained by rural service levels should be promoted (Section 1.1.5.4)
- d. Long-term economic prosperity should be supported by:
 - a) Promoting opportunities for economic development and community investment-readiness;
 - b) Maintaining and, where possible, enhancing the vitality and viability of downtowns and main streets;
 - c) Encouraging a sense of place, by promoting well-designed built form and cultural planning, and by conserving features that help define character, including built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes;
 - d) Promoting the redevelopment of brownfield sites;
 - e) Providing opportunities for sustainable tourism development (Section 1.7.1).

Based on these policies, the amendments and revisions of this CIP further seek to enhance the quality and appearance of North Frontenac and provide new business opportunities is consistent with directions established within the PPS.

A.2 Municipal Act

The *Municipal Act* provides rules to regulate the provision of financial or other similar incentives to private business operations, a practice known as ‘bonusing’. The purpose of the legislation is to ensure public finances are accounted for and distributed in a transparent manner. Section 106 of the *Municipal Act* prohibits municipalities from assisting “...directly or indirectly any manufacturing business other industrial or commercial enterprise through the granting of bonuses for that purpose” (Section 106(1)).

Such prohibited actions include:

- a. “Giving or lending any property of the municipality, including money;
- b. Guaranteeing borrowing;
- c. Leasing or selling any property of the municipality at below fair market value; or
- d. Giving a total or partial exemption from any levy, charge or fee.”



The *Municipal Act* S. 106 (3) does provide exceptions to these regulations and allows municipalities to make grants and loans for the purposes of carrying out a CIP that has come into effect in accordance with S. 28 (6), (7) and (7.2) of the *Planning Act*. Exceptions are also provided under S. 365.1 of the *Municipal Act*, permitting municipalities to offer tax relief to properties for which a phase two environmental site assessment has been conducted, and which is located within a CIP. The rationale for this form of tax relief is that an improved property will lead to an increased tax assessment in turn providing future increased tax revenue while at the same time remediating and/or redeveloping deteriorated sites.

A.3 Planning Act

Section 28 of the *Planning Act* provides the enabling legislation for a municipality to implement a Community Improvement Plan. Community improvement is defined as “the planning or re-planning, design or redesign, re-subdivision, clearance, development or redevelopment, construction, reconstruction and rehabilitation, improvement of energy efficiency, or any of them, of a community improvement project area, and the provision of such residential, commercial, industrial, public, recreational, institutional, religious, charitable or other uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements or facilities, or spaces therefor, as may be appropriate or necessary ” (Section 28 (1)).

In order to create a Community Improvement Plan and allocate funds accordingly, a municipality must identify a community improvement project area which 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” (Section 28 (1)).

Once a community improvement project area is defined in the Official Plan and through a by-law, a municipality may prepare and implement a Community Improvement Plan. Through the *Planning Act* a municipality may:

- a. Acquire, grade, clear, hold or otherwise prepare the land for community improvement (Section 28(3));
- b. Construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on land acquired or held by it in conformity with the CIP (Section 28(6a));



- c. Sell, lease or otherwise dispose of any land acquired or held by it in the community improvement project area to any person or governmental authority for use in conformity with the CIP (Section 28(6b)); and
- d. Make grants, in conformity with the CIP, to registered owners, assessed owners and tenants of lands and buildings.

Section 28 (7.1) identifies costs eligible for CIP financing which may include: “costs related to environmental site assessment, environmental remediation, 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.”

Section 69 (1) and (2) of the *Planning Act* allow a municipality to establish a tariff of fees for the processing of planning matters, which are intended to meet the anticipated cost of processing planning applications. This section also permits a municipality to waive or reduce these fees if it is satisfied that it would be “unreasonable to require payment”. This provision can be incorporated into a CIP as an incentive program to encourage economic growth.

A.4 County of Frontenac Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP)

The County of Frontenac’s Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP) was approved in 2009. Two primary documents make up the ICSP, “Directions for our Future” and “Sustainable Actions”. Directions for Our Future documents a County-wide vision towards a sustainable future in the Frontenacs while the purpose of the Sustainable Actions component of the ICSP is to ensure ongoing implementation of the Plan through projects, policies and actions that support sustainability. The Plan provides vision for thirteen focus areas, of which community improvement planning touches on Land Use Planning, Economic Development and Infrastructure. As a result, the Plan recommends the development of a Community Improvement Plan pilot project.

The Plan has recognized Community Improvement Plans as an important priority throughout its annual versions. The approach is to be coordinated, with the County acting as a facilitator to ensure consistency between this CIP and future plans for other local areas.



The ICSP requires responsible and proactive decision making. The North Frontenac CIP process will utilize the direction of the ICSP to develop a plan that emphasizes both the Council of the Township of North Frontenac and the community's desired approach and direction.

A.5 County of Frontenac Official Plan, 2016

The first Official Plan for the County of Frontenac was approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing in 2016. The Plan creates a framework for guiding land use changes in the County over a 20 year period by protecting and managing the natural environment, direction and influencing growth patterns and facilitating the vision of the County as expressed through its residents. The Plan is focused on the six themes of economic sustainability, growth management, community building, housing and social services, heritage and culture and environmental sustainability and is a major cornerstone in the implementation of Directions for Our Future, the County's sustainability plan.

Section 4.5 of the Official Plan recognizes that Community Improvement Plans are one of many sustainable community planning tools found in the *Planning Act*. County Council has recognized that there are a number of communities that could potentially benefit from a Plan and have invested in these communities through the County Sustainability Plan. The objectives in the Official Plan including the continuation of the County working with the Townships to provide for the on-going maintenance, improvement, rehabilitation and upgrading of residential, commercial, recreational, and industrial areas in the region. The Plan supports the development of Community Improvement Plans in all areas of the Frontenac, where focused in one community or village or covering a larger area, including an entire Township. To support community revitalization and economic development, County Council will provide financial investment for at least one CIP in each of the four Townships and may consider additional investments.

A.6 Township of North Frontenac Official Plan, 2017

The Official Plan for the Township of North Frontenac has a broad range of policies encouraging economic development and community improvement. The policies within



the Official Plan manifest themselves in the goals and initiatives of the Community Improvement Plans.

According to the Community Improvement Plan policies in the Township Official Plan, the community improvement project area is recognized as the entire municipality. Designation of the Community Improvement Project Area can be based on a variety of subject areas including energy efficiency, environmental, social and economic development and affordable housing.

Other objectives from the Official Plan that support community improvement are described below with reference to specific incentive programs.

1. Diversifying the Local Economy

- **2.3.1** *To develop a healthy diversified local economy, which provides for local employment opportunities and a balanced tax base between residential, commercial and industrial property classes. Appropriate commercial and industrial development will be encouraged in order to achieve this objective.*
- The Commercial Space Funding Program could assist the Township by transforming existing housing into new space that could support new local businesses or add additional space to support expansion of existing business.
- The Township could also create a new facilities or enhance existing programs to support business development.

2. Enhancing Hamlet and Waterfront Development Areas

- **4.1.3** *An existing residential property may be converted to a commercial use or may be a mix of commercial and residential uses. Council will encourage development to occur on existing approved lots before considering new development. Opportunities for intensification and redevelopment shall also be promoted where it can be accommodated.*
- **4.10.5** *To encourage development which will contribute to the attraction and viability of the waterfront for visitors and residents. To support the continued viability of resorts, campgrounds, other commercial uses, as important elements in the North Frontenac economy. To support redevelopment opportunities of waterfront properties while maintaining the character of the waterfront area.*



- The CIP can help support businesses in settlement areas undergo renovations or improvements to attract new customers.

3. Social Equity

- **4.3.2** *Accessibility by those with physical and other challenges will be considered in the review and approval of all development.*
- Council of the Township of North Frontenac supports a number of policies relating to accessibility enhancements and the consideration of accessibility in all development. The accessibility grants would help support accessibility improvements to businesses serving residents and visitors to the Township.

4. Economic Development

- **2.3.19** *The intent of Council is to strengthen the economic base by building on the assets that a remote and pristine area has to offer. This will take the form of encouraging residential development that is environmentally sustainable, by encouraging home based and small businesses, by fostering the expansion of the service industry sector and by conserving the areas renewable and non-renewable resources for their economic benefit.*
- The proposed incentive programs will help to encourage economic development and build on the Township's existing assets.

Implementation of the Plan can be undertaken through a variety of means, including the municipal acquisition of land and/or buildings for community improvement, rehabilitation of properties, offering grants to pay for the cost of rehabilitation lands and buildings, tax assistance, and participation in senior level government programs.

