



INNOVATE NORTH
NORTH MIDDLESEX COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN



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North Middlesex Community Improvement Plan

Prepared for: Municipality of North Middlesex
Prepared by: Re:Public Urbanism

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Ailsa Craig

Welcome to...
Our Village

MUNICIPALITY OF NORTH MIDDLES

SECTION 1.0 | INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Municipality of North Middlesex undertook the preparation of this Community Improvement Plan (CIP) between Fall 2020 to Spring 2021 with the goal of creating a toolbox to support economic development and provide direction for municipal community improvement projects. While the Municipality had previously implemented programs and policies associated with community improvement, this document is the first official CIP in North Middlesex. Building on the roots of the Façade Improvement Program (2018) and Community Development Fund Policy (2019), this Plan will allow the Municipality to provide more opportunities to incentivize economic development across a range of sectors; reinforce a culture of strong municipal leadership; and assist with improvements to the public/private realms in strategic areas of the community.

This Plan also represents the collective vision for community improvement in North Middlesex, established through the collaborative efforts of Council, Staff, local business community, and the general public.

1.2 PURPOSE & PLANNING HORIZON

This document is intended to facilitate improvements to public and private buildings and lands in strategic areas of North Middlesex, replacing and expanding on the existing Façade Improvement Program (2018). Private investment in the community will be encouraged and supported through the provision of a range of diverse financial incentive streams outlined in Section 5.0. The municipal leadership initiatives outlined in Section 6.0 seek to provide inspiration for Council-led projects to complement private investment. Through the complementary administration of financial incentives and implementation of the municipal leadership strategy, the

guiding principles and goals for community improvement outlined in Section 4.0 of this plan will be realized.

The intended implementation timeline or “planning horizon” for this plan is 10 years, however, it is recommended that Council review the plan every 3 years (or as determined necessary) to address changes in community priorities, adjust financial incentives, amend any goals or municipal initiatives, and/or to ensure consistency with updates to applicable legislation throughout the lifespan of the plan. Notwithstanding this, minor annual reviews/changes may be carried out on an as-needed basis to address technical changes or other minor items. Further information on changes/amendments to the plan is provided in Section 8.0.

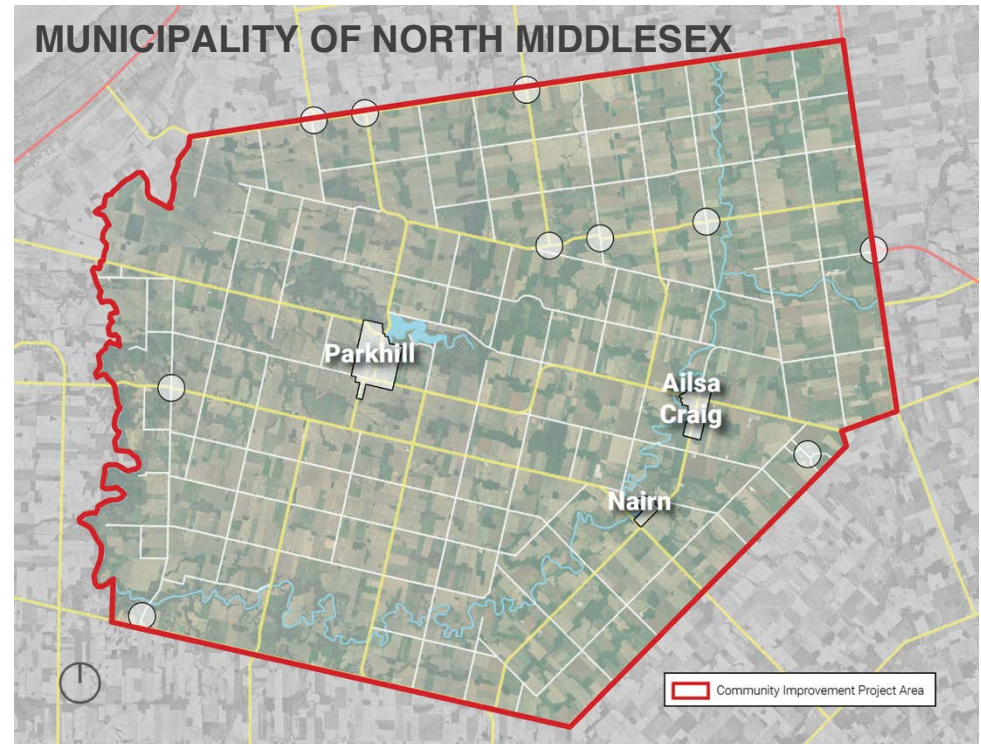
1.3 WHAT IS A CIP?

A CIP is a powerful tool used by Ontario municipalities to facilitate the (re)development, rehabilitation, and/or revitalization of areas in a municipality. This is done through the identification a Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA), where the plan is directed, encouraging projects that will benefit the public realm and the general improvement of the area. Most CIPs provide a selection of financial incentive programs specially tailored to encourage property or building owners to undertake improvement projects that are aligned with the goals and vision of the plan. Without a CIP, municipalities are otherwise largely prohibited under the *Municipal Act* from offering financial assistance to the private sector in any way. More information on the legislative framework is provided in Section 2.0.

1.4 COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT AREA (CIPA)

Pursuant to Section 28 of the Planning Act, the Municipality must identify a Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA) to which the CIP will apply. Early in the stages of developing the plan, it was made clear that Council was seeking a tool to support both urban and rural community improvement initiatives in the Municipality – this was further echoed by community stakeholders, businesses, and staff in the early stages of developing the plan. Accordingly, the entirety of the Municipality of North Middlesex is designated a Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA) in an effort to balance financial support between the urban and rural areas. **Figure 1** (opposite) outlines the CIPA to which this Plan applies.

Notwithstanding the designation of the entire Municipality as a CIPA, not all financial incentive programs are available everywhere. Careful attention should be paid to the eligible areas to which each program applies. Further information is provided in Section 5.0, and specific mapping overlays are provided in **Appendix A** where applicable.





SECTION 2.0 | LEGISLATIVE & POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 PROVINCIAL LEGISLATION

This section of the CIP identifies and summarizes the legislative and planning framework under which this document has been developed to assist the reader in understanding the CIP’s policy and regulatory context.

2.1.1 Municipal Act, S.O. 2001, c.25

Under Section 106 of the *Municipal Act*, a municipality cannot provide assistance to any manufacturing business or other industrial or commercial enterprise through the granting of “bonuses”. Assistance in the form of a “bonus” includes:

- giving or loaning any municipal property or money;
- guaranteeing the borrowing, leasing or selling any municipal property below fair market value; and/or,
- giving partial or full exemption from any levy, charge, or fee (i.e. development charges, building permit fees).

Notwithstanding this, Section 106 (3) states that municipalities can provide assistance in the carrying out of a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) adopted under Section 28 of the Planning Act.

2.1.2 Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13

Section 28 of the Planning Act outlines the authority and means by which community improvement planning is to be undertaken by Ontario municipalities. This section states that where there is an official plan in effect within a municipality that contains provisions respecting community improvement, a municipal council may designate all or part of the area covered by the official plan as a Community Improvement Project Area or “CIPA”. Council may then prepare and adopt a Community

Improvement Plan (CIP) to help facilitate the improvement goals of the municipality.

Section 28 also outlines the actions that a municipality may undertake for the purposes of carrying out a CIP, which include:

- constructing, repairing, rehabilitating or improving buildings on land owned by the municipality;
- selling, leasing or disposing of any buildings or land owned by the municipality; and/or
- creating and issuing grants, loans, or other incentive programs to owners and tenants of buildings and lands within the CIPA, to assist with eligible improvements covered under the CIP.

When considering the development of incentives, the Act is considerably flexible in how municipalities can structure and administer their programs. However it does outline some general criteria for what constitutes an “eligible cost” for funding under a CIP, which municipalities must adhere to. These “eligible costs” generally include:

- environmental site assessment or remediation;
- development/redevelopment;
- construction and reconstruction of lands and buildings for rehabilitation purposes; and,
- provision of energy efficient uses, building, structures, works, improvements, or facilities.

2.1.3 Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O 1990, c. O.18

Under Section 39 of the Ontario Heritage Act, a municipal council may pass by-laws providing for grants and/or loans to

the owner of a heritage property designated under Part IV of the Act for the purpose of paying for all or part of the costs associated with altering the property. CIPs commonly contain goals and incentive programming related to the preservation or enhancement of heritage buildings and properties within the community, designated or not.

2.1.4 Development Charges Act, S.O. 1997, c.27

Under Section 5 of the Development Charges Act, in developing the rules for a development charge by-law, a municipal council may opt to include provisions for full or partial exemptions for certain types of development and/or for the phasing-in of development charges. It will be important to ensure that any CIP incentive programming geared towards relieving part or all of a development charge is coordinated with the community’s development charges by-law and rules. Recent amendments to the Development Charges Act (effective June 1, 2024) introduced province-wide exemptions and discounts for specific housing types in an effort to strengthen tools for the creation of affordable housing:

- Full DC exemption for non-profit housing;
- Full DC exemption for affordable and select attainable residential units
- Discounts of up to 25% for qualifying purpose-built rental units.

As a result, the Municipality should ensure that its Development Charge By-law reflects the legislative exemptions.

2.2 PROVINCIAL PLANNING STATEMENT (2024)

The Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) sets out Ontario’s province-wide land use policy priorities and requires that all

planning decisions be consistent with its policies. The PPS supports community improvement by encouraging compact, mixed-use development, reinvestment in main streets and downtowns, brownfield redevelopment, and infrastructure efficiency. It promotes long-term economic growth and complete communities by directing municipalities to strategically invest in areas that can accommodate growth and renewal. Community Improvement Plans are explicitly supported as tools for achieving these objectives and aligning local efforts with provincial interests.

CIPs are being leveraged more commonly by municipalities to support addressing housing needs/affordability by helping fund expansions in the supply and mix of housing, including affordable, rental, and supportive housing options, as well as climate resilient improvements.

2.3 MIDDLESEX COUNTY OFFICIAL PLAN (2006)

Section 2.3.4 of the County OP establishes economic development as an important component of growth management in the County and the importance of protecting the agricultural base while supporting new diverse economic development opportunities. To this end, the County is committed to actions such as encouraging local municipalities to promote a high standard of urban design to create healthy communities which attract investment. Section 2.3.5 of the OP outlines the general policies related to growth management throughout the County. Under this section, local municipalities are directed to prepare detailed policies to guide the redevelopment of areas in transition or land that is underutilized. Further to this, Section 3.2.3 encourages local municipalities to include general development policies in their local official plans dealing with a range of issues, including community improvement matters. Section 4.6 of the County

OP states that local municipal councils shall ensure that the public is adequately notified and consulted with during the course of preparing and considering planning policies, studies, and strategies associated with community improvement plans. The creation and implementation of a CIP is an action encouraged under the Middlesex County Official Plan.

2.4 MIDDLESEX COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN (2014-2019) & 2021 UPDATE

The County’s economic development strategy establishes three interrelated vision statements focused on; the County leveraging its strategic location in the attraction of new business and skilled workers while retaining its community image; leveraging attractive lifestyle choice, economic vitality, and natural environment of the County; and, fostering diversification efforts to enhance the regional economy. Further to this, there are three main goals established under the strategy to help achieve the overall vision pertaining to creating a supportive environment for business and investment, an active and targeted approach to business growth and attraction, and a commitment to community sustainability and growth. One of the key recommended actions arising out of the strategy is the exploration of opportunities to offer community improvement-like initiatives geared towards the agricultural sector and its diversification.

2.5 NORTH MIDDLESEX OFFICIAL PLAN 2003 (2018 CONSOLIDATION)

Section 9.4 of the Official Plan outlines the policies respecting community improvement planning, project area selection and prioritisation, as well as implementation. This includes policies

respecting the designation of a CIPA and criteria for doing so, process with which a CIP may be developed, and involvement of the Community in the development of the CIP. Section 9.4 further outlines the means with which Council may implement the CIP, which include but are not limited to:

- Participation in senior government programs that provide financial assistance for community improvement;
- Encouragement of infill development in appropriate areas;
- Encourage the rehabilitation of private buildings by advising property owners of government subsidies and programs, and assisting where possible, the property owners in obtaining grants;
- Where conflicting land uses occur in Community Improvement Areas, endeavouring to limit the expansion of these uses and encouraging and/or assisting in the relocation of the offensive use;
- Where contamination exists, offer tax equivalent grants or loans to facilitate site remediation; and/or
- Support the historic preservation of significant buildings and sites through application of the Ontario Heritage Act;
- Provision of grants and loans by the Municipality to registered owners, assessed owners and tenants of lands and buildings within a Community Improvement project area, and their assigns, for the purpose of paying for eligible community improvement projects.

It is important to note that despite these policies, the Official Plan has not undergone a comprehensive review since 2009. As such, it is anticipated that the Municipality will be

undertaking a comprehensive review and modernization of the OP in the future, which may incorporate amendments respecting community improvement policies.

2.6 NORTH MIDDLESEX STRATEGIC PLAN (2018)

North Middlesex’s 2018-2028 Strategic Plan provides guidance to the organization/community over a 10-year period. This document, particularly the findings of the consultation programme, were referenced in the development of a vision for the CIP. While much of the strategic direction in this document is high-level and organizational in scope, some of the specific priorities/items as they related to the preparation of the CIP included:

- Developing a community improvement plan
- Offering high-quality public spaces and places through investment in streetscaping, wayfinding, lighting, as well as the development of community design guidelines
- Providing incentives for affordable assisted living
- Improving non-vehicular connections throughout the community
- Identifying cultural heritage landscapes and architectural heritage, and encourage preservation
- Promote arts, culture, and heritage resources as tourism attractions
- Supporting the development of Ailsa Craig and Parkhill downtowns as vibrant and thriving areas, as well as supporting rural economic activity/diversity

2.7 NORTH MIDDLESEX ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (2015)

At the time of the CIPs adoption, the North Middlesex Economic Development Strategy provided a shared, community-based economic vision and strategic priorities to bolster the community’s future growth and prosperity. Some of the relevant strategic priorities and recommended initiatives as they related to the development of the CIP at the time of writing included:

Strategic Priorities

- Build the economic development capacity in North Middlesex;
- Ensure the community is attractive to new residents and businesses;
- Business retention and expansion and supporting entrepreneurship.

Recommended Initiatives

- Establish business grant or loan programs for new and existing business funded in part with Vibrancy Fund money;
- Establish a community improvement plan targeting downtown development;
- Explore loans and funding mechanisms supportive of value added agriculture;
- Develop tax incentives/promotions to encourage residential development through a community improvement plan.

2.8 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FUND POLICY (2019)

The second of two grant programs funded through the CVF Policy. The purpose of this program is to financially assist community groups and organizations that offers programs or projects which will provide a benefit to improve the well-being of the Municipality. The intent is for the funding to benefit the general public without a profit motive or to support specific interests of an organization. This program will continue to operate independent, but complementary to the CIP following its adoption.

2.9 DEVELOPMENT CHARGES BY-LAW

The general purpose for which development charges (DCs) are imposed by the Municipality is to ensure that the capital cost of the meeting growth related demands or burden on municipal services does not place an excessive financial burden on the Municipality of North Middlesex or its existing taxpayers while at the same time ensuring new taxpayers contribute no more than the net capital cost attributable to providing the current level of municipal services. DCs are generally applicable throughout Parkhill, Ailsa Craig, Nairn, as well as anywhere the development of land will increase the need for services and/or as part of applications under the Planning Act.



McIntyre & Sons
JEWELLERS

PHARMACY

No Parking

WANT

SECTION 3.0 | THE CASE FOR COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT

3.1 MUNICIPAL CONTEXT

North Middlesex is strategically located in what has been referred to as the “Goldilocks Zone” – not too close and not too far from larger urban centres such as Sarnia, London, and Stratford, as well as Lake Huron, all of which can be reached in under an hour of driving. In this regard, North Middlesex has been able to enjoy the benefits of being situated along major economic/tourism routes via provincial highways and an extensive county roads system, while maintaining a relatively strong cultural identity and “small town feel” since amalgamation in 2001. The Municipality boasts a population of approximately 6,700, with the majority of those taking up residence in the Parkhill, Ailsa Craig, and Nairn settlement areas. The remainder of the population is distributed throughout the 10 hamlet settlements and rural area. North Middlesex enjoys a healthy economy anchored in agriculture/agriculture-service industries, with a great mix of commercial activity, institutional facilities, and public amenities focused in and around the community cores of Parkhill and Ailsa Craig.

3.2 BACKGROUND REPORT & STUDY AREAS

The entirety of North Middlesex was explored and analysed as part of the Background Report prepared for the Plan, which was integral in establishing the scope and vision for the development of the CIP. As part of this process, the Municipality was broken down into four distinct Study Areas of Parkhill, Ailsa Craig, Nairn, and the Rural Area. Assessments were carried out for each of these study areas to assist in determining baseline conditions, as well as the community improvement opportunities and challenges that exist on the ground in the community. These assessments were generally focused on generally focused on investigating; Land Use &

Built Forms; Streetscape & Mobility; Public/Open Space and Recreation; and Culture & Heritage. Further information on these assessments can be found in the Background Report.

- **Parkhill** - Centrally located, Parkhill is the largest community in North Middlesex and contains the highest concentration of economic activity. The Municipality’s offices are located in the downtown core, situated at the King and Parkhill Main Street intersection, from which a bustling commercial backbone extends north-south along the Parkhill Main Street corridor to connect each end of the Town.
- **Ailsa Craig** - The Village of Ailsa Craig is the second largest centre in North Middlesex, historically developed along the former Grand Trunk Railway. The community is centred around Ailsa Craig Main Street, which serves as another commercial/economic core in the Municipality and gateway for those travelling west. The Craigwiel Gardens long-term care facility is a cornerstone of local employment, while the mix of amenities such as Lions Park, library, and museums help to foster a strong close-knit community culture.
- **Nairn** - Nairn is the third settlement area in the Municipality, largely dominated by residential uses. Notwithstanding this, there is some limited commercial/development activity in the community and opportunity for infill/redevelopment along the County Road corridors. It is likely that Nairn will continue to grow as a residential centre, supported by continued economic growth and amenity in Ailsa Craig and Parkhill.
- **Rural Area** – The majority of the rural area is made up of a strong agricultural user base, with some mixed rural

residential, commercial, and industrial uses throughout. A robust County and Local road network serve the rural area well, including the Municipality’s 10 hamlet clusters of residential/institutional uses. A number of natural heritage amenities such as the Parkhill Dam reservoir, north of Parkhill, and Ausable River, meandering through the west, south, and east stretches of the municipality, offer strong potential for new community/commercial recreation or conservation opportunities.

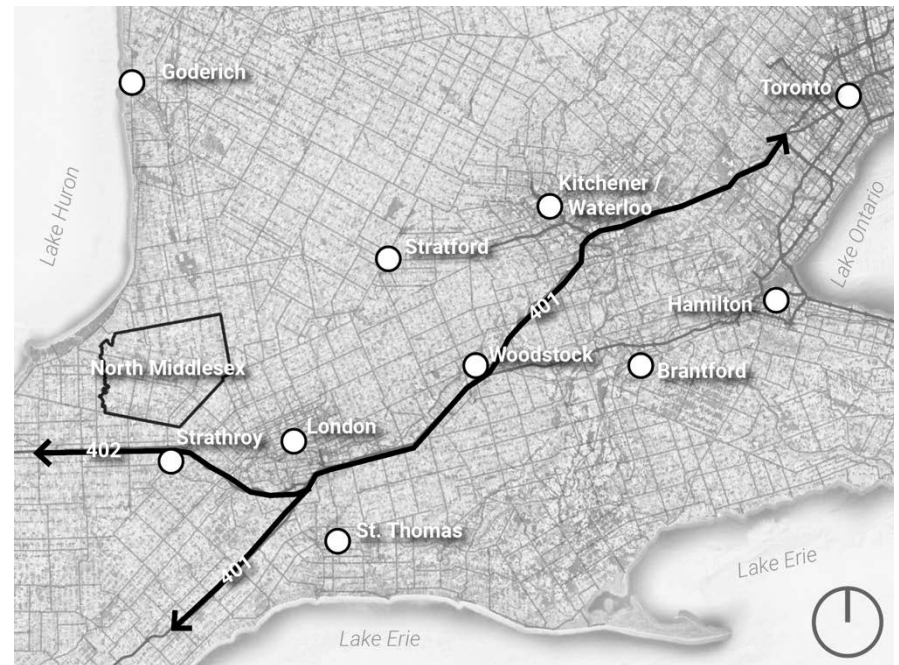
3.3 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

No one understands community needs better than the people who live and do business there – accordingly, beyond the statutory requirements for public engagement under the *Planning Act*, a consultation strategy was followed for the project to ensure that the needs and priorities of the community were reflected early in the development of the Plan. This strategy centred around two stakeholder workshops and a community survey. The first stakeholder workshop and community online survey were designed to coincide with the development of the background report, each intended to help review challenges and priorities related to community improvement in North Middlesex. Following the completion of the Background Report, a second workshop was held to review its findings, as well as further scope the types of incentives and municipal initiatives that would be included in this Plan.

During its final drafting stages, the Plan was circulated to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) for review and comment, in accordance with the requirements of the *Planning Act*. The draft document was also presented to the general public at a virtual open house on May 12, 2021,

wherein attendees were invited to discuss the plan with members of the project team, staff, Council, and the community. The final consultation event for the project consisted of a statutory public meeting, also held virtually by the Municipality of North Middlesex on May 19, 2021. It should be noted that all consultation events were held virtually in lieu of in-person events, in order to respect public health regulations and safety during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic in 2020/2021.

These final events allowed the project team to not only obtain feedback from the community, but also ensure any issues were addressed prior to Council adoption.



3.4 COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

The following list comprises some of the main priorities identified in consultation with community stakeholders and through a physical assessment of each of the Study Areas outlined in Section 3.2. These priorities ultimately helped shape the Guiding Principles and Goals in Section 4.0:

- Ensuring the community is able to maintain and build on the vitality of downtowns, core areas, & corridors
- Promoting economic development and diversity throughout the community
- Addressing “evolution of the community” – with growth comes change – how do we evolve but maintain our identity?
- The need to support our strong agriculture & rural foundations
- Taking advantage of our existing recreation, landmarks, and natural amenities
- Supporting more available/affordable housing
- Leveraging our regional location to benefit the community
- The need to preserve and enhance heritage assets
- Protecting our built heritage
- Fostering new and improved connections between and within our communities
- Enhanced public/community spaces
- Attracting new businesses while maintaining support for existing ones
- Improving walkability/safety of our main corridors
- Supporting rural opportunities for economic development
- Instilling a culture of pride and high-quality spaces through design/development
- Revitalizing downtown cores
- Finding new ways to bring life to the cores



SECTION 4.0 | GUIDING PRINCIPLES & GOALS

4.1 GUIDING PRINCIPLES & GOALS

The following 5 Guiding Principles were identified in consultation with the community to ensure the Plan effectively addresses the priorities outlined in Section 3.0. Each of the following Guiding Principles contain more specific goals that will assist in the review of applications for funding, provide measures of success in the annual evaluation of the plan, and help with overall plan implementation.



4.1.1 MAIN STREET BEAUTIFICATION & REVITALIZATION

Parkhill, Ailsa Craig, and the majority of North Middlesex relies on the success of main streets as the commercial backbone for the community. However, while these streets boast some beautiful and interesting facades, business presence, and charm, they are generally lacking in permanent green/streetscaping elements to improve pedestrian experience and would benefit from traditional main street revitalization improvements (i.e. landscaping, facade improvements, signage treatments, etc.). In addition to the visual appearance of the main corridors, there are also significant opportunities to improve the function of public spaces/vacant lots along the roadways, and further improve building facades.

Goal: Improve the physical and visual quality of buildings, properties, and streetscapes along main corridors

Goal: Increase walkability and multi-modal capacity of the streetscapes in the community cores

4.1.2 RURAL ECONOMIC HEALTH & VITALITY

North Middlesex has a strong foundation and history built in agriculture and the rural economy. It is therefore crucial that the CIP assists with the evolution of this economy - particularly through resources to assist with on-farm diversified uses, alternative sources of farm income, farmgate businesses, and agri-tourism. It is also important to remember that, in addition to agriculture, the rural area is home to a number of natural heritage sites, open space, and a great network of recreational-focused amenities and businesses that can help to further bolster the rural economy.

Goal: Create more opportunities for rural economic development to complement the existing agricultural base and balance urban investment





4.1.3 HOUSING CHOICE & AFFORDABILITY

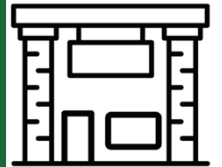
One of the clear challenges noted by the community and local stakeholders has been the lack of attainable and diverse housing in the community. The lack of availability is beginning to lead to steady increases in home prices and rents in the community, creating challenges for those in search of suitable housing. This CIP seeks to assist in breaking this cycle by encouraging the creation of a wider range of housing types (particularly rentals) in order to improve choice and affordability.

Goal: Increase opportunities for more affordable housing (Additional Residential Units, affordable housing, etc.)

Goal: Support more diverse and dense housing options, including mixed-use development in the settlement areas

4.1.4 MAINTAINING COMMUNITY CHARACTER

There is a rich foundation of built and social heritage in the community that has evolved over the years - it will be important to preserve this heritage as the community grows (specifically in the historic downtown cores). In implementing the CIP, the North Middlesex should strive to balance opportunities to protect older built forms with new development and enhance the existing education and storytelling present in local plaques, murals, and signage. Careful consideration should be given in the future to guidelines or prescriptive policies to ensure the community does not lose this important identity as it grows.



Goal: Preserve and enhance historical buildings and features in the community (whether designated or not)

Goal: Create a stronger and more defined sense of “Place” in the downtown of Parkhill and Ailsa Craig



4.1.5 MORE IN THE CORE!

Parkhill and Ailsa Craig are both notable stops for travellers to and from Grand Bend, Strathroy, Stratford, Sarnia, and even the United States. The CIP seeks to transform these “travellers” into “visitors”, wherein North Middlesex is the destination! This can be done through the improvement and enhancement of existing civic spaces, diversification of businesses/attractions, building community connections, and promotion of cultural events to foster the creation of a distinct identity in the core.

Goal: Reduce the number of vacant or underutilized sites/buildings in the community

Goal: Increase the number of businesses and services provided in the core of the community

Goal: Create new or enhance existing community parks, civic spaces, and other amenities, and their connections throughout the community.



Historic

Parkhill

Edith Parkhill

SECTION 5.0 | FINANCIAL INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

5.1 BEAUTIFICATION PROGRAM



5.1.1 PURPOSE

The Beautification Program is intended to assist and encourage property owners to undertake visual improvements to their buildings and/or sites to improve the overall character of core areas in the community. Funding through this program will be geared toward balancing a mix of historical and new construction/architectural styles in order to maintain a balanced community identity.

5.1.2 ELIGIBLE AREAS

The Beautification Program shall be limited to those buildings/properties located within the following Eligible Areas, as shown in Appendix A:

- Parkhill Settlement Area
 - Parkhill Main Street (County Road 81) Corridor
 - Elginfield Road (County Road 7) Corridor
- Ailsa Craig Settlement Area

- Elginfield Road (County Road 7) Corridor
- Queen Street (County Road 19) Corridor
- Nairn Settlement Area
 - Petty Street (County Road 19) Corridor

Notwithstanding the above, the Municipality of North Middlesex may, in their sole discretion, approve grants and funding for Eligible Projects outside of the Eligible Areas listed above in extenuating circumstances.

5.1.3 AVAILABLE GRANTS & FUNDING

Applicants may apply for funding under one or a combination of the following grants:

1. Construction Costs Matching Grant

Grant equal to 50% of the **Construction Costs** associated with the Eligible Project, up to a maximum of \$10,000.

2. Professional Fees Matching Grant

Grant equal to 50% of the **Professional Fees** associated with the Eligible Project, up to a maximum of \$1,500.

5.1.4 ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

The following non-exhaustive list is intended to provide guidance on the types of projects eligible for funding under the Beautification Program:

- Façade Improvements, such as, but not limited to:
 - painting (including wall murals/art)
 - restoring façade masonry and brickwork
 - restoring architectural features
 - replacing or repairing windows
 - improvement of the appearance of entrances
 - re-design of storefronts
 - installation or repair of canopies and awnings
 - install or repair exterior lighting

- any other façade improvements which may be approved by the Municipality
- Installation, expansion, or renovation of a permitted streetside patio/terrace directly associated with a business;
- New/Improved Signage;
- Landscaping Works, such as but not limited to:
 - Permanent planting beds/greenspaces (in-ground)
 - Semi-permanent/permanent planters/fixtures
- Permanent Artwork (murals, plaques, instalments)

Notwithstanding the above, the determination of an Eligible Project shall be at the sole discretion of the Municipality of North Middlesex.

5.1.5 PROGRAM-SPECIFIC ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The following eligibility criteria is specific to the Beautification Program, and shall apply in addition to the General Eligibility Criteria outlined in Section 5.7:

- The Beautification Program is only available to non-residential buildings/properties, including mixed-use buildings/properties, located within the eligible areas identified in subsection 5.1.3;
- Buildings/properties containing a sole residential use are not eligible for funding;
- Notwithstanding the above, select community/recreational properties may be considered for funding if they are located within a settlement area and are aligned with the guiding principles/goals of the CIP;

- Projects must be directly related to facades and/or site areas which front onto, or are highly visible from, a public right-of-way or other lands legally and reasonably accessible to the general public (i.e. parks, parking lots, laneways, etc.)
- This program is not intended to facilitate end-of-life cycle replacements for building or other materials such as vinyl siding, lightbulb replacement,
- The Eligible Project must be directly associated with a building, property, or use that is open and accessible to the general public, or which provides local employment.

Eligible Project compliance/noncompliance with any or all applicable eligibility criteria shall be determined by the Municipality of North Middlesex in their sole discretion.

5.1.6 ELIGIBLE PROGRAM COMBINATIONS

The grants & funding under this program may be combined with grants and funding from the following programs:

- **5.3 Conversion, Expansion, & Redevelopment Program**
- **5.6 Accessibility Program**

5.2 RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



5.2.1 PURPOSE

The Rural Economic Development Program is intended to provide financial assistance to existing and prospective agricultural/rural business owners for projects that contribute to a diversification of the rural economy. This program is largely focused on providing financial assistance to help facilitate the establishment, expansion, or improvement of on-farm diversified businesses; value added agricultural uses, rural-commercial uses, agri-tourism, and/or other recreation-focused commercial uses that are appropriate for a rural setting. This program is also designed to ensure that Eligible Projects are consistent with the scope of permitted uses in the Provincial Policy Statement, Middlesex County Official Plan, and North Middlesex Official Plan appropriate in a rural setting

5.2.2 ELIGIBLE AREAS

The Rural Economic Development Program shall be limited to those buildings/properties located outside of settlement areas in the Municipality.

Notwithstanding the above, the Municipality of North Middlesex may, in their sole discretion, approve grants and funding for Eligible Projects outside of the Eligible Areas listed above in extenuating circumstances.

5.2.3 AVAILABLE GRANTS & FUNDING

Applicants may apply for funding under one or a combination of the following grants, unless otherwise noted:

1. Interest-Free Loan

Loan equal to **50% of the costs** associated with an Eligible Project, **up to a maximum of \$20,000**. Loan is structured as a secured, interest-free loan, **amortized over 5-years**. Cannot be combined with any other grants in this Program.

2. Construction Costs Matching Grant

Grant equal to **50% of the Construction Costs** associated with the Eligible Project, **up to a maximum of \$10,000**.

3. Planning & Building Fee Grant

100% of the costs of any required **Building Permit and/or Planning Application** required for the Eligible Project, **up to a combined maximum of \$1,500**.

4. Professional Fees Matching Grant

Grant equal to **50% of the Professional Fees** associated with the Eligible Project, **up to a maximum of \$1,500**.

5.2.4 ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Eligible Works generally include those directly associated with the establishment, expansion, or improvement of an on-farm diversified business, value added agricultural use, rural-commercial/industrial use directly related to agriculture, agri-tourism use, and/or other recreation-focused commercial use on a rural property. This program is not intended to fund traditional or standard agricultural uses (standard livestock operations, dairy farms, cash cropping, etc.).

The following non-exhaustive list is intended to provide guidance on the types of projects eligible for funding under the Rural Economic Development Program:

- New building construction and/or additions to an existing building directly associated with the eligible use;
- Works associated with the improvement, redevelopment, renovation, and/or conversion of the ground floor of existing buildings necessary to accommodate the establishment, expansion, or enhancement of an eligible use noted above. Such works may be associated with, but are not limited to:
 - Fire safety
 - Electrical systems
 - Ventilation
 - Plumbing/fixtures
 - Other reasonable works necessary to meet the requirements of the Building Code
 - Renovation and/or redevelopment of the space
- Façade Improvements to an existing building directly associated with an eligible use, such as, but not limited to:
 - painting (including wall murals/art)
 - restoring façade masonry and brickwork

- restoring architectural features
- replacing or repairing windows
- improvement of the appearance of entrances
- re-design of storefronts
- installation or repair of canopies and awnings
- install or repair exterior lighting
- any other façade improvements which may be approved by the Municipality

- New/Improved Signage;
- Installation of new permanent landscape elements such as vegetation/planting beds, trees, hardscaping features (armour stone, paver paths, furniture, rock gardens, etc.), landscape islands within parking areas, and beautification of the site or area directly associated with the business/activity.
- For more information on permitted uses in the agricultural area, value-added agriculture, and on-farm diversified uses, please refer to the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs' (OMAFRA) Publication 851: *Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario's Prime Agricultural Areas*.

Notwithstanding the above, the determination of an Eligible Project shall be at the sole discretion of the Municipality of North Middlesex.

5.2.5 PROGRAM-SPECIFIC ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The following eligibility criteria is specific to the Rural Opportunity Program, and shall apply in addition to the General Eligibility Criteria outlined in Section 5.8:

- Projects must be clearly and directly associated with a bonafide on-farm diversified business, value added

agricultural use, rural-commercial/industrial use directly related to agriculture, agri-tourism use, and/or other recreation-focused commercial use on a rural property;

- Improvements to dwellings / parts of dwellings used as part of a home-based business or other commercial operation are not eligible for funding under this program, unless otherwise approved by the Municipality;
- Funding preference will be given to those projects located along major rural roads/corridors, as determined by the Municipality in its sole discretion
- Projects must be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement and conform to the Middlesex County Official Plan and North Middlesex Official Plan policies respecting permitted uses in agricultural areas
- The Eligible Project must be directly associated with a building, property, or use that is open and accessible to the general public, or which provides local employment;
- Non-permanent or moveable components used by the business, such as appliances, furnishings, interior signage, and light fixtures are not eligible
- Terms of the interest-free loan shall be specified in an agreement with the Municipality.

Eligible Project compliance/noncompliance with any or all applicable eligibility criteria shall be determined by the Municipality of North Middlesex in their sole discretion.

5.2.6 ELIGIBLE PROGRAM COMBINATIONS

The grants & funding under this program may be combined with grants and funding from the following programs:

- **5.6 Accessibility Program**

5.3 CONVERSION, EXPANSION, & REDEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



5.3.1 PURPOSE

This program is intended to support private sector investment in the redevelopment, renovation, and/or expansion of commercial and mixed-use buildings (generally interior) to improve their viability for accommodating a new or expanded commercial/service activity. This program also seeks to support and encourage some limited residential development through the conversion of existing space within a mixed-use building to accommodate new residential units.

5.3.2 ELIGIBLE AREAS

The Conversion, Expansion, & Redevelopment Program shall be limited to those buildings/properties located within the following Eligible Areas:

- Parkhill Settlement Area

- Ailsa Craig Settlement Area
- Nairn Settlement Area

Notwithstanding the above, the Municipality of North Middlesex may, in their sole discretion, approve grants and funding for Eligible Projects outside of the Eligible Areas listed above in extenuating circumstances.

5.3.3 AVAILABLE GRANTS & FUNDING

Applicants may apply for funding under one or a combination of the following grants:

1. Interest-Free Loan

Loan equal to **50% of the costs** associated with an Eligible Project, **up to a maximum of \$20,000**. Loan is structured as a secured, interest-free loan, **amortized over 5-years**. Cannot be combined with any other grants in this Program.

2. Construction Costs Matching Grant

Grant equal to **50% of the Construction Costs** associated with the Eligible Project, **up to a maximum of \$10,000**.

3. Planning & Building Fee Grant

50% of the costs of any required **Building Permit or Planning Application** required for the Eligible Project, **up to a combined maximum of \$5,000**.

4. Professional Fees Matching Grant

Grant equal to **50% of the Professional Fees** associated with the Eligible Project, **up to a maximum of \$2,500**.

5.3.4 ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

The following non-exhaustive list is intended to provide a guidance on the types of projects eligible for funding under the Conversion, Expansion, & Redevelopment Program:

- Works associated with the improvement, redevelopment, renovation, and/or conversion of the ground floor of existing buildings necessary to accommodate the establishment, expansion, or enhancement of a commercial, office, institutional, or mixed-use. Such works may be associated with, but are not limited to:
 - Fire safety
 - Electrical systems
 - Ventilation
 - Plumbing/fixtures
 - Other reasonable works necessary to meet the requirements of the Building Code
 - Renovation and/or redevelopment of the space
- Works associated with the improvement, redevelopment, renovation, and/or conversion of upper storey space (whether vacant, office, commercial or other non-residential use) to convert into new residential units provided that the ground floor space is a commercial or office space;
- Infill development on vacant or partially developed properties, such as but not limited to:
 - New main building construction on a partially developed lot
 - Additions to an existing building, resulting in a minimum 25% increase in gross floor area
- Professional fees for any designs or services reasonably associated with the works above

Notwithstanding the above, the determination of an Eligible Project shall be at the sole discretion of the Municipality of North Middlesex.

5.3.5 PROGRAM-SPECIFIC ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The following eligibility criteria is specific to the Conversion, Expansion, & Redevelopment Program, and shall apply in addition to the General Eligibility Criteria outlined in Section 7.0:

- Program is only available to non-residential and mixed-use properties/buildings;
- Decorative or finishing elements are not eligible under this program (ex. painting, finished flooring surfaces, drywall, etc.);
- Non-permanent or moveable components used by the business, such as appliances, furnishings, interior signage, and light fixtures are not eligible;
- This program is not intended to support greenfield development - new development is generally not to be supported under this program;
- Residential-only buildings/properties are not eligible;
- Conversion of ground-level non-residential floor space to residential is not eligible for funding under this program
- The Eligible Project must be directly associated with a building, property, or use that is open and accessible to the general public, or which provides local employment.
- Terms of the interest-free loan shall be specified in an agreement with the Municipality.

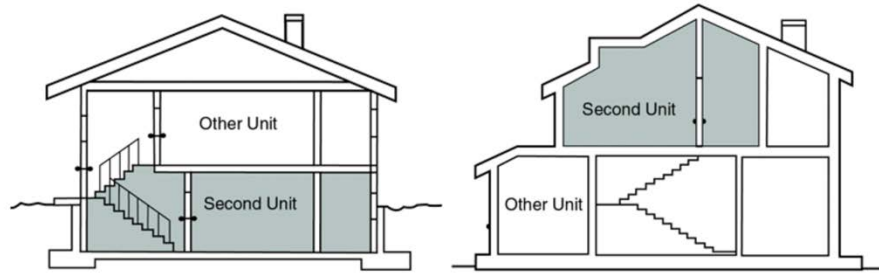
Eligible Project compliance/noncompliance with any or all applicable eligibility criteria shall be determined by the Municipality of North Middlesex in their sole discretion.

5.3.6 ELIGIBLE PROGRAM COMBINATIONS

The grants & funding under this program may be combined with grants and funding from the following programs:

- **5.1 Beautification Program**
- **5.6 Accessibility Program**
- **5.7 Affordable Rental Housing Program**

5.4 ADDITIONAL RESIDENTIAL UNIT PROGRAM



5.4.1 PURPOSE

This program is intended to encourage the creation of new residential (rental) units in the Municipality in an effort to help diversify the housing base, as well as provide more affordable housing options. This program is also intended to assist property owners with the costs associated with bringing non-compliant units up to code to legalize existing units and ensure the safety and wellbeing of tenants is maintained.

5.4.2 ELIGIBLE AREAS

The Additional Residential Unit Program shall be limited to those buildings/properties located within the following Eligible Areas:

- Parkhill Settlement Area
- Ailsa Craig Settlement Area
- Nairn Settlement Area

Notwithstanding the above, the Municipality of North Middlesex may, in their sole discretion, approve grants and funding for Eligible Projects outside of the Eligible Areas listed above in extenuating circumstances.

5.4.3 AVAILABLE GRANTS & FUNDING

Applicants may apply for funding under one or a combination of the following grants,

1. **Construction Costs Matching Grant**
Grant equal to **50% of the Construction Costs** associated with the Eligible Project, **up to a maximum of \$10,000.**
2. **Planning & Building Fee Grant**
Up to **50%** of the costs of any required **Building Permit or Planning Application** required for the Eligible Project, **up to a maximum of \$2,500.**
3. **Professional Fees Matching Grant**
Grant equal to **50% of the Professional Fees** associated with the Eligible Project, **up to a maximum of \$1,500.**

5.4.4 ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

The following non-exhaustive list is intended to provide guidance on the types of projects eligible for funding under the Beautification Program:

- Creation of a new additional residential rental unit/secondary suite on a residential property within an existing dwelling;
- Works or upgrades that may be required to achieve compliance with building/fire codes and/or the zoning by-law, in order to "legalize" an existing residential rental unit

Notwithstanding the above, the determination of an Eligible Project shall be at the sole discretion of the Municipality of North Middlesex.

5.4.5 PROGRAM-SPECIFIC ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The following eligibility criteria is specific to the Beautification Program, and shall apply in addition to the General Eligibility Criteria outlined in Section 7.0:

- Prior to any grant monies being issued, the additional residential unit must comply with the Zoning By-law, and any other applicable codes/legislation;
- Costs associated with cosmetic, material lifecycle replacement, or otherwise visual improvements to an existing dwelling or additional residential unit are not eligible for funding;

Eligible Project compliance/noncompliance with any or all applicable eligibility criteria shall be determined by the Municipality of North Middlesex in their sole discretion.

5.4.6 ELIGIBLE PROGRAM COMBINATIONS

The grants & funding under this program shall not be combined with any of the other programs in this CIP.

5.5 ACCESSIBILITY PROGRAM



5.5.1 PURPOSE

This program is intended to support owners and businesses in undertaking barrier-free/general accessibility improvements to their properties and/or buildings. This program will be administered alongside public realm accessibility improvements undertaken by the Municipality to improve mobility for everyone in the community.

5.5.2 ELIGIBLE AREAS

The grants and funding available under the Accessibility Program shall be available to all non-residential buildings/properties in the Municipality which are regularly open to and/or accessible to the general public or provide local employment.

Notwithstanding the above, the Municipality of North Middlesex may, in their sole discretion, approve grants and funding for Eligible Projects outside of the Eligible Areas listed above in extenuating circumstances.

5.5.3 AVAILABLE GRANTS & FUNDING

Applicants may apply for funding under one or a combination of the following grants,

1. **Construction Costs Matching Grant**
Grant equal to **50% of the Construction Costs** associated with the Eligible Project, **up to a maximum of \$10,000.**
2. **Planning & Building Fee Grant**
Up to **100%** of the costs of any required **Building Permit & Planning Application** required for the Eligible Project, **up to \$1,500.**
3. **Professional Fees Matching Grant**
Grant equal to **50% of the Professional Fees** associated with the Eligible Project, **up to a maximum of \$1,500.**

5.5.4 ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

The following non-exhaustive list is intended to provide guidance on the types of projects eligible for funding under the Accessibility Program:

- Works undertaken to improve barrier-free accessibility and/or otherwise allows the building or site to achieve or exceed standards for code compliance with respect to accessibility, such as but not limited to:
 - Installation of wheelchair ramps;
 - Improvements to site/building circulation;
 - Creation or improvement of on-site barrier-free parking spaces;
 - Barrier-free improvement/retrofitting of washroom facilities; and/or,
 - General storefront accessibility improvements as approved by the Municipality.

Notwithstanding the above, the determination of an Eligible Project shall be at the sole discretion of the Municipality of North Middlesex.

- **5.7 Affordable Rental Housing Unit Program** (if the property is mixed-use)

5.5.5 PROGRAM-SPECIFIC ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The following eligibility criteria is specific to the Accessibility Program, and shall apply in addition to the General Eligibility Criteria outlined in Section 7.0:

- Program is only available to non-residential or mixed-use properties/buildings;
- Residential-only buildings/properties are not eligible
- Improvements shall generally be permanent (i.e. not moveable/removable), unless permitted by the Municipality in its sole discretion
- The Eligible Project must be directly associated with those parts/areas of a building, property, or use that is open and accessible to the general public, or which provides local employment.

Eligible Project compliance/noncompliance with any or all applicable eligibility criteria shall be determined by the Municipality of North Middlesex in their sole discretion.

5.5.6 ELIGIBLE PROGRAM COMBINATIONS

The grants & funding under this program may be combined with grants and funding from the following programs:

- **5.1 Beautification Program**
- **5.2 Rural Economic Development Program**
- **5.3 Conversion, Expansion, & Redevelopment Program**

5.6 BROWNFIELD STUDY PROGRAM



5.6.1 PURPOSE

The Brownfield Study Program is intended to provide assistance with the costs of investigating the scope and nature of contamination on known or perceived brownfield sites. The main goal of this program is to provide better information to the property owner, prospective developer(s), and greater community respecting the type of contamination present and remediation costs anticipated for redevelopment.

5.6.2 ELIGIBLE AREAS

The Brownfield Program shall be limited to those buildings/properties located within the following Eligible Areas:

- Parkhill Settlement Area
- Ailsa Craig Settlement Area
- Nairn Settlement Area

Notwithstanding the above, the Municipality of North Middlesex may, in their sole discretion, approve grants and funding for

Eligible Projects outside of the Eligible Areas listed above in extenuating circumstances.

5.6.3 AVAILABLE GRANTS & FUNDING

Applicants may apply for funding under one or a combination of the following grants,

1. Study Fees Grant

- a) Grant equal to **50% of the costs of a Phase I ESA, up to a maximum of \$3,000;**

AND / OR

- b) Grant equal to **50% of the cost of any study(ies) listed in 5.6.4 below, up to a combined maximum of \$10,000;**

up to a combined maximum of \$13,000.

5.6.4 ELIGIBLE STUDIES

The following studies are eligible for funding through the Brownfield Study Program:

- Phase I & II Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs);
- A Designated Substances and Hazardous Materials Survey;
- A Remedial Work Plan; and,
- A Risk Assessment/Management Plan.

Notwithstanding the above, the determination of an Eligible Project shall be at the sole discretion of the Municipality of North Middlesex.

5.6.5 PROGRAM-SPECIFIC ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The following eligibility criteria is specific to the Beautification Program, and shall apply in addition to the General Eligibility Criteria outlined in Section 7.0:

- A maximum of two (2) studies may be funded per project.
- Program is only available to properties where the proposed development is non-residential or mixed-use. Properties where the proposed development is a residential-only use are not eligible unless permitted by the Municipality in its sole discretion;
- Environmental study grants will only be offered on eligible properties where there is potential for renovation, expansion, or adaptive reuse of the buildings on the property, and/or development / redevelopment of the property. Applicants must clearly demonstrate their legitimate intention to undertake one of these activities on an eligible property (i.e. detailed project description, concept plan, financial information/business plan), to the satisfaction of the Municipality in its sole discretion.
- Applications for a Phase II ESA must be accompanied by a Phase I ESA completed by a Qualified Person (QP) (as defined by the Environmental Protection Act and Ontario Regulation (O. Reg) 153/04) that demonstrates the property is suspected of environmental contamination and that preparation of a Phase II ESA is recommended.
- Applications for a Remedial Work Plan/Risk Assessment/Risk Management Plan must be accompanied by:

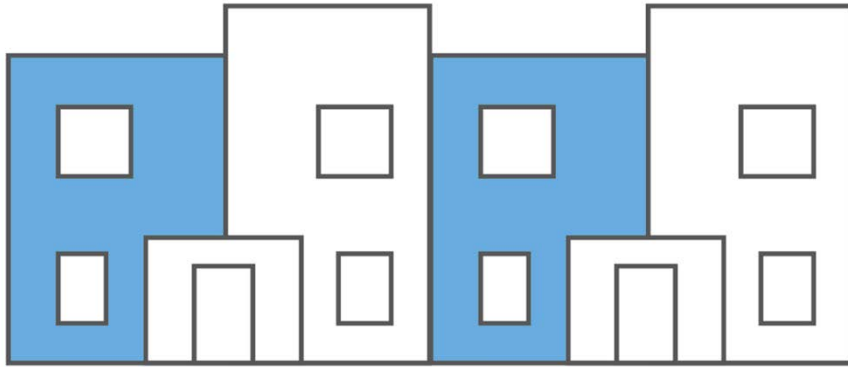
- a Phase I ESA completed by a QP that demonstrates the property is suspected of environmental contamination and that preparation of a Phase II ESA is recommended; and,
- a Phase II ESA prepared by a QP that demonstrates that, as of the date the Phase II ESA was completed, the property did not meet the required standards under subparagraph 4i of Section 168.4(1) of the Environmental Protection Act to permit a Record of Site Condition (RSC) to be filed in the Environmental Site Registry for the proposed use of the property.
- One (1) electronic and one (1) hard copy for each study funded through the Brownfield Study Program shall be submitted to the Municipality for review upon completion. The Municipality shall have the right to hold, disseminate, distribute, and otherwise utilize the findings of the study(ies) for the purposes of facilitating or promoting the future remediation or redevelopment of the subject property.

Eligible Project compliance/noncompliance with any or all applicable eligibility criteria shall be determined by the Municipality of North Middlesex in their sole discretion.

5.6.6 ELIGIBLE PROGRAM COMBINATIONS

The grants & funding under this program may not be combined with any of the other programs in this CIP.

5.7 AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING UNIT PROGRAM



5.7.1 PURPOSE

Similar to the Additional Residential Unit Program, the Affordable Rental Housing Unit Program is intended to encourage the creation of new affordable rental units in the Municipality to help diversify the housing base and provide more housing options. This will be accomplished through a combination of financial grants, municipal fee relief, and tax increment incentives, helping to offset the revenue losses that housing providers experience when incorporating affordable units in their developments. The Municipality and development community will be encouraged to coordinate any prospective affordable housing projects with local/regional housing service providers or agencies (ex. London & Middlesex Community Housing).

For the purpose of administrating this program, the Municipality will determine and publish an annual statement of Average Market Rent (AMR) for each of the following units, to be updated as-needed:

- Bachelor
- 1-Bedroom
- 2-Bedroom
- 3+ Bedroom

5.7.2 ELIGIBLE AREAS

The Additional Residential Unit Program shall be limited to those buildings/properties located within the following Eligible Areas:

- Parkhill Settlement Area
- Ailsa Craig Settlement Area
- Nairn Settlement Area

Notwithstanding the above, the Municipality of North Middlesex may, in their sole discretion, approve grants and funding for Eligible Projects outside of the Eligible Areas listed above in extenuating circumstances.

5.7.3 AVAILABLE GRANTS & FUNDING

Applicants may apply for funding under one or a combination of the following grants,

1. Construction Costs Matching Grant

Grant amount determined in accordance with the level of affordability achieved, which is measured as a percentage of the current Average Market Rent (AMR) for the respective unit type/size, as determined by the Municipality of North Middlesex and shown in the table below.

Affordability Level	Percentage of AMR	Max Grant Amount
Near-Market Unit	100% to 120%	\$5,000 per unit
Affordable Unit	<100%	\$10,000 per unit

2. Planning & Building Fee Grant

Grant equal to 100% of the costs of any required Building Permit or Planning Application required for the Eligible Project, up to a maximum of \$5,000 for the entire project.

3. Professional Fees Matching Grant

Grant equal to 50% of the Professional Fees associated with the Eligible Project, up to a maximum of \$2,500, for the entire project.

4. Tax Increment Grant (TIG)

The total annual grant offered under the Tax Increment Grant (TIG) will be tied to the number of rental housing units provided within each level of affordability, the combined annual maximum of which shall not exceed 50% of the tax increment.

TIG amounts will be determined in accordance with the level of affordability achieved, which is measured as a percentage of the current Average Market Rent (AMR) for the respective unit type/size, as determined by the Municipality of North Middlesex and shown in the table below.

Affordability Level	Percentage of AMR	Max Grant Amount	Grant Period
Near-Market	100% to 120%	\$1,500 per unit per year	Minimum 10 Years
Affordable	<100%	\$3,000 per unit per year	

The Municipality of North Middlesex shall maintain full discretion in the determination of Average Market Rent (AMR) based on unit size/type and the maximum rent permitted to qualify for each Affordability Level described above.

5.7.4 ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

The following non-exhaustive list is intended to provide guidance on the types of projects eligible for funding under the Affordable Rental Housing Unit Program:

- Development or redevelopment resulting in the creation of one or more new rental housing units on a property where at least 15% of units, with a minimum of one, are rented at or below Near-Market Rent as defined in this program. Any calculation of the 15% shall be rounded to the nearest whole number;

Notwithstanding the above, the determination of an Eligible Project shall be at the sole discretion of the Municipality of North Middlesex.

5.7.5 PROGRAM-SPECIFIC ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The following eligibility criteria is specific to the Affordable Rental Housing Unit Program, and shall apply in addition to the General Eligibility Criteria outlined in Section 5.9:

- Registered owners of lands and buildings must enter into an agreement with the Municipality outlining the obligations and responsibilities of the owner, including but not limited to the criteria listed in this section.
- A minimum of 15% of the total rental housing units in the development must be rented at or below Near-Market for a minimum period of 10 years from occupancy.

- If any unit(s) change in their affordability level but remain eligible for funding under this program, the grant amount(s) may be adjusted accordingly. If the units are no longer deemed to be affordable, the Municipality may cancel the annual grants paid under this program and/or may require past grant funding, plus interest, to become repayable to the Municipality in full.
- During tenancy, the housing provider must agree not to increase the rent during the affordability period by more than the prevailing rent increase guideline established for each calendar year pursuant to the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 or any successor legislation or the rental rates established through the agreement, whichever is less. However, the rent rate established through the agreement may be adjusted to the current year during unit turnover.
- The total combined annual maximum grant offered under the Tax Increment Grant (TIG) component shall not exceed 50% of the tax increment as defined below:

Tax Increment: *The incremental increase in property taxes generated by an eligible project. Determined as the difference between pre- and post-project completion municipal property taxes levied as a result of the revaluation of the property by Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC).*

- Tenancy for Affordable Units should be coordinated with the City of London Housing Access Centre (HAC) to ensure those most in need of housing have priority access, based on wait list or other available data deemed appropriate.

- Any housing unit (affordable or not) within a development supported under this program shall not be used as a short-term rental for the duration of the grant period.
- Prior to the payment of any TIG grants, the following must be satisfied:
 - The development is complete and occupancy permits have been issued;
 - The property has been reassessed by MPAC;
 - Property taxes for the respective year have been paid in full, and each year subsequent;
 - The Municipality of North Middlesex has confirmed the rent levels are in accordance with the requirements of the CIP and any funding agreement(s).

Eligible Project compliance/noncompliance with any or all applicable eligibility criteria shall be determined by the North Middlesex in their sole discretion.

5.7.6 ELIGIBLE PROGRAM COMBINATIONS

The grants & funding under this program may be combined with grants and funding from the following programs:

- **5.3 Conversion, Expansion, & Redevelopment Program**
- **5.5 Accessibility Program** (if the property is mixed-use)

5.8 RENTAL HOUSING RETROFIT PROGRAM



5.8.1 PURPOSE

The Rental Housing Retrofit Program is intended to incentivize sustainability, energy efficiency, and climate-resilient upgrades to existing multi-unit residential rental buildings, including both market and affordable units. By supporting improvements such as high-performance building envelopes, efficient HVAC systems, and renewable energy installations, the program aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve tenant comfort, lower operating costs, and extend the life of buildings. This program is designed to complement existing provincial and federal funding opportunities, encouraging applicants to “stack” funding where permitted to maximize impact.

5.8.2 ELIGIBLE AREAS

The Rental Housing Retrofit Program shall be limited to those buildings/properties located within the following Eligible Areas:

- Parkhill Settlement Area
- Ailsa Craig Settlement Area
- Nairn Settlement Area

Notwithstanding the above, the Municipality of North Middlesex may, in their sole discretion, approve grants and funding for

Eligible Projects outside of the Eligible Areas listed above in extenuating circumstances.

5.8.3 AVAILABLE GRANTS & FUNDING

Applicants may apply for funding under one or a combination of the following grants,

1. Construction Costs Matching Grant

Grant equal to **50% of the Construction Costs** associated with the Eligible Project, **up to a maximum of \$10,000.**

5.8.4 ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Projects must include retrofits or upgrades to a rental housing unit(s) that directly improve building sustainability, climate resilience, or energy efficiency. Eligible works may include:

- Implementation of tight building envelopes with high levels of insulation and airtightness.
- Installation of efficient HVAC systems, selected based on building design requirements.
- Use of high-performance windows with optimal orientation and thermal resistance, and shading to reduce summer heat gain.
- Installation of high-performance lighting systems, such as LED, and lighting controls (occupancy/daylight sensors).
- Upgrading to efficient water heating systems and ENERGY STAR- \mathcal{A} E (or equivalent) appliances.
- Use of light-coloured or permeable exterior materials to reduce heat island effect.
- Incorporation of renewable energy systems (e.g., solar panels) or natural ventilation strategies.

- Integration of smart building technologies to improve energy performance and monitoring.
- Structural integrity upgrades, accessibility retrofits, or purely aesthetic improvements are not eligible under this program but may be eligible under other CIP programs.

Notwithstanding the above, the determination of an Eligible Project shall be at the sole discretion of the Municipality of North Middlesex.

5.8.5 PROGRAM-SPECIFIC ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The following eligibility criteria is specific to the Rental Housing Retrofit Program, and shall apply in addition to the General Eligibility Criteria outlined in Section 5.9:

- Only residential buildings and mixed-use buildings containing a legal rental housing units are eligible. For a mixed-use building, the Municipality may adjust the final grant amount to ensure that funding is applied only to those residential portions of the building/project.
- Applicants must disclose all other sources of funding for the project. The Municipality may adjust the final grant amount to ensure total funding from all sources does not exceed the eligible project costs.

Eligible Project compliance/noncompliance with any or all applicable eligibility criteria shall be determined by the Municipality of North Middlesex in their sole discretion.

5.8.6 ELIGIBLE PROGRAM COMBINATIONS

The grants & funding under this program may be combined with grants and funding from the following programs:

- 5.1 Beautification Program
- 5.3 Conversion, Expansion, & Redevelopment Program
- 5.5 Accessibility Program
- 5.7 Affordable Rental Housing Unit Program

5.9 GENERAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The following general eligibility requirements are applicable to all CIP funding applications, in addition to any program-specific criteria, and must be satisfied in order for a project to be eligible for grant funding.

5.9.1 COMPLETE APPLICATION

All applications for CIP funding must be complete to the satisfaction of the Municipality. In order to be deemed complete, applications may be required to include some or all of the following, to the satisfaction of the Municipality:

- Original copy of all required application forms signed and completed;
- A minimum of two (2) cost estimates/quotes for the proposed works, provided by a qualified source (*example: project contractor*). A detailed breakdown of costs per project/phase may be required;
- Drawings, renderings, or other design information as determined necessary by the Municipality for the proposed works (plot plan, elevations, renderings, floor plans, etc.);
- Current/recent photos of the existing property and building(s)/area(s) that are the subject of the proposed works;
- Any historical information or documents available (as necessary);
- A detailed description as to how the project is consistent with the guiding principles and contributes to the achieving the community improvement goals of the Plan, outlined in Section 4.0;

- Other supporting materials such as, but not limited to work plans, applicable reports (traffic impact, inspection report, etc.), public funding sources, and/or approvals, that may be required to supplement the application, as determined by the Municipality in its sole discretion.

5.9.2 APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Applicants must be the owner of the property that is the subject of the application for CIP funding. If the applicant is not the owner of the lands, they must provide written the consent of the owner(s) to submit the application on their behalf. Please note all registered owners of the subject property must provide written authorization for the submission of an application.

5.9.3 CONSISTENCY WITH GUIDING PRINCIPLES & GOALS

All proposed works shall be consistent with the guiding principles and contribute to achieving the goals outlined in Section 4.0 of this Plan, to the satisfaction of the Municipality in its sole discretion.

5.9.4 OBSERVABLE & PERMANENT IMPROVEMENT

All proposed projects shall represent an observable improvement to the property and/or building; lifecycle replacement of existing materials, fixtures, structures, paving, etc. are not eligible for funding under the program. Proposed works must constitute a permanent improvement, to the satisfaction of the Municipality in its sole discretion.

5.9.5 COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT AREA

All proposed works must be located within the *Community Improvement Project Area* in order to be eligible for funding under the CIP.

5.9.6 MAXIMUM GRANT FUNDING AMOUNTS

Notwithstanding the limits outlined in the individual incentive programs, under no circumstances will the total amount of financial incentives issued under one or more programs in this plan exceed the total eligible costs of a project.

5.9.7 INCENTIVE PROGRAM COMBINATIONS

Where a proposed project meets the eligibility requirements for more than one incentive program, applicants may apply for grants under one or a combination of incentive programs, unless otherwise specified in the incentive program. Notwithstanding this, under no circumstances will the same works be funded under two or more separate grant programs (i.e. “double-dipping”).

5.9.8 GOOD STANDING

Properties in tax arrears and/or having outstanding municipal bills (water, wastewater) are ineligible for funding. All applicants shall be in good standing with regard to any municipal fees or other levies liable on the property/building.

Properties having any issues with noncompliance, outstanding Work Orders (Fire, Building) and/or Zoning Orders are ineligible for financial incentives under this plan. Notwithstanding this, if the proposal is directly associated with eligible works that would allow the improvements to reach compliance, the application may be accepted.

Applicants who are currently involved in active litigation with the Municipality are ineligible for financial incentives under this Plan.

5.9.9 CONFORMITY WITH APPLICABLE BY-LAWS, POLICIES, GUIDELINES, & LEGISLATION

Proposed works must conform to the Middlesex County Official Plan, North Middlesex Official Plan, North Middlesex Zoning By-law, and any other applicable planning legislation/documents.

Proposed works shall be carried out in accordance with, or exceed, the applicable minimum requirements of the Ontario Building Code and Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

Conformity with any applicable by-laws, policies, guidelines, and/or legislation shall be determined by the Municipality of North Middlesex in its sole discretion.

5.9.10 ADHERENCE TO APPROVED PROJECT

Project works approved for incentive funding under the CIP must be carried out and completed in accordance with the description of project provided in the application and associated supporting materials. Should any works, in the opinion of the Municipality, be inconsistent with the original description of the project, the Municipality may delay, reduce, or otherwise cancel any approved incentives and may require the applicant to repay any incentives dispersed to date.

5.9.11 WORKS COMPLETED PRIOR TO FUNDING APPROVAL

Those parts of projects or site works commenced and/or completed prior to the submission and approval of an application shall be generally ineligible for funding unless otherwise determined eligible by the Municipality in its sole discretion. Notwithstanding this, part or all of the remaining works of a project that has already been started may be

considered eligible for funding at the discretion of the Municipality.

5.9.12 DISCLOSURE OF OTHER PUBLIC FUNDING SOURCES

As part of any application for financial incentives, applicants must disclose all other public sources of funding received and/or anticipated for the project.

5.9.13 REQUIREMENT TO OBTAIN APPROVALS OR PERMITS

Where applicable, the release of grant funding shall be subject to the issuance of any permits or approvals required for the proposed works (i.e. building permit, rezoning, minor variance, etc.).



SECTION 6.0 | MUNICIPAL LEADERSHIP INITIATIVES

The following municipal leadership initiatives are based on the priorities that were identified by the Municipality and community during the background stages of developing the Plan. These recommended initiatives are largely intended to provide inspiration to North Middlesex Council for the undertaking of separate actions/projects that complement and build-on community improvement, and the guiding principles/goals of the Plan. Notwithstanding this, nothing in this Section or Plan is intended to commit the Municipality, Council, or any other public authority to funding or supporting the following initiatives. Council will maintain full discretion to determine whether to pursue any of the following initiatives.

6.1 STREETScape IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY



6.1.1 OVERVIEW

The development of a streetscape improvement strategy would assist the community in identifying challenges within the public realm of the main corridors through the community and exploring solutions/interventions to address these challenges. Examples of interventions or improvements could include; further beautification and greenscaping along main streets; hardscaping projects like sidewalk widening/improvements; “road dieting” at certain high-traffic areas to reduce the width of the roadway, making it easier for pedestrians to navigate; or even the introduction of bike/shared lanes along main corridors. Such a strategy would complement the private property investment encouraged in this CIP by guiding Municipal-led improvement projects on public lands/rights-of-way along main paths of travel through the downtowns.

6.1.2 RECOMMENDED TIMEFRAME

Short-term (1-3 years).

6.1.3 CONSIDERATIONS

The following are some example items that a streetscape improvement strategy could focus on/explore:

- Identifying underused spaces within wider rights-of-way to:
 - Introduce bike lanes
 - Widen sidewalks
 - Introduce more greenspace/landscaping/decoration
- Implementing policy to direct better subdivision design as it relates to street design and connectivity
- Explore potential improvements to on-street/off-street parking at key areas
- Investigate opportunities for traffic calming and control to improve relationship between vehicles/non-vehicles
- Identify specific projects (sidewalk widening, road bulb-outs, hardscaping/landscaping) and a roadmap for implementation to improve the streetscape in key commercial/core areas
- Community pilot projects for interventions over limited periods of time (ex. parking space patios)

6.1.4 ROLES & IMPLEMENTATION

The decision to pursue and/or timing of this Municipal Leadership Initiative will be at the sole discretion of the Municipality of North Middlesex Council. Coordination between the Municipality and Middlesex County should be an early priority in the development of a streetscape improvement strategy and/or any associated interventions, as the main targeted corridors are under County jurisdiction.

6.2 MUNICIPAL DESIGN GUIDELINES



6.2.1 OVERVIEW

The development and implementation of design guidelines would assist the Municipality in preserving and enhancing the commercial core areas and main corridors of the community through architectural measures, controls (and guidelines) for buildings related to height, materials, lighting, signage, etc. While traditionally urban in nature, these guidelines may also contemplate less prescriptive rural design considerations related to building siting, landscaping, etc. These guidelines would seek to strike a balance between existing built forms/heritage buildings and new construction, to ensure the identity or character of the community is preserved and well-defined. Furthermore, the guidelines would also be intended to promote and encourage a high standard of quality development and site design, which could eventually be utilized in the review of eligible projects under the CIP.

6.2.2 RECOMMENDED TIMEFRAME

Short to Medium-term (1-5 years). Recommended to be developed after/concurrently with Streetscape Improvement Strategy (if pursued).

6.2.3 CONSIDERATIONS

The design guidelines could be developed in-house, or by a consultant, and would ideally address:

- Different standards/guidelines for rural development and urban development, depending on context and/or applicable area
- “Requirement” vs.” Encouragement” - how prescriptive are the guidelines to be?
- The desired design, form, and character of buildings
- Building materials
- Landscaping standards
- Signage, Lighting, & general wayfinding elements
- Heritage/cultural design elements

6.2.4 ROLES & IMPLEMENTATION

The decision to pursue and/or timing of this Municipal Leadership Initiative will be at the sole discretion of the Municipality of North Middlesex Council. It will be important to consult with the general public, businesses, and development community early in the creation of design guidelines to ensure “buy-in”. Middlesex County should also be involved/consulted with throughout the process of developing any such guidelines, given the importance of the County road system, and volume of development served by it.

6.3 WAYFINDING IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY/POLICIES



6.3.1 OVERVIEW

Good wayfinding can accomplish a lot for a community as these elements assist locals and visitors alike in easily finding community landmarks or amenities; they can add character to simple street signs in a downtown core; improve access to businesses/services; and can help foster better physical connections throughout the community. However, achieving a good wayfinding network in a community is not accidental, it involves a deliberate, collaborative approach to creating a functional and interesting network with the community. One of the best ways in which wayfinding can be improved in a community is through the development of a strategy to do just that: a strategy that evaluates the current level and quality of wayfinding elements, identifies challenges and areas for improvement, and puts forth an action plan for implementation.

6.3.2 RECOMMENDED TIMEFRAME

Short to Medium-term (1-5 years)

6.3.3 CONSIDERATIONS

The strategy and/or policies could be developed in-house, or by a consultant, and may involve:

- A review the current baseline conditions of wayfinding – similar to an asset inventory/management exercise, existing features and assets should be identified,

catalogued, and evaluated. This info would not only identify any areas for improvement with the existing features, but also highlight some missing links or gaps in the network.

- An exploration into best practices for improved signage and other community navigation elements that break from the traditional, mostly utilitarian wayfinding elements employed in many communities
- Ensuring consistency with any design guidelines or streetscape improvement strategies.
- Working with the community to develop a central “rolodex” of businesses, heritage buildings/sites, public services, parks, recreational/natural amenities, or other community features and points of interest
- Identifying specific improvements to existing public wayfinding elements (consistent “welcome” signage designs and landscaping elements for settlement area gateways, community maps, etc.))
- Improving digital wayfinding elements (maps, directories, etc.), and finding a way to bridge these with physical features

6.3.4 ROLES & IMPLEMENTATION

The decision to pursue and/or timing of this Municipal Leadership Initiative will be at the sole discretion of the Municipality of North Middlesex Council. Again, it will be very important to involve the business and development community, as well as the general public and other local agencies in ensuring the wayfinding strategy meets their needs, and is able to achieve a realistic and meaningful level of implementation.

6.4 PARKS, RECREATION, & TRAILS MASTER PLAN



6.4.1 OVERVIEW

There is a rich base of trails, conservation areas, community spaces, and amenities throughout the Municipality; however, at the moment these various places in the community are relatively detached unless they are co-located or within the same settlement area. The development of a Parks, Recreation, & Trails Master Plan would help provide direction for reconnecting the communities of Ailsa Craig, Nairn, Parkhill, and larger Rural community through targeted improvements to recreational and community spaces, connections/trails, and natural heritage features in the Municipality. Ultimately, a master plan would provide direction and guidance to Council in the evaluation and pursuit of specific community projects throughout the lifespan of the plan.

6.4.2 RECOMMENDED TIMEFRAME

Medium to Long-term (5+ years)

6.4.3 CONSIDERATIONS

A Parks, Recreation, & Trails Master Plan could be developed in-house, or by a consultant, and may involve:

- An inventory and assessment of all community parks/recreation/trail assets and services (service delivery & programming, indoor facilities, outdoor facilities, parks and trails)
- Evaluation of options for improvements and/or the development of new assets
- High-level budget forecasting for the implementation of the plan
- Public engagement with the community about their “needs” vs. “wants” respecting community recreation assets, alongside other stakeholder consultation (agencies, businesses, organizations, etc.)
- Specific projects aimed at creating stronger community connections (ex. multi-use trail(s) between the communities of Parkhill-Ailsa Craig-Nairn)

6.4.4 ROLES & IMPLEMENTATION

The decision to pursue and/or timing of this Municipal Leadership Initiative will be at the sole discretion of the Municipality of North Middlesex Council. This initiative will require collaborative approaches between Council, Staff, and the community. The Municipality should also seek to explore partnerships with other local authorities (i.e. Middlesex County, Conservation Authority) to work collaboratively toward improved public recreation amenities/spaces/trails/facilities.



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SECTION 7.0 | ADMINISTRATION

7.1 ADMINISTERING THE PLAN

7.1.1 General Administration & Interpretation

This Plan must be read and interpreted in its entirety, and in conjunction with other applicable legislation including, but not limited to the *Municipal Act* and *Planning Act*. This CIP will be administered by the Municipality of North Middlesex, Municipal Council, and the *CIP Coordinator*. Interpretation of this plan will be at the sole discretion of the Municipality of North Middlesex

7.1.2 Plan Horizon

This CIP is intended to be implemented over a 10-year period from the date of adoption. Notwithstanding this, the plan may continue to be implemented beyond the 10-year plan horizon at the discretion of the Municipality.

7.1.3 Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA)

The *Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA)* identified in Section 1.4 constitutes the applicable area of this Plan. Properties not located within the CIPA are not eligible for CIP funding. The CIPA may be amended by By-law from time to time, at the sole discretion of Council.

Council may dissolve the CIPA if, in their opinion, the Plan has been carried out and/or no longer aligns with the goals and objectives of the Municipality for community improvement. Should Council opt to dissolve the CIPA, the CIP should be repealed.

7.1.4 CIP Coordinator

The Municipality shall appoint a *CIP Coordinator* to administer the CIP. The *CIP Coordinator* will act as a day-to-day liaison between the community and the Municipality, championing the plan, providing guidance to applicants on the interpretation of the plan, and coordinating intake of applications. The *CIP*

Coordinator will also organize the review of funding applications with Council and/or their designate, as well as arrange for the issuance of decisions. The *CIP Coordinator* will also be responsible for marketing, monitoring, and evaluating the Plan throughout its lifecycle.

7.1.5 Approval Authority & Responsibilities

Municipal Council is the approval authority responsible for making final decisions on CIP funding applications. The responsibilities of Council as the approval authority are as follows:

- reviewing CIP funding applications, supporting information, and/or associated reports/packages prepared by the *CIP Coordinator*, and providing comments;
- participating in the formulation of a recommendation for approval or refusal of CIP funding applications;
- participating in the monitoring and evaluation activities of the plan and providing recommendations on amendments which may be identified from time to time.

Notwithstanding the above, Municipal Council may, in its sole discretion, opt to delegate some or all of the approval authority responsibilities listed above (excluding final decisions) to an *Implementing Committee*, which may be an existing committee of Council, or a new CIP-specific committee. The *Implementing Committee* is encouraged to be made up of a combination of municipal staff, council, and/or local organizational leaders/professionals to ensure diverse backgrounds and perspectives. The size, role, and composition of any *Implementing Committee* shall be determined by Council in its sole discretion.

7.1.6 CIP Budget & Incentive Program Funding

Council is responsible for establishing the annual CIP budget to fund the financial incentive programs. Each year Council may, at their sole discretion, opt to fund some, all, or none of the financial programs outlined in the CIP. The annual CIP budget should be informed by the program monitoring/evaluation data gathered under Section 8.2, to ensure community uptake and interest in programming is reflected appropriately.

Council may, in their sole discretion, opt to restrict any portion of the annual CIP budget to one or more specific programs to ensure adequate/reserved funding for certain types of projects.

All applications for grant funding will be evaluated and determined on a “first come, first served” basis. However, Council reserves the right to limit funding for individual applications/projects if, in their opinion, it would unduly limit the availability of funding for other projects seeking funding throughout the budget year.

7.1.7 Implementation of Municipal Leadership Initiatives

Council will maintain full discretion with respect to determining whether to budget, plan for, and/or pursue any of the Municipal Leadership initiatives in Section 6.0. Nothing in this plan is intended to commit the Municipality or any other public authority to funding or pursuing any one of the initiatives outlined in Section 6.0.

7.1.8 County Participation in the CIP

Section 28(7.2) of the Planning Act allows an upper-tier municipality to make grants or loans to a lower-tier municipality for the purpose of carrying out a community improvement plan, on such terms as to security and otherwise as council

considers appropriate. To this end, Middlesex County may, from time to time and at their sole discretion, make grants or loans to North Middlesex for the purpose of participating in the grant programs or municipal leadership initiatives defined in this CIP.

7.2 APPLICATION PROCESS

The following section outlines the standard application submission/approval process for the CIP funding programs. The **Figure 2** on page 44 provides a high-level visual overview of the process.

7.2.1 Application Intake

It is recommended that the Municipality establish an annual or bi-annual deadline(s) for the intake of CIP funding applications to allow for more efficient administration, implementation, and monitoring of the plan. Alternatively, the Municipality may opt to allow for a “floating intake” structure, at their discretion, wherein CIP funding applications could be submitted throughout the year (with or without a cut-off deadline) and reviewed on an ad-hoc basis.

7.2.2 Pre-Consultation

All applicants are encouraged to arrange for a pre-consultation with the *CIP Coordinator* to discuss their project(s) and identify eligibility, review applicable streams, clarify process, and receive preliminary feedback prior to submission. The *CIP Coordinator* will also advise of any additional information and materials required for a complete application, beyond the standard requirements outlined in Section 5.8.1.

7.2.3 Submission of Application

Applicant submits their application, including any required supporting information and materials identified at the pre-

consultation. As outlined in Section 5.8.1, in order to be deemed complete, applications may be required to include some or all of the following, to the satisfaction of the Municipality:

- Original copy of all required application forms signed and completed;
- A minimum of two (2) cost estimates/quotes for the proposed works, provided by a qualified source (*example: project contractor*). A detailed breakdown of costs per project/phase may be required;
- Drawings, renderings, or other design information as determined necessary by the Municipality for the proposed works (plot plan, elevations, renderings, floor plans, etc.);
- Current/recent photos of the existing property and building(s)/area(s) that are the subject of the proposed works;
- Any historical information or documents available (as necessary); and,
- Other supporting materials such as, but not limited to work plans, applicable reports (traffic impact, inspection report, etc.), public funding sources, and/or approvals, that may be required to supplement the application, as determined by the municipality in its sole discretion.

7.2.4 Confirmation of Complete Application

The *CIP Coordinator* reviews the application to determine completeness, screening for general eligibility criteria, and ensuring all required supporting information identified at the pre-consultation meeting has been included and is acceptable. Applications which are deemed incomplete will be returned to

the applicant with comments and/or instructions related to satisfying the requirements for a complete application. If the application is deemed complete, the *CIP Coordinator* will notify the applicant accordingly.

7.2.5 Application Review & Recommendation

Upon deeming an application complete, one of the following will take place, depending on whether Council has delegated approval authority responsibilities to an *Implementing Committee* under Section 7.1.5:

a) *If Council **HAS** delegated approval authority responsibilities:*

- the *CIP Coordinator* will circulate the application and all associated information/materials to the *Implementing Committee* for review. It is recommended to schedule a meeting date for all *Implementing Committee* members to review the application against the general and program-specific eligibility criteria and form a recommendation on the application.

b) *If Council **HAS NOT** delegated approval authority responsibilities:*

- the *CIP Coordinator* will review the application and all associated information/materials against the general and program-specific eligibility criteria and form a recommendation on the application.

In the event of a recommendation for refusal, the applicant must be notified, provided with reasons for refusal, and given an opportunity to resubmit their application for review within a reasonable timeframe. If an applicant disagrees with the proposed recommendation and wishes to have the application

heard by Council, the application will continue through the process.

Following the above, the *CIP Coordinator* will prepare a report to Council containing an overview of the application and recommendation for approval or refusal. The application and all associated information/materials should be included with the report. Council will then consider and make a decision on the application.

7.2.6 Council Decision

As outlined in Section 7.1.5, Council is the approval authority responsible for making final decisions on CIP funding applications. The decision by Council to fund (or not fund) improvements through the programs of this CIP is entirely at the discretion of Council. Council reserves the right to determine the level of funding which shall be received by an applicant, whether to fund at all or in part, and what conditions, obligations and other requirements may be attached to any funding allocation and/or agreement(s). Considering the above, Council will make one of the following two decisions on a CIP funding application:

APPROVAL: If an application is approved, the applicant will be notified accordingly. The *CIP Coordinator* will arrange for a funding agreement to be prepared for execution between the Municipality and Applicant respecting the approved project/funding, as outlined in Section 7.2.6.

REFUSAL: If an application is refused, the applicant will be notified accordingly and provided with reasons for the refusal. There is no opportunity for appeal where an application has been refused by Council; however, a

refusal does not disqualify the applicant from submitting a new CIP funding application.

7.2.7 Funding Agreement

If Council approves the application, the *CIP Coordinator* will be directed to arrange for the preparation of a CIP Funding Agreement for execution between the applicant and the Municipality. The Funding Agreement will address matters such as, but not limited to; general terms and conditions; duration/deadlines; default; payment; and/or any other conditions related to the specific grant programs, as determined by the Municipality in its sole discretion. Payment of any financial incentives will be in accordance with the provisions of the CIP Funding Agreement.

7.2.8 Project Commencement

Upon execution of a CIP Funding Agreement, the applicant may commence the works associated with the improvement project, in accordance with the provisions of the agreement and approved proposal.

7.2.9 Project Completion

Unless otherwise outlined in the Funding Agreement described in 7.2.7, the approval of any application for funding will expire if works are not substantially commenced within six (6) months and completed within twelve (12) months from the date of execution of the Funding Agreement, as determined by the Municipality in its sole discretion. It is the responsibility of the applicant to notify the Municipality when the project has been completed.

Upon completion of the improvement project, and prior to the issuance of any financial incentives outlined under the CIP Funding Agreement, the applicant may be required to submit

supporting information and materials documenting the completion of the works, including but not limited to:

- Original invoices for all costs associated with eligible works;
- Proof of payment for all costs claimed for eligible works;
- Photographs of the completed project;
- Certificates of occupancy or other similar documents;
- Required inspection reports; and
- Any applicable licenses or other approvals.

Further to the above, prior to the issuance of any financial incentives, the *CIP Coordinator*, in coordination with other municipal staff which may be necessary, will conduct a site

inspection of the completed works to confirm the works have been carried out in accordance with the CIP Funding Agreement and consistent with the approved application. The Municipality will address the non-completion or non-compliance of any works in accordance with the CIP Funding Agreement.

7.2.10 Payment of Grant

If the works have been carried out in accordance with the CIP Funding Agreement, and all provisions and obligations of the agreement have been satisfied, the *CIP Coordinator* will organize for the payment of the financial incentives in accordance with the CIP Funding Agreement. The Municipality may allow for early and/or partial release of grant payments in its sole discretion.

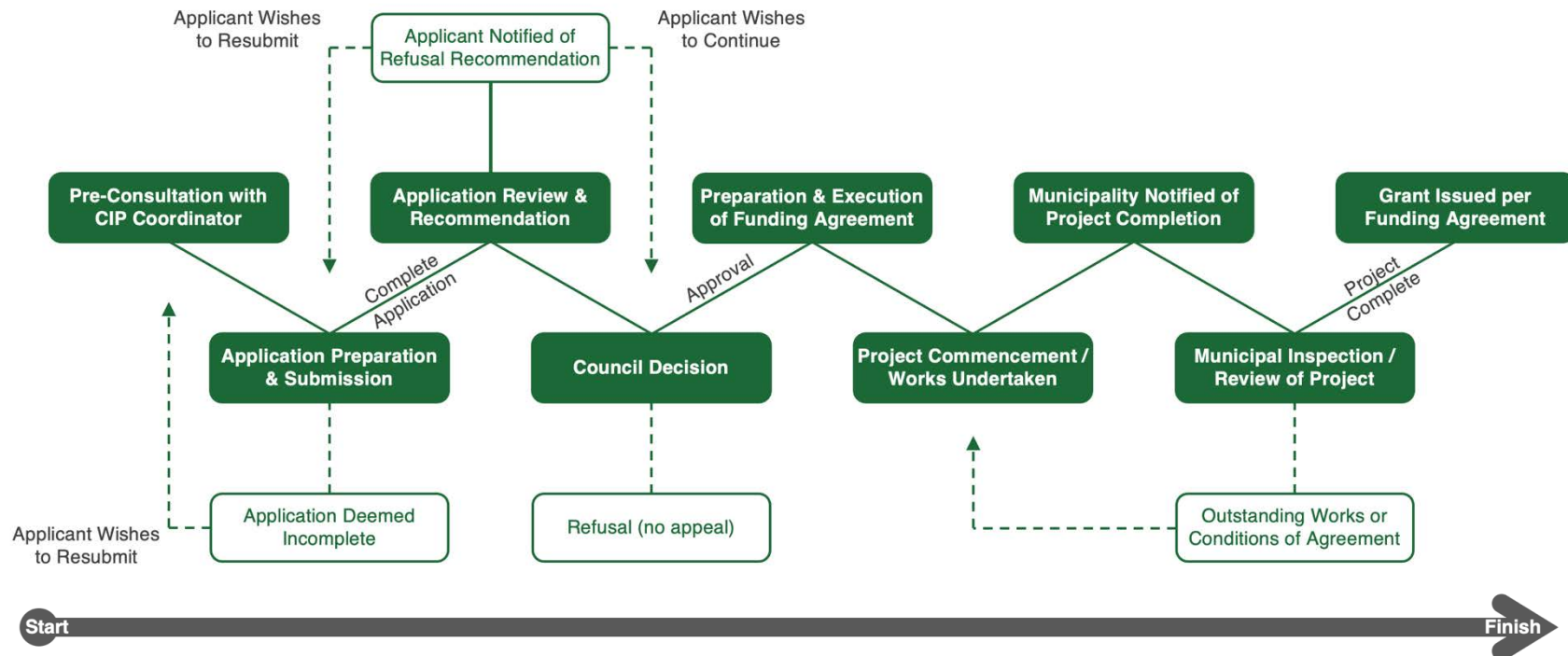


Figure 2: CIP Application Process



SECTION 8.0 | MARKETING, MONITORING, & MODIFICATIONS

8.1 MARKETING THE PLAN

A large part of the success of this CIP will be determined by its accessibility and familiarity among the business community and general public. Marketing of the plan and the various incentive programs will play an important role in reaching potential applicants and encouraging a broader intake of project proposals. It is therefore recommended that the Municipality take advantage of all opportunities to provide more information about the plan, projects, and incentive programs through a range of methods, such as:

- Dedicated webpage within the Municipality’s municipal website that includes a copy of the plan, any promotional materials, applications, an FAQ section, and/or any other relevant information that can help people learn more about the plan
- Brochures & Posters which are easy to read, visually appealing, and provide information on the CIP. These should be made available to drop-ins at the municipal office, at community centres, in businesses, and/or distributed in other innovative ways (included in tax/water bills).
- Celebration of the success of completed CIP projects through regular updates to council, on-site CIP program signage for current/completed projects, as well as actively promoting projects on the municipality’s website and social media with photos/posts.
- Annual monitoring/evaluation reports to Council should be made readily available to the community to promote the successes of the plan. The reports could include photographs, data trends, and other interesting aspects of the plan implementation on an annual basis

8.2 EVALUATING & MONITORING THE PLAN

8.2.1 Annual Report to Council

In order to track the implementation and performance of this Plan, various baseline data will be gathered and measured throughout its lifecycle, and municipal staff will prepare and present findings in an annual report to Council and make the findings available to the greater community. The report should contain an overview of statistics, trends, as well as recommendations for improvements to the structure or framework of the plan. The report should also summarize any progression towards implementing the municipal leadership initiatives outlined in Section 6.0

8.2.2 Baseline Data

The following data is suggested to be tracked and measured by the CIP Coordinator upon adoption of the plan and monitored for changes on an annual basis or as frequent as available data allows, for inclusion in the annual monitoring report described above:

- Acreage / floor area of commercial space
- Number of new housing units added, as well as affordable housing units
- Commercial vacancy rates in the community
- Number of building and planning applications submitted for certain types of development (accessibility, internal redevelopment, façade improvement, etc.)
- Any other baseline data that may be beneficial to tracking the implementation and evaluation of this plan.

8.2.3 Monitoring Statistics & CIP Goals

The following measures of success should also be tracked and monitored by the CIP Coordinator, for inclusion in the annual monitoring report described above:

- Number of applications received
- Number of applications approved and for which respective stream(s)
- Total value of grants issued
- Total value of investment dollars leveraged
- Observable trends in the baseline data noted above

In addition to the above, the municipality may also wish to track measures directly related to the goals of this plan outlined in Section 4.0 to assist in monitoring success and identifying any recommendations for changes.

8.2.4 Housing Affordability and Resiliency Key Performance Indicators

The following housing-specific key performance indicators were identified in 2025 to complement the more general CIP statistics, by providing better insight on CIP impact on housing affordability and climate resiliency. The following indicators should be incorporated into the above monitoring and reporting to Council.

Indicator	Why it Matters
Total number of new affordable residential rental units supported through the CIP	Tracks the tangible outcomes of new affordable rental tenure residential units delivered with the assistance of the incentives
Amount of private capital investment leveraged per dollar amount of public investment in Housing through the CIP	Tracks how effectively the incentives stimulate private sector participation in affordable housing development and the ability of the incentives to de-risks development for home builders
Total dollar value of incentives allocated per affordable housing unit delivered through the CIP	Tracks the cost-effectiveness of the incentives by quantifying how much public support is required to produce each affordable unit
Total dollar value of incentives leveraged per dollar amount of private investment in climate resiliency retrofits/improvements	Tracks how effectively the incentives encourage climate-resilient retrofits and improvements to the rental housing stock

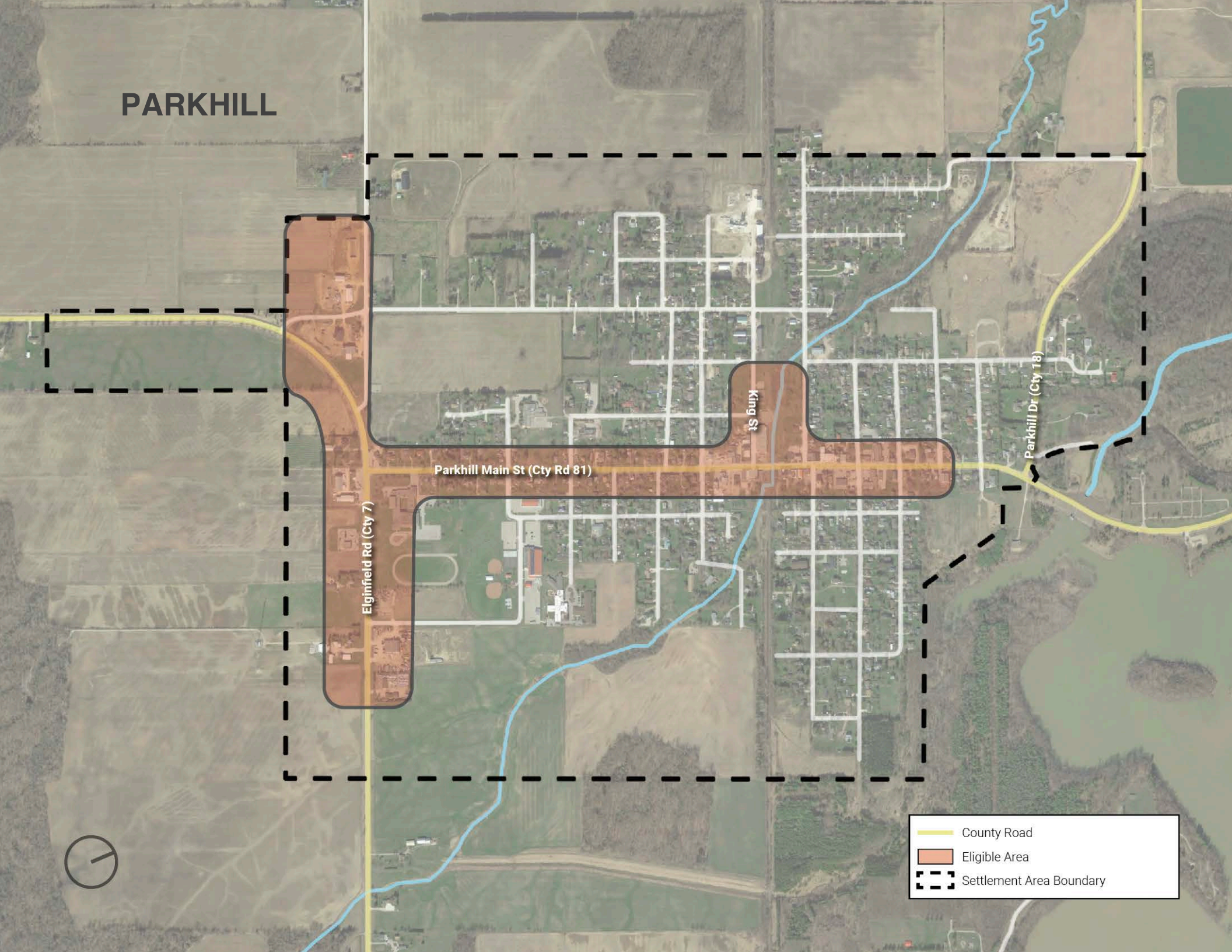
8.3 AMENDING & MODIFYING THE PLAN

Based on the result of the monitoring exercises above, or feedback gathered throughout the implementation of the CIP, it may be necessary to modify or amend this plan from time to time as community priorities and goals change or as the plan is implemented. The table to the right provides guidance as to what plan adjustments or changes would require an amendment to the plan, as required by the *Planning Act*.

Adjustment or Change to Plan	Amendment Required?
Addition or removal of one or more financial incentive programs from the Plan	Yes.
Modifications to one or more incentive programs, such as but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • types of eligible projects; • eligible costs; • eligibility requirements; • maximum grant values or amounts 	Yes (except for minor technical or administrative changes).
Add, modify, or remove any of the Guiding Principles or Goals of the Plan	Yes
Add, modify, or remove any general eligibility criteria in Section 5.8.	Yes
Change to Community Improvement Project Area	No. Requires a by-law passed by Council.
Repeal of Community Improvement Project Area	No. Requires a by-law passed by Council.
Budgetary allocation changes (overall budget or program-specific)	No.
Changes to funding or prioritization of municipal leadership initiatives	No.
Cancelling of funding for one or more incentive programs	No.
Extension of the plan beyond the 10-year planning horizon	No.
Delegation of Council’s approval authority responsibilities under Section 7.1.5 to a <i>Implementing Committee</i> or a return of responsibilities to Council	No. Requires a by-law passed by Council.

APPENDIX A | BEAUTIFICATION PROGRAM ELIGIBLE AREAS

PARKHILL



Elginfield Rd (Cty 7)

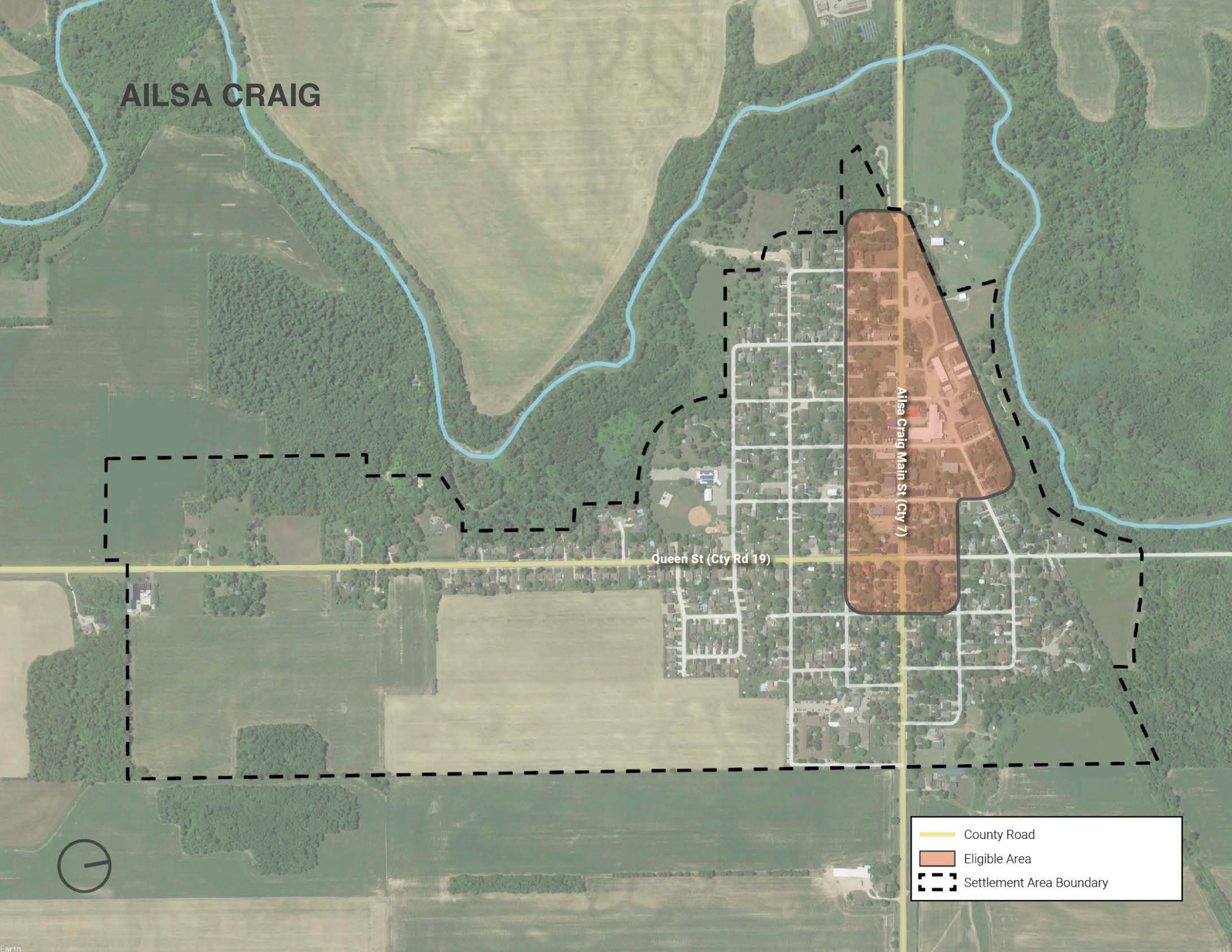
Parkhill Main St (Cty Rd 81)

King St

Parkhill Dr (Cty 18)

	County Road
	Eligible Area
	Settlement Area Boundary

AILSAS CRAIG



Queen St (Cty Rd 19)

Ailsa Craig Main St (Cty 7)

	County Road
	Eligible Area
	Settlement Area Boundary



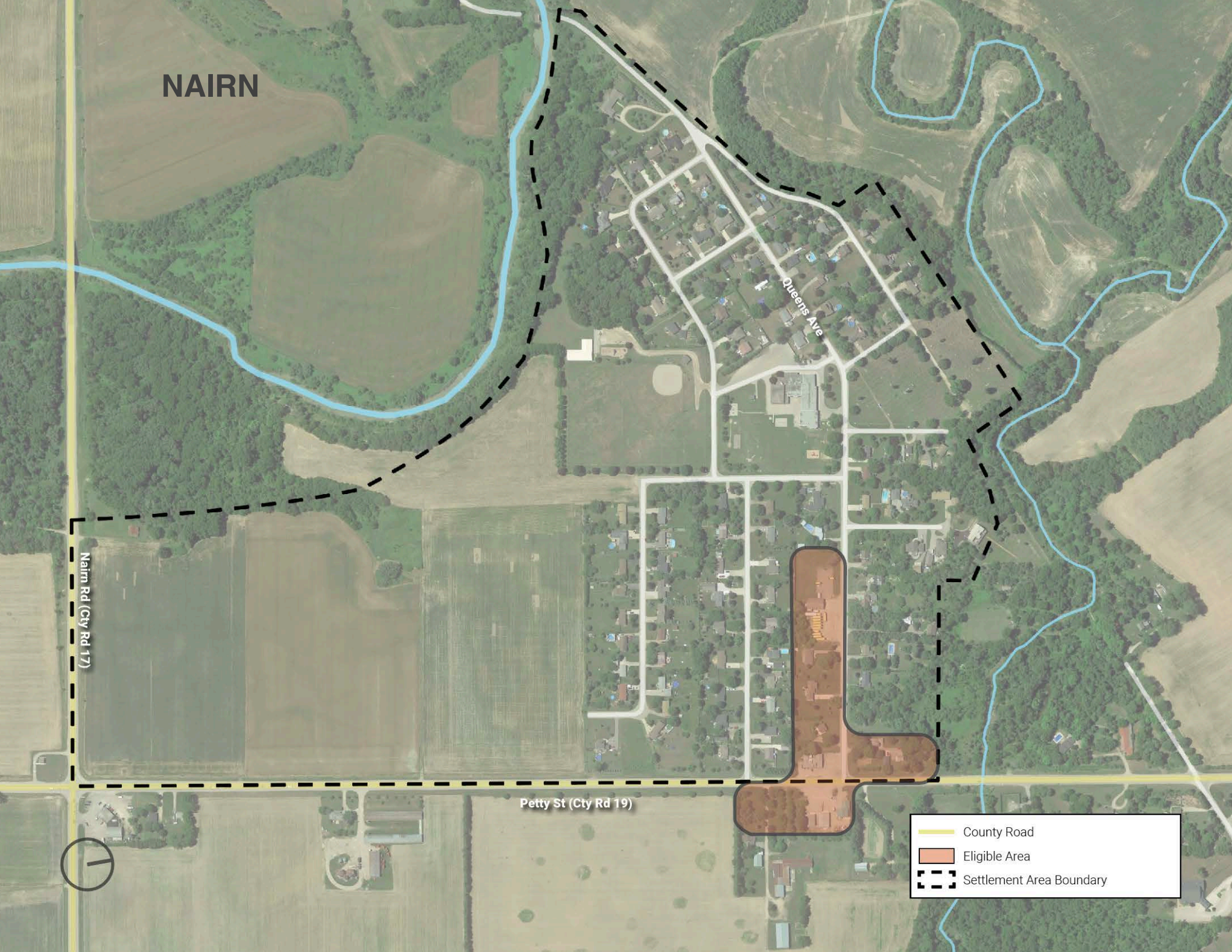
NAIRN

Queens Ave

Nairn Rd (Cty Rd 17)

Petty St (Cty Rd 19)

	County Road
	Eligible Area
	Settlement Area Boundary



APPENDIX B | GLOSSARY

Additional Residential Unit means a self-contained dwelling unit located within a main dwelling or within an accessory building to a main dwelling, designed for human habitation and meeting the minimum requirements of the North Middlesex Zoning By-law and Ontario Building Code.

Affordable Rental Housing Unit shall mean the least expensive of:

- A unit for which the rent does not exceed 30% of gross annual household income for low- and moderate-income households, where low- and moderate-income households refers to households with incomes in the lowest 60% of the income distribution for renter households in the regional market area; or
- A unit for which the rent is at or below the average market rent of a unit in the regional market area.

In determining the average market rent of a unit in the regional market area, the Municipality should reference Canada Housing and Mortgage Corporation (CMHC) data and/or the "Affordable Residential units for the Purposes of the Development Charges Act, 1997

Bulletin" published annually by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (<https://data.ontario.ca/dataset/affordable-residential-units-for-the-purposes-of-the-development-charges-act-1997-bulletin>). In the event this bulletin is discontinued, or more up-to-date information is available from another source approved by the Municipality, the Municipality may use any such method that, in its opinion, is appropriate for determining average market rent for the purpose of implementing this community improvement plan.

Agriculture-Related Uses means those farm-related commercial and farm-related industrial uses that are directly related to farm operations in the area, support agriculture, benefit from being in close proximity to farm operations, and provide direct products and/or services to farm operations as a primary activity.

Agri-Tourism uses means those farm-related tourism uses, including limited accommodation such as a bed and breakfast, that promote the enjoyment, education, or activities related to the operation of a farm.

Applicant means registered owner, assessed owner, or tenant of a building or property within the CIPA, and any person who has been given written permission to act on behalf of any of the aforementioned any person to whom any of the aforementioned has assigned the right to apply for/receive a grant or loan.

Average Market Rent (AMR) means, for the purposes of this CIP, the average rent charged for a rental housing unit in the Municipality of North Middlesex, according to building type and number of bedrooms.

Building Permit and Planning Application means the North Middlesex fees required for an application for one or more of the following:

- building permit
- demolition permit
- minor variance
- consent
- part lot control
- site plan approval
- zoning by-law amendment
- official plan amendment

For the purposes of this Plan, Development Charges are not considered a Building Permit and Planning Fee.

Brownfield means undeveloped or previously developed properties having known or perceived contamination. They are usually, but not exclusively, former industrial or commercial properties that may be underutilized, derelict, or vacant.

CIP Coordinator means a member of North Middlesex staff appointed by the Municipality to administer the CIP, organize the review of funding applications with Council and/or their designate, as well as arrange for the issuance of decisions. The CIP Coordinator will also be responsible for marketing, monitoring, and evaluating the CIP throughout its lifecycle.

Construction Costs means those costs directly related to materials, labour, equipment, and/or installation associated with the completion of the eligible improvement project. For the purposes of this Plan, development charges are not considered a Construction Cost.

Development means the creation of a new lot, a change in land use, or the construction of buildings and structures requiring approval under the Planning Act.

Environmental Study refers to the following studies which are typically associated/required as part of development on a brownfield or site with known/perceived contamination:

- Phase I & II Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs);
- A Designated Substances and Hazardous Materials Survey;
- A Remedial Work Plan; and,
- A Risk Assessment/Management Plan.

Greenfield means, for the purposes of this Plan, lands which have not previously been developed and generally exist in a natural state. In some cases, limited agricultural uses (pasture, cultivation) may exist on a greenfield.

Implementing Committee means an existing committee of Council or CIP-specific committee created by the Municipality that has been delegated some or all of the approval authority

responsibilities outlined in Section 7.1.5 by Council. The size, role, and composition of any Implementing Committee shall be determined by Council in its sole discretion.

Infill means development or redevelopment which results in the physical or observable intensification of the built form, use, and/or activity potential of a property.

Mixed-use means a building or property containing a combination of two or more of the following uses:

- retail uses / commercial services;
- office space
- institutional uses;
- residential uses as ancillary or secondary uses to one or more of the above uses.

On-Farm Diversified Uses means uses that are secondary to the principal agricultural use of the property and are limited in area. On-farm diversified uses include, but are not limited to, home occupations, home industries, agri-tourism uses, and uses that produce value-added agricultural products (cideries, breweries, wineries, smaller-

scale ag product processing, etc.), where permitted by the Middlesex County Official Plan, North Middlesex Official Plan, and/or North Middlesex Zoning By-law.

Owner means the registered Owner of the Lands and includes any successors, assigns, agents, partners and any affiliated corporation.

Professional Fees means the costs associated with the preparation and/or registration of any agreements, plans, designs, studies, or the carrying out of any services required for the project by an architect, engineer, designer, or other qualified professional or agency. For the purposes of this Plan, this definition does not include:

- Phase I & II Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs);
- A Designated Substances and Hazardous Materials Survey;
- A Remedial Work Plan; and,
- A Risk Assessment/Management Plan.

Redevelopment means the creation of new units, uses or lots on previously developed land in existing

communities, including brownfield sites.

Tax Increment means the net increase between the pre-development and post-development municipal and/or county property taxes levied as a result of the revaluation of the property by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC).

APPENDIX C | FINANCIAL INCENTIVE APPLICATION REVIEW CRITERIA

CIP APPLICATION REVIEW FORM

This CIP is not intended to fund all property improvements, but rather those eligible projects that are most aligned with the guiding principles and goals of the plan, and priorities of the Municipality. This CIP Application Review Form is designed to guide the Municipality through the review of applications, while also helping applicants to better understand the criteria on which their proposals are evaluated. This Form is not intended to be a “pass / fail” exercise, but more of a consistent and transparent methodology for the review of CIP applications – the Municipality may exercise full discretion in their assessment and decision on any application for funding under the CIP.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. This Form should only be completed after reading the North Middlesex Community Improvement Plan in its entirety.
2. This Form should be completed by the CIP Coordinator and each member of the Implementing Committee (if applicable) prior to engaging in the discussion and/or development of any recommendations on a CIP application. Alternatively, one form may be completed as a group for an application.
3. Complete the relevant sections of this Form, indicating the level of compliance with the general eligibility criteria, program-specific eligibility criteria, and alignment with the guiding principles and goals of the CIP, as follows:

C = Compliant

PC = Partially Compliant

NC = Not Compliant

NA = Not Applicable

4. A comment section is provided beside each of the criteria in this Form to allow for a brief summarization of the individual reviewer’s thought process and/or to provide further explanation related to their assessment, where necessary.
5. This Form is intended to be made available to the applicant in order to help provide feedback and understanding on the review and decision-making process.

Applicant: _____ Location: _____

Description of Proposal: _____

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Applicable Program(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> 5.1 Beautification Program
<input type="checkbox"/> 5.2 Rural Economic Development Program
<input type="checkbox"/> 5.3 Conversion, Expansion, & Redevelopment Program
<input type="checkbox"/> 5.4 Additional Residential Unit Program | <input type="checkbox"/> 5.5 Accessibility Program
<input type="checkbox"/> 5.6 Brownfield Study Program
<input type="checkbox"/> 5.7 Affordable Rental Housing Unit Program
<input type="checkbox"/> 5.8 Rental Housing Retrofit Program |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Form Completed By: _____

PART 1 – GUIDING PRINCIPLES & GOALS REVIEW

Goal	C	PC	NC	NA	Summary / Notes
Main Street Beautification & Revitalization					
Improve the physical and visual quality of buildings, properties, and streetscapes along main corridors					
Increase walkability and multi-modal capacity of the streetscapes in the community cores					
Rural Economic Health & Vitality					
Create more opportunities for rural economic development to complement the existing agricultural base and balance urban investment					
Housing Choice & Affordability					
Increase opportunities for more affordable housing (i.e. Additional Residential Units, affordable housing, etc.)					
Support more diverse and dense housing options, including mixed-use development in the settlement areas					
Maintaining Community Character					
Preserve and enhance historical buildings and features in the community (whether designated or not)					

Goal	C	PC	NC	NA	Summary / Notes
Create a stronger and more defined sense of “Place” in the downtown of Parkhill and Ailsa Craig					
More in the Core!					
Reduce the number of vacant or underutilized sites/buildings in the community					
Increase the number of businesses and services provided in the core of the community					
Create new or enhance existing community parks, civic spaces, and other amenities, and their connections throughout the community.					

PART 2 – GENERAL REVIEW

Criteria	C	PC	NC	NA	Summary / Notes
Is the project located within an eligible area for the program?					
Are the project works considered eligible for the program?					
Does the project meet the eligibility criteria for the specific grant program?					
If the project involves one or more funding programs, are they eligible to be combined?					
Is the project good design/high quality?					
Does the project genuinely contribute to the improvement of the community?					
Is the project a permanent improvement? If not, is the proposal appropriate given the location and situational context of the property?					

Criteria	C	PC	NC	NA	Summary / Notes
Is the project feasible?					
How much funding has been obtained for the project through other public sources or programs?					
Does the project comply with and/or conform with all applicable by-laws, policies, guidelines, and legislation? If not, does the project allow the applicant to do so?					
In your opinion, do you believe the project constitutes the type of Community Improvement intended to be funded through the CIP?					