



**TOWNSHIP OF WEST LINCOLN
GROWTH AND SUSTAINABILITY
COMMITTEE AGENDA**

MEETING NO. ONE

Monday, February 9, 2026, 5:30 p.m.

Township Administration Building

318 Canborough Street, Smithville, Ontario

NOTE TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: All Cell Phones, Pagers and/or PDAs to be turned off. Members of the public who are attending and participating virtually are reminded to keep their microphones muted until they are acknowledged to speak. Additionally, for your information, please be advised that this meeting will be livestreamed as well as recorded and will be available on the Township's website.

Pages

1. CHAIR - Councillor Joann Chechalk

Prior to commencing with the Growth and Sustainability meeting agenda, Chair Chechalk will provide the following announcements:

1. Comments can be made from members of the public for a matter that is on the agenda by advising the Chair during the "Request to Address an Item on the Agenda" Section of the agenda.
2. The public may submit written comments for matters that are on the agenda to jpaylove@westlincoln.ca before 4:30 p.m. on the day of the meeting for consideration by the Committee. Comments received after 4:30 p.m. on the day of the Committee meeting will be considered at the following Council meeting. Comments submitted are included in the record.
3. This meeting will be livestreamed as well as recorded and available on the Township's website.

2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

The Township of West Lincoln, being part of Niagara Region is situated on treaty land. This land is steeped in the rich history of the First Nations such as the Hatiwendaronk, the Haudenosaunee, and the Anishinaabe, including the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. There are many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit from across Turtle Island that live and work in Niagara today. The Township of West Lincoln, as part of the Regional Municipality of Niagara,

stands with all Indigenous people, past and present, in promoting the wise stewardship of the lands on which we live.

3. CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

RECOMMENDATION:

That, the next portion of this meeting be closed to the public to consider the following pursuant to Section 239(2) of the Municipal Act 2001:

3.1 Kelsey Waugh, CIMA

Re: Educational Presentation - Parking Rules and Regulations

TRAINING

Applicable Closed Session Exemption(s):

- Educational Training Session (section 3.1)

3.1 Kelsey Waugh, CIMA

Re: Educational Presentation - Parking Rules and Regulations

TRAINING

4. DISCLOSURE OF CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

5. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND/OR CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Public Meeting(s)

6. PUBLIC MEETING(S)

6.1 Community Improvement Plan - Township of West Lincoln

Re: The Township of West Lincoln is proposing an Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan (CIP), a land use planning tool that allows municipalities like ours to provide financial incentives (grants and loans) and non-financial incentives to private landowners to encourage revitalization and development like housing.

6.2 Zoning By-law Amendment - Township of West Lincoln

Re: The Township of West Lincoln is initiating amendments to the Zoning By-law 2017-70, to address some minor updates to be addressed through housekeeping amendments to the Zoning By-law. The proposed amendments are changes to Part 1 Administration-Enforcement, Part 3 General Provisions - On-Farm Diversified Uses, Driveway and Parking Aisles, Part 13 and Schedule A - Zoning Employment Zones within the Spring Creek Heights Secondary Plan Area,

7. CHANGE IN ORDER OF ITEMS ON AGENDA

8. APPOINTMENTS/PRESENTATION

There are no appointments/presentations

9. REQUEST TO ADDRESS ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

NOTE: Section 10.13 (5) & (6) – General Rules

One (1) hour in total shall be allocated for this section of the agenda and each individual person shall only be provided with **five (5) minutes** to address their issue (some exceptions apply). A response may not be provided and the matter may be referred to staff. A person who wishes to discuss a planning application or a matter that can be appealed, will be permitted to speak for ten (10) minutes.

Chair to inquire if there are any members of the public present who wish to address any items on the Growth and Sustainability Committee agenda.

10. COMMUNICATIONS

There are no communications

11. STAFF REPORTS

11.1 ITEM GS01-26

5

Senior Planner (Robin Shugan) and Manager, Community Planning and Design (Susan Smyth)

Re: Recommendation Report PD-04-2026 - Proposed Street Name for Abingdon Road Condominium File: 2000-91-22CDM

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That, Recommendation Report PD-04-2026, titled “Proposed Street Name for Abingdon Road Condominium File: 2000-91-22CDM”, dated February 9, 2026, be received; and,
2. That, the Township pass a by-law to name the proposed street within the Vacant Land Condominium Abingdon Road Development ‘Kerrigan Lane’ in accordance with Schedule ‘A’ of the attached Draft By-law.

11.2 ITEM GS02-26

12

Manager, Community Planning and Design (Susan Smyth) and Director, Growth and Sustainability (Gerrit Boerema)

Re: Information Report PD-03-2026 – Township Initiated Housekeeping Amendments to the Zoning By-law for Public Consultation

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That, Information Report PD-03-2026, titled “Information Report – Township Initiated Housekeeping Amendments to the Zoning By-law for Public Consultation”, dated February 9, 2026, be received for Information.

11.3 ITEM GS03-26

24

Director, Growth and Sustainability (Gerrit Boerema)

Re: Information Report PD-05-2026 - Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan File No.1701-001-26

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That Information Report PD-05-2026 titled "Information Report, Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan, File No. 1701-001-26" dated February 9, 2026 be received for information.

12. OTHER BUSINESS

12.1 ITEM GS04-26

Members of Committee

Re: Other Business Matters of an Informative Nature

13. NEW BUSINESS

NOTE: Only for items that require immediate attention/direction and must first approve a motion to introduce a new item of business (Motion Required).

14. ADJOURNMENT

The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at the hour of _____.

DATE: February 9, 2026

REPORT NO: PD-04-2026

SUBJECT: **Recommendation Report
Proposed Street Name for Abingdon Road Condominium File:
2000-91-22CDM**

CONTACT: Robin Shugan, Senior Planner
Susan Smyth, Manager, Community Planning and Design

OVERVIEW:

- A Street Naming Application has been submitted by AJ Clark and Associates on behalf of the owner, Dan Caco to name the new private road being constructed as part of the Vacant Land Condominium fronting onto Abingdon Road.
- The Draft Plan of Condominium is located within the Hamlet of Abingdon at the northwest corner of Abingdon Road and Regional Road 65.
- The Draft Plan of Condominium and Zoning By-law Amendment was passed on October 23, 2023.
- The Street Naming Application is required to clear Condition 6 of the Draft Condominium Agreement, of which requires proposing a street name in accordance with Township’s Street Naming Policy.
- The Applicant has proposed 3 names for the proposed street, Magnolia Court, Magnolia Lane or Magnolia Way, none of which are on the approved list of street names.
- The Applicant has also provided ‘Kerrigan’ as an alternative, which is on the approved reserve street naming list.
- Administration is recommended that ‘Kerrigan Lane’ be approved as the private street name as it has historical significance in the area and complies with the Township’s street naming policy.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That, Recommendation Report PD-04-2026, titled “Proposed Street Name for Abingdon Road Condominium File: 2000-91-22CDM”, dated February 9, 2026, be received; and,
2. That, the Township pass a by-law to name the proposed street within the Vacant

Land Condominium Abingdon Road Development 'Kerrigan Lane' in accordance with Schedule 'A' of the attached Draft By-law.

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

Theme #1

- Build A safe, connected, caring and active community

BACKGROUND:

A Recommendation Report for the Zoning By-law Amendment and Draft Plan of Vacant Condominium was presented to the Planning Building and Environmental Committee (now Growth and Sustainability) on October 10, 2023, through Report PD-51-2023, and approved by Council on October 23, 2023 (By-law 2023-73). The proposed development consists of 9 new vacant land condominium lots for single detached dwelling units. The proposed private road will have access off Abingdon Road and will have a cul-de sac at the west end of the road.

On January 12, 2026, a public meeting held for the proposed Street Naming Application for the Vacant Land Condominium for the Abingdon Road Development. The Information Report, [PD-02-2026](#) outlines the Applicants' request to name the proposed street "Magnolia", which is not on the approved list of street names and does not follow the Township's Street Naming Policy. The Applicant also provided an alternative street name "Kerrigan" that is on the approved Street Name List and would be in keeping with the Township's policy.

CURRENT SITUATION:

The Applicant is seeking to clear condition 6 of the Draft Plan of Vacant Condominium "That the street naming fee be provided and the proposed street be named to the satisfaction of the Township of West Lincoln (Township Street Naming Policy POL-PD-01-11, as amended). The proposed road is a private road and will not be dedicated to the Township as a public highway".

The Township's Street Naming Policy states that at least 50 percent of proposed street names shall be taken from the approved street naming list for new developments. As the proposed development consists of only one road, the street name is required to be selected from the approved list. The Applicant has proposed the street name "Magnolia" (Magnolia Court, Magnolia Lane, or Magnolia Way); however, "Magnolia" is not included on the approved street naming list.

As an alternative, the Applicant has also proposed "Kerrigan" which is included on the approved street naming list. Through additional research, staff confirmed that Kerrigan is a historical surname associated with the Hamlet of Abingdon, as documented in the *Historical Atlas of Lincoln and Welland (Illustrated, 1876)* and shown on Schedule B attached to this report. Based on this historical connection, it is to be consider that

Kerrigan Lane be a more appropriate and contextually relevant street name for the proposed private road development, as well as compliant with the Township's Street Naming Policy.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no financial implications as a result of this Street Naming Application.

INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COMMENTS:

Comments were provided at the time of the Public Meeting through the [Information Report \(PD-02-2026\)](#) and presented at the All-Committees Meeting. No additional comments have been received. Planning Staff continue to work with the Applicant to clear the conditions and obtain final approval of the Draft Plan of Vacant Condominium and register the Condominium Agreement.

PUBLIC MEETING COMMENTS:

Council noted that proposed street should utilize the list of approved street names.

CONCLUSION:

Based on the above, it is recommended that the proposed street name for the Abingdon Vacant Land Condominium development be named "Kerrigan Lane".

ATTACHMENTS:

- Schedule A: Draft Plan of Vacant Land Condominium
- Schedule B: Historical Atlas – Map
- Schedule C: Draft Street Naming By-law

Prepared & submitted by:

Robin Shugan
Senior Planner

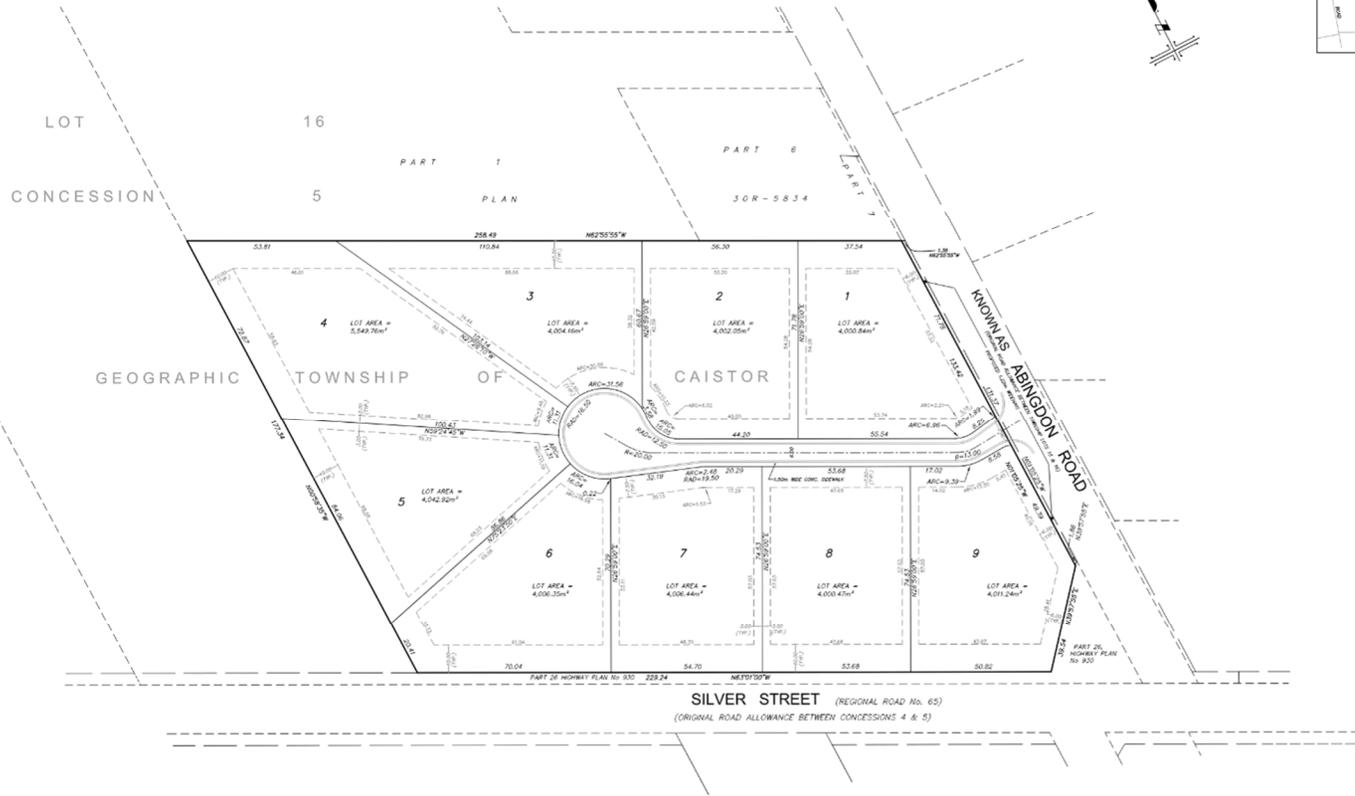
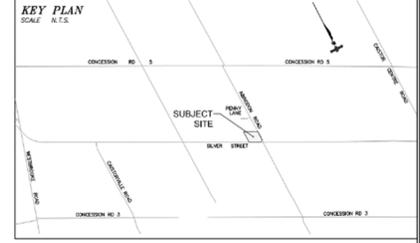
Susan Smyth
Manager, Community Planning
and Design

Approved by:

Gerrit Boerema
Director, Growth and Sustainability

Truper McBride
CAO

Schedule A to PD-04-2026



Part of Lot 16, Concession 5
 In the
 Geographic Township of Caistor
 In the
 TOWN OF LINCOLN

AREA OF SITE = 3,9871.4m² / 3.99 Ha.
 (9.85 Ac.)

May 6, 2022

PROJECT OWNER:	HILLWOOD HOMES INC.
MUNICIPALITY:	TOWN OF WEST LINCOLN (CAISTOR)
PROJECT NAME:	ABINGDON ROAD
<p>A. J. Clarke and Associates Ltd. SURVEYORS • PLANNERS • ENGINEERS 25 HARK STREET WEST, SUITE 300 HAMILTON, ONTARIO L8P 1R1 Tel: 905 528-8261 Fax: 905 528-2289 email: ajc@ajclarke.com</p>	
TITLE:	CONCEPT PLAN 2
SCALE: 1:750	DATE: APRIL 2022
DESIGN:	DRAWN: LKH, J.M.H.
DWG: 218107	SHT: CP 2

--- DOTTED LINE --- DENOTES BUILDING ENVELOPE

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WEST LINCOLN

BY-LAW NO. 2026-XX

**A BY-LAW TO NAME THE ROAD WITHIN THE DRAFT PLAN OF
VACANT LAND CONDIMUINIM -ABINGDON ROAD
DEVELOPMENT, TOWNSHIP OF WEST LINCOLN**

WHEREAS Section 11 (2) of the Municipal Act, 2001, provides for spheres of jurisdiction and under Table (1) it states that a lower tier municipality and an upper tier municipality may pass by-laws respecting highways, including parking and traffic on highways;

WHEREAS the Municipal Act, 2001, provides that a local municipality may name or change the name of a private road;

WHEREAS notice of the proposed by-law naming of Kerrigan Lane of in Draft Plan of Vacant Land Condominium – Abingdon Road was published in News Now on December 18, 2025;

WHEREAS such notice provided that Council would hear any person(s) who wished to give written correspondence on this matter;

WHEREAS no public comments have been received, and;

NOW THEREFORE the Municipal Council of The Corporation of the Township of West Lincoln hereby enacts as follows:

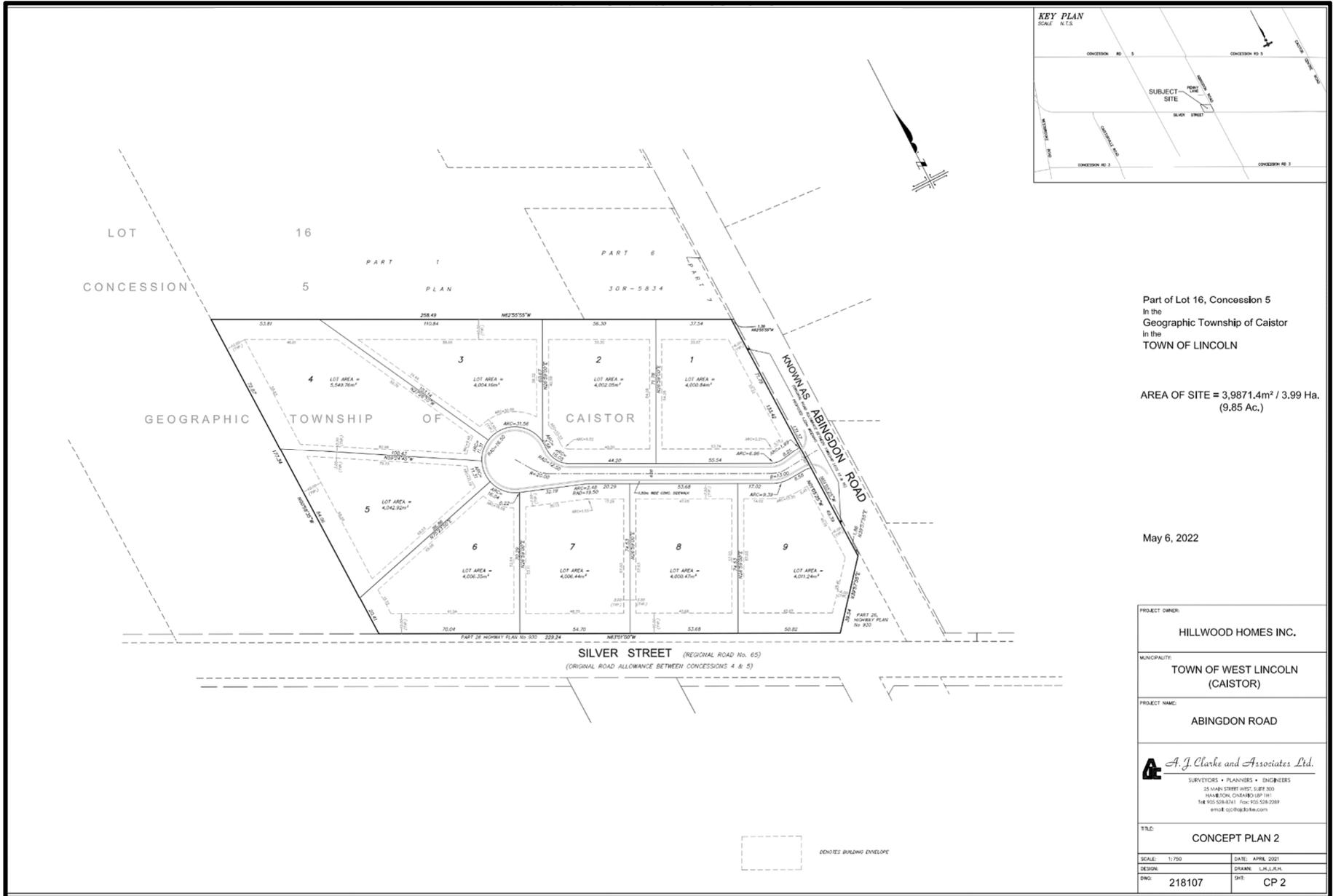
1. **THAT**, Council hereby confirms that Kerrigan Lane (Proposed Street) as shown on the Draft Plan of Vacant Land Condominium illustrated on Schedule A attached hereto be approved.

**READ A FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD
TIME AND FINALLY PASSED THIS
9 DAY OF FEBRUARY 2026.**

MAYOR CHERYL GANANN

CLERK JUSTIN PAYLOVE

Schedule A



DATE: February 9, 2026

REPORT NO: PD-03-2026

SUBJECT: **Information Report – Township Initiated Housekeeping Amendments to the Zoning By-law for Public Consultation**

CONTACT: Susan Smyth, Manager, Community Planning and Design
Gerrit Boerema, Director, Growth and Sustainability

OVERVIEW:

- Council on December 8, 2025, directed Administration to proceed with a Public Meeting and present the draft amending Housekeeping Amending Zoning By-law for public consultation.
- Administration has prepared several housekeeping amendments to the Comprehensive Zoning By-law 2017-70, as amended, to keep the by-law functioning as intended and to address specific zoning regulations that required some attention of which were approved by Council.
- This Housekeeping Amending By-law is intended to address administration and enforcement of the by-law, clarify driveway access regulations for agricultural lots, minor changes to on-farm diversified regulations, and pre-zone employment lands within the Spring Creek Heights Secondary Plan.
- This report is to provide an opportunity for the public and members of Committee and Council to review the proposed amendments and offer feedback.
- A recommendation report will be presented at a future Committee meeting once all agency and public comments have been received.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That, Information Report PD-03-2026, titled “Information Report – Township Initiated Housekeeping Amendments to the Zoning By-law for Public Consultation”, dated February 9, 2026, be received for Information.

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

- Build a safe, connected caring and active community
- Champion strategic and responsible growth

BACKGROUND:

The Township's Zoning By-law 2017-70, as amended has functioned well and has been improved over the years to address minor issues through several Housekeeping Amendments. These amendments have focused on Township wide regulations and site-specific zoning provisions to keep the by-law current and align the land use regulations with community needs and strategic development growth.

More recently, improvements to regulations prompted the requirement to focus attention on minor refinements and improvements to the implementation of the regulations by the Township. There are four proposed amendments to the Zoning Bylaw through this housekeeping amendment:

- Zoning Administration and Enforcement
- Agricultural driveway entrances
- On-farm diversified use areas
- Pre-zoning Employment lands within Spring Creek Heights Secondary Plan

CURRENT SITUATION:

Changes to Zoning Administration and Enforcement

Since the Comprehensive Zoning By-law was approved in 2017, the Township did not have a dedicated By-law Enforcement Officer and enforcement was carried out by the Chief Building Official (CBO) and Building Inspector. Section 1.2.1 of the by-law states that enforcement of the by-law is to be carried out by the CBO and Building Inspector. The Township has since hired a full-time dedicated By-law Enforcement Officer position. Therefore, to allow for more efficient and effective enforcement of the by-law, Administration is proposing to add the Municipal By-law Enforcement Officer to the list of positions responsible for the enforcement of the by-law, hence amending Section 1.2.1.

Current Zoning:

1.2.1 Administration and Enforcement

This By-law shall be administered by the municipal staff as appointed by the Council of the Township of West Lincoln. The Chief Building Official and any Inspector appointed under the Building Code Act are each assigned the responsibility of enforcing this By-law for the purposes of Section 49 of the Planning Act.

Proposed Zoning:

This By-law shall be administered by the municipal staff as appointed by the Council of the Township of West Lincoln. **Any Enforcement Officer appointed by Council** are each assigned the responsibility of enforcing this By-law for the

purposes of Section 49 of the Planning Act.

Changes to Agricultural Driveways

Administration have received entrance permit applications for driveway entrances and farm accesses in the agriculturally zoned areas in the Township. Upon review of the by-law regulations, Administration recognizes that the zoning provisions have been written applying an urban standard in the agricultural and rural areas. Part 3: General Provisions (Table 3: Minimum and Maximum Widths for Driveways and Parking Aisles) related to driveway accesses for agricultural parcels and on-farm diversified uses does not have specific regulations for agricultural entrances. The revisions to the regulations will be in alignment with the Township’s engineering standards for culvert construction requirements to avoid confusion and eliminate the delayed release of permits for construction/development applications for driveways in the agricultural areas. They will also be flexible taking into consideration the size of agricultural machinery.

Current Zoning:

Table 3: Minimum and Maximum Widths for Driveways and Parking Aisles

Type of Driveway or Parking Aisle	Minimum Width	Maximum Width
<i>Driveways for residential uses within a settlement area with less than five (5) dwelling units (By-law 2019-63 & 2022-32):</i>		
<i>Driveway for a dwelling with a private garage</i>	3 metres	<i>Garage width plus 0.5 metre or 60% of the lot frontage, whichever is greater, to a maximum of 6 metres</i>
<i>Driveway for a dwelling with no private garage</i>		<i>60% of the lot frontage, to a maximum of 6 metres</i>
<i>Driveways for residential uses outside a settlement area with less than five (5) dwelling units (Bylaw 2019-63 & 2022-32):</i>		
<i>Driveway for a dwelling with a private garage</i>	3 metres	<i>Garage width plus 0.5 metre or 60% of the lot frontage, whichever is greater, to a maximum of 7.5 metres</i>
<i>Driveway for a dwelling with no private garage</i>		<i>60% of the lot frontage, to a maximum of 7.5 metres</i>
<i>Driveways for residential uses with five (5) or more dwelling units and non-residential uses:</i>		
Single traffic lane for travel in one direction	3 metres	6 metres
Double traffic lane for travel in one or two directions	6 metres	9 metres
Double traffic lane for travel in one or two directions plus one or more dedicated turning lanes where required in accordance with an approved site plan	9 metres	16 metres

Proposed Zoning:

Type of Driveway or Parking Aisle	Minimum Width	Maximum Width
<i>Driveways for residential uses within a settlement area with less than five (5) dwelling units (By-law 2019-63 & 2022-32):</i>		
<i>Driveway for a dwelling with a private garage</i>	3 metres	<i>Garage width plus 0.5 metre or 60% of the lot frontage, whichever is greater, to a maximum of 6 metres</i>
<i>Driveway for a dwelling with no private garage</i>		<i>60% of the lot frontage, to a maximum of 6 metres</i>
<i>Driveways for residential uses outside a settlement area with less than five (5) dwelling units (Bylaw 2019-63 & 2022-32):</i>		
<i>Driveway for a dwelling with a private garage</i>	3 metres	<i>Garage width plus 0.5 metre or 60% of the lot frontage, whichever is greater, to a maximum of 7.5 metres</i>
<i>Driveway for a dwelling with no private garage</i>		<i>60% of the lot frontage, to a maximum of 7.5 metres</i>
<i>Driveways for residential uses with five (5) or more dwelling units and non-residential uses:</i>		
Single traffic lane for travel in one direction	3 metres	6 metres
Double traffic lane for travel in one or two directions	6 metres	9 metres
Double traffic lane for travel in one or two directions plus one or more dedicated turning lanes where required in accordance with an approved site plan	9 metres	16 metres
Driveways for Agricultural Uses		
Driveways for farm access or agricultural lots with residential uses	3 metres	16 metres

Changes to On Farm Diversified Uses

Administration recognized that the current zoning regulations for on-farm diversified uses state uses are not to exceed 1% of the lot area, this is not consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) policies that protect prime agricultural areas for long-term agricultural use and supports a thriving agricultural industry and rural economy by permitting a range of different uses on agricultural land. Similarly including the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs' (OMAFRA) Guidelines (Publication 851) on Permitted Uses in Ontario's Prime Agricultural Areas, whereas the guidelines recommend that "limited in area" be relative to the size of the farm property on which the on-farm diversified use is located to a maximum lot coverage of 2%.

Current Zoning:

Section 3.11 On-Farm Diversified Uses

- c) On-farm diversified uses shall not exceed the following size limits:
- i. The area of the lot permanently, temporarily or seasonally devoted to on-farm diversified uses shall not exceed the lesser of 1% of the lot area or 0.5 hectare, including the area of existing and new buildings and structures, required parking

and loading areas, outside display and sales areas, outside storage areas, and any other areas of the lot used for the on-farm diversified use, excluding existing driveways shared with a permitted principal use on the lot and areas that produce a harvestable crop.

Proposed Zoning:

Section 3.11 On-Farm Diversified Uses

- c) On-farm diversified uses shall not exceed the following size limits:
 - i. The area of the lot permanently, temporarily or seasonally devoted to on-farm diversified uses shall not exceed the lesser of **2%** of the lot area or 0.5 hectare, including the area of existing and new buildings and structures, required parking and loading areas, outside display and sales areas, outside storage areas, and any other areas of the lot used for the on-farm diversified use, excluding existing driveways shared with a permitted principal use on the lot and areas that produce a harvestable crop.

Employment Zone in the Spring Creek Heights Secondary Plan Area

Administration is proposing to pre-zone the current employment lands located within the Spring Creek Heights Secondary Plan Area which are designated for restricted employment. Refer to Figure 1 for the Spring Creek Heights Secondary Plan Area.

Figure 1: Spring Creek Heights Secondary Plan Area



Current Zoning:

These vacant lands are designated 'Restrictive Employment' in the Township's Official Plan. Schedule 'S2' of Schedule 'A' of the Zoning By-law 2017-70, as amended has zoned the lands as Development 'D' Zone.

Proposed Zoning:

Considering the imminent future development potential of these lands, the following parcels of land located in the Secondary Plan Area are proposed to be amended from the Development – 'D' Zone to Industrial Employment – 'M2' Zone. This zone can include Class I light industrial uses involving light manufacturing, processing of semi-manufactured goods or assembly of manufactured goods, that only involve indoor activities.

A Holding (H) Provision or other similar tool will be applied to the zone until the Spring Creek Secondary Plan Area policies, such as noise and vibration, drainage, and other applicable site details, are in place to the satisfaction of the Township to ensure compatibility with adjacent sensitive land uses. The holding provision will be added to Part 13, Special Provisions, Section 13.1 and Table 28. Refer to Figure 2 that illustrates the general location of the proposed M2-H## Zone.

Figure 2: Proposed M2-H## Zone

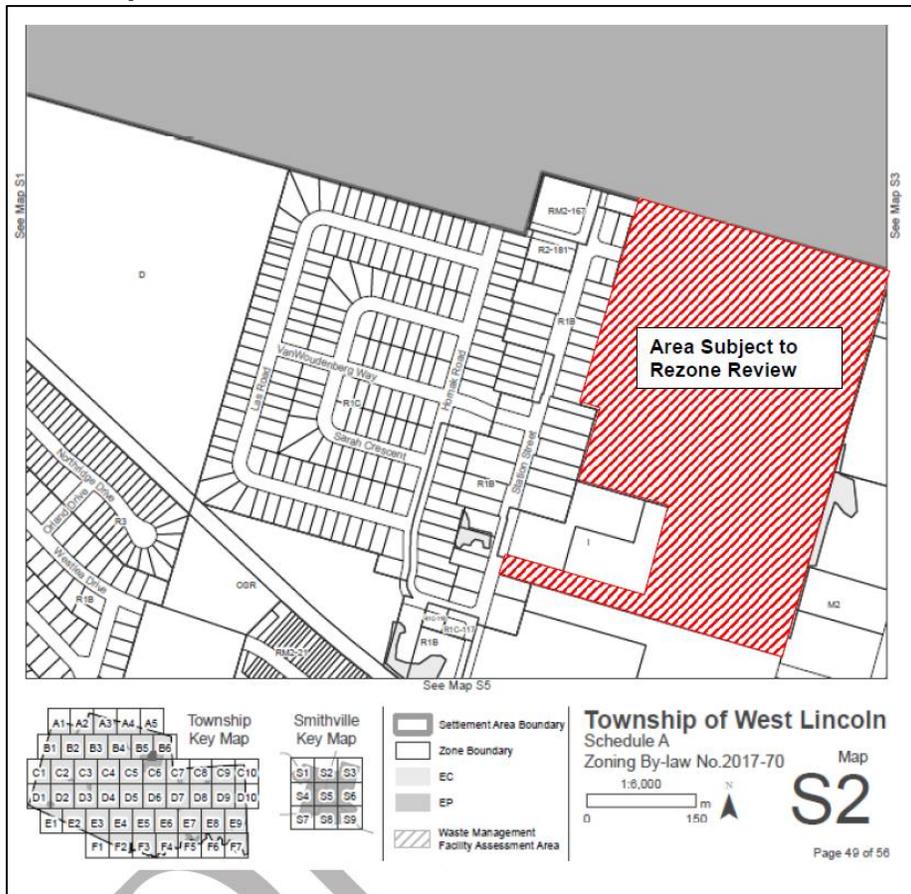


Table 28: Holding Provisions

Holding Provision #	Map #	Parent Zone(s)	Permitted Uses Subject to Holding Provisions	Holding Provisions
H-##	S2	M2	All permitted <i>uses</i> of the parent <i>zone</i> , including Class I Light Industrial Uses involving light manufacturing, processing of semi-manufactured goods or assembly of manufactured goods, that only involve indoor activities.	No site alteration or <i>buildings</i> or <i>structures</i> shall be permitted until the Spring Creek Heights Secondary Plan Area policies are in place to the satisfaction of the <i>Township</i> .

Administration is aware that there may be further areas in the Comprehensive Zoning By-law that need to be reviewed, however, at this time a detailed review and update will be undertaken following the completion of the new West Lincoln Official Plan, slated to be completed in 2027.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no financial implications associated with this report as this application for an amendment to the Zoning By-law has been initiated by the Township of West Lincoln.

INTER-DEPARTMENTAL AND PUBLIC COMMENTS:

The Township has received some preliminary comments and discussions with landowners in the Spring Creek Heights Secondary Plan area regarding the proposed zoning. They are in favour but wish to have further discussion regarding the specific language in the Zoning By-law.

Notice of the Township of West Lincoln Initiated Housekeeping Zoning By-law Amendment was circulated in the local newspaper, and the notice was posted on the Township website and circulated to agencies and departments on January 15, 2026.

CONCLUSION:

This report is to inform Committee and Council and the public that Administration have prepared a Housekeeping Amending By-law that are considered minor and technical in nature but will resolve a few of the issues that have been presented by members of the public and development community since the implementation of the Township’s Comprehensive Zoning By-law, 2017-70, as amended.

The draft Housekeeping Amending By-law is found in Schedule A.

ATTACHMENTS:

Schedule A – Draft By-law and Schedule

Prepared & Submitted by:

Susan Smyth
Manager, Community Planning and Design

Approved by:

Gerrit Boerema
Director, Growth and Sustainability

Truper McBride
CAO

**THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WEST LINCOLN
BY-LAW NO. 2026-XX**

**A BY-LAW TO AMEND ZONING BY-LAW NO. 2017-70, AS AMENDED,
OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WEST LINCOLN**

WHEREAS the Township of West Lincoln Council is empowered to enact this By-Law by virtue of the Provisions of Section 34 of the Planning Act, 1990, as amended;

NOW THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WEST LINCOLN HEREBY ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

1. THAT, Part 1, Administration, Section 1.2.1 Administration and Enforcement, is hereby amended and modified to:

This By-law shall be administered by the municipal staff as appointed by the Council of the Township of West Lincoln. ~~The Chief Building Official and any Inspector~~ **Any Enforcement Office appointed** ~~under the Building Code Act~~ **by Council** are each assigned the responsibility of enforcing this By-law for the purposes of Section 49 of the Planning Act.

2. THAT, Part 3, General Provisions, Section 3.11 On-Farm Diversified Uses, is hereby amended and modified to:

c) On-farm diversified uses shall not exceed the following size limits:

- i. The area of the lot permanently, temporarily or seasonally devoted to on-farm diversified uses shall not exceed the lesser of ~~4%~~ **2%** of the lot area or 0.5 hectare, including the area of existing and new buildings and structures, required parking and loading areas, outside display and sales areas, outside storage areas, and any other areas of the lot used for the on-farm diversified use, excluding existing driveways shared with a permitted principal use on the lot and areas that produce a harvestable crop; and,

3. THAT, Part 3, General Provisions, Section 3.12.2 Driveways and Parking Aisles, specifically Table 3: Minimum and Maximum Widths for Driveways and Parking Aisles is amended as follows:

Type of Driveway or Parking Aisle	Minimum Width	Maximum Width
<i>Driveways for residential uses within a settlement area with less than five (5) dwelling units (By-law 2019-63 & 2022-32):</i>		
<i>Driveway for a dwelling with a private garage</i>	3 metres	<i>Garage width plus 0.5 metre or 60% of the lot frontage, whichever is greater, to a maximum of 6 metres</i>
<i>Driveway for a dwelling with no private garage</i>		<i>60% of the lot frontage, to a maximum of 6 metres</i>
<i>Driveways for residential uses outside a settlement area with less than five (5) dwelling units (Bylaw 2019-63 & 2022-32):</i>		
<i>Driveway for a dwelling with a private garage</i>	3 metres	<i>Garage width plus 0.5 metre or 60% of the lot frontage, whichever is greater, to a maximum of 7.5 metres</i>
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<i>Driveways for residential uses with five (5) or more dwelling units and non-residential uses:</i>		
Single traffic lane for travel in one direction	3 metres	6 metres
Double traffic lane for travel in one or two directions	6 metres	9 metres
Double traffic lane for travel in one or two directions plus one or more dedicated turning lanes where required in accordance with an approved site plan	9 metres	16 metres
Driveways for Agricultural Uses		
Driveways for farm access or agricultural lots with residential uses	3 metres	16 metres

Type of Driveway or Parking Aisle	Minimum Width	Maximum Width
<i>Parking aisles:</i>		
<i>Parking aisles for parking spaces angled 75 or 90 degrees to a line parallel to the aisle</i>	6 metres	7.5 metres
<i>Parking aisles for parking spaces angled 60 degrees to a line parallel to the aisle</i>	5 metres	
<i>Parking aisles for parking spaces angled 45 degrees to a line parallel to the aisle</i>	4 metres	
<i>Parking aisles for parallel parking spaces</i>	5 metres	

4. THAT, Map 'S2' to Schedule 'A' to Zoning By-law No. 2017- 70, as amended, is amended by changing the zoning as shown on Schedule 'A' attached hereto from Development (D) Zone to Industrial Employment Zone (M2-H-##) with a Holding Provision.
5. THAT, Part 13, Special Provisions, Section 13.1 Holding Provisions and Table 28 is hereby amended by adding the following:

Table 28: Holding Provisions

Holding Provision #	Map #	Parent Zone(s)	Permitted Uses Subject to Holding Provisions	Holding Provisions
H-##	S2	M2	All permitted uses of the parent zone, including Class I Light Industrial Uses involving light manufacturing, processing of semi-manufactured goods or assembly of manufactured goods, that only involve indoor activities.	No site alteration or buildings or structures shall be permitted until the Spring Creek Heights Secondary Plan Area policies are in place to the satisfaction of the Township.

6. THAT, all other provisions of By-law 2017-70, as amended, continue to apply.
7. THAT, this By-law shall become effective from and after the date of passing thereof.

READ A FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD TIME AND FINALLY PASSED THIS ____ DAY OF _____, 2026.

MAYOR CHERYL GANANN

JUSTIN PAYLOVE
MANAGER, LEGISLATIVE SERVICES/CLERK

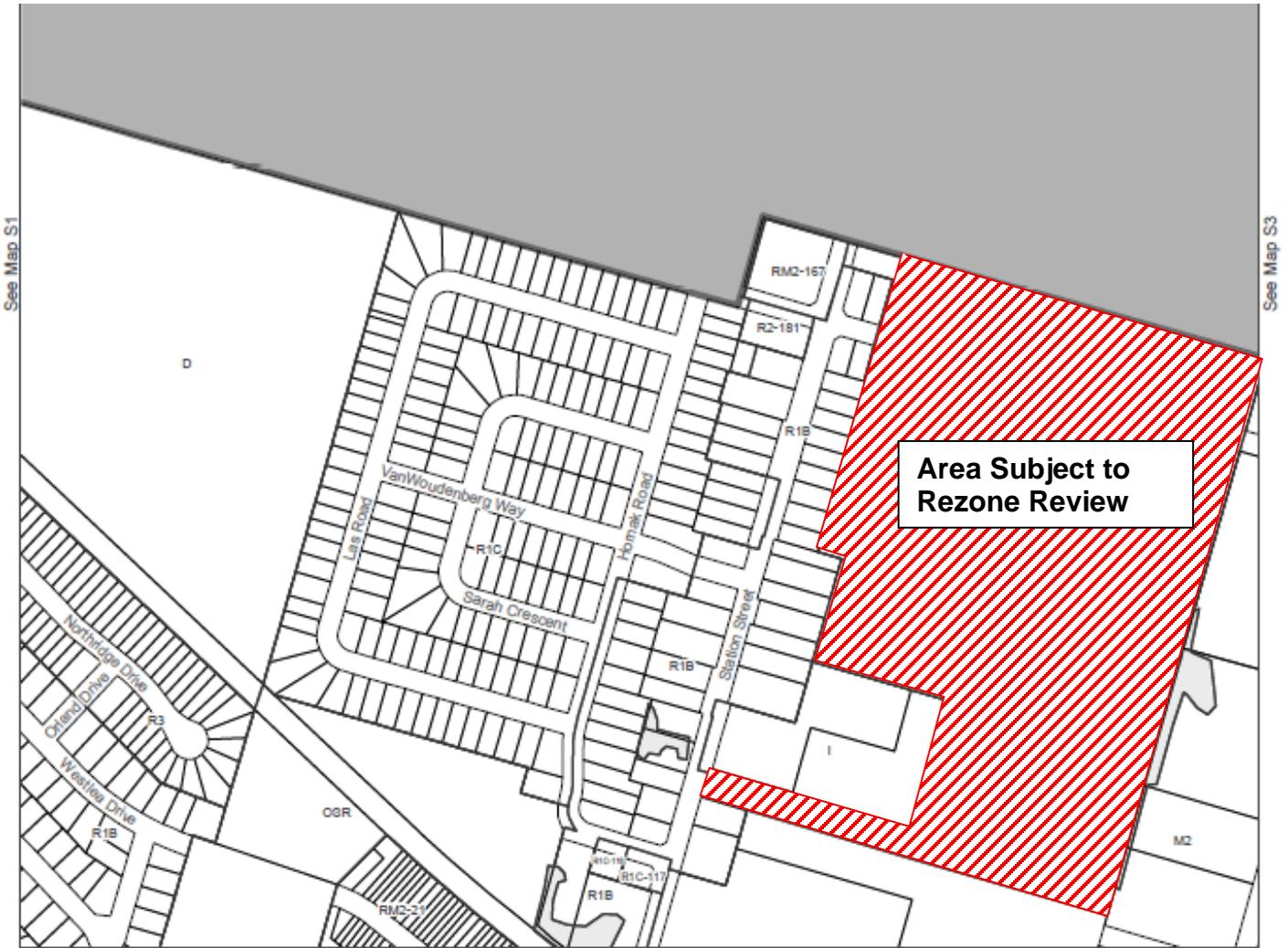
EXPLANATION OF THE PURPOSE AND EFFECT OF BY-LAW NO. 2026-XX

The Township's Comprehensive Zoning By-law 2017-70 was passed by the Council of the Corporation of the Township of West Lincoln on June 26, 2017. This By-law amends Zoning By-law 2017-70, as amended, to address issues and opportunities that have become apparent during implementation.

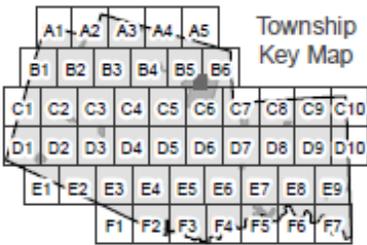
ZBA File: 1601-012-25 (Housekeeping By-law)

DRAFT

SCHEDULE 'A'

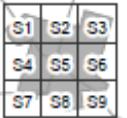


See Map S5



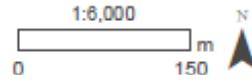
Township Key Map

Smithville Key Map



- Settlement Area Boundary
- Zone Boundary
- EC
- EP
- Waste Management Facility Assessment Area

Township of West Lincoln
Schedule A
Zoning By-law No.2017-70



Map
S2

Page 49 of 56

DATE: February 9, 2026

REPORT NO: PD-05-2026

SUBJECT: **Information Report**
Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan
File No. 1701-001-26

CONTACT: Gerrit Boerema, Director, Growth and Sustainability

OVERVIEW:

- Council through the approved 2025 budget has directed Administration to create an Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan (CIP), to provide incentive programs for the creation of affordable housing in the Township.
- In 2025 the Township retained Nethery Consulting to prepare a background report, the Community Improvement Plan and Official Plan amendment.
- There have been two public surveys completed, as well as a Public Information Centre held on January 14th, 2026.
- This report is to provide background to the statutory public meeting being held on February 9th, 2026 and to provide an overview of the proposed CIP programs prepared by Nethery Planning Consultants.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Information Report PD-05-2026 titled “Information Report, Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan, File No. 1701-001-26” dated February 9, 2026 be received for information.

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

Theme #

- **Build a Safe, Connected, Caring and Active Community**
- **Champion Strategic and Responsible Growth**

BACKGROUND:

In the 2025 Township Budget Council approved money to initiate an affordable housing Community Improvement Plan in alignment with the Township’s strategic plan to

encourage the development of mixed forms of housing across the Township. A Community Improvement Plan is a tool under the Planning Act that can provide financial incentives to stimulate private sector investment, building and development work. It allows for a variety of financial grants and loans to assist property owners and tenants in rehabilitating their properties and buildings within a designated Community Improvement area.

Administration has retained a consultant, Nethery Planning, to complete the Affordable Housing CIP Program. It is anticipated that the background report to the CIP will be completed by December and the CIP will be before Council in March for approval.

If approved by Council, the CIP and Official Plan Amendment would also need to be approved by the Province, and the CIP program will need to be funded prior to any grants or incentives being offered.

CURRENT SITUATION:

In an effort to provide incentives for affordable housing projects, Council has supported the creation of an Affordable Housing CIP. In advance of preparing the CIP, Nethery Planning Consultants undertook a [Background study](#) of the Township, as well as conducted a survey to gauge the public's interest in different CIP programs.

In January of 2026, an Open House Session was also held, and an additional survey was also released to the public. The [slide deck from the Open House](#) can be found on the Township's website.

Through the public engagement it was evident that there was a desire for incentive programs which could create more affordable units for seniors housing, waive Township fees, and support family sized units, among other things.

The [Background report](#) was completed in 2025 and is available on the Township's website under the [Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan](#) webpage.

The vision statement of the draft CIP is as follows:

"To invest in the liability of our community by providing the Township with a toolbox of incentive programs for affordable housing for people of all ages and stages, connecting people to amenities, and creating a more inclusive West Lincoln for all."

The goals for the CIP program are as follows:

- To Expand the supply of Affordable Housing in Smithville
- Diversify Housing Options to Serve All Ages and Stages
- Reduce Barriers to Affordable and Attainable Housing Development
- Encourage Homeowner Participation in Housing Solutions
- Maximize the Impact of Municipal Funding

The proposed CIP programs include a range of financial and non-financial incentives which include the following:

- Municipal Fee Grant Program
- Additional Residential Unit (ARU) Grant
- Accessibility Top-up Grant
- Family-Sized/Seniors Unit Top-Up Grant
- Home Upgrade Grant
- Education and Capacity Building workshops (non-financial)
- Housing Concierge/client support service (non-financial)
- Housing reserve (non-financial)

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

If Committee and Council approves the new Affordable housing CIP program, funds would need to be allocated to that program in order to fund the incentive program.

As previously discussed in Staff Report PD-43-2025, there is an option to re-allocate funds currently committed to the Commercial Building Facade Program which are held in the Township's Planning Reserve, in the amount of \$95,985. Repurposing these funds towards the future Affordable Housing CIP program would enable a more efficient deployment of existing resources, and provide a necessary funding source for the Affordable Housing CIP program, once approved by Council.

The repurposing of these funds would reduce pressure on the Planning Reserve and reduce the required increases to the reserve contributions. Further, Administration will provide more information on the proposed future Affordable Housing CIP program project funding strategy through the 2027 Budget process, if approved.

The Affordable Housing CIP Project is being completed by Nethery Planning for approximately \$30,000, which is in line with the approved project budget. This required a budget amendment (BA 2025-10), which was approved by Administration within their delegated authority and shared with Council in the Q3 2025 Financial Update report (T-18-2025).

INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COMMENTS:

This project is being completed with the assistance of the Director of Corporate Services/CFO and Communications/Legal and Legislative services. Community and Protective Services has also been involved.

The Draft CIP and Background report were also shared with the Region of Niagara, however, there were not comments provided back to staff.

The Region is also completing work on CIP programs, including a purpose built rental CIP

program. It would be intended that the Township program, if approved, could be stacked with any available Regional funding.

CONCLUSION:

Following any further public comments received through the public meeting and public consultation period, Administration will bring a recommendation to Committee at a future date with the final proposed Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan. This recommendation will also recommend options for funding the program.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan

Prepared & Submitted by:

Approved by:

**Gerrit Boerema
Director, Growth and Sustainability**

**Truper McBride
CAO**



The Township of West Lincoln

Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan

Background Study Report
December 2025

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Introduction

The Township of West Lincoln is preparing an Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan (CIP) to establish a framework of financial and non-financial tools that will encourage the creation of affordable and attainable housing across the municipality. The Plan responds to Council’s strategic priorities of promoting diverse housing options, supporting community well-being, and planning for sustainable and inclusive growth. Like many municipalities, West Lincoln is facing an increasing gap between local household incomes and housing costs, limited rental availability, and barriers to developing a diverse range of housing forms. The West Lincoln Affordable Housing CIP will provide a toolbox of options, enabling the Township to advance a coordinated, locally tailored approach to address these challenges.

Under the *Municipal Act*, the Township does not have legal authority to require private developers to build affordable housing, and current market conditions make such development financially challenging. Furthermore, through a prohibition on bonusing under the *Municipal Act*, municipalities are prohibited from waiving application fees for certain types of development, including affordable housing, unless Council has adopted a Community Improvement Plan set out under Part IV, Community Improvement of the *Planning Act*. This background report forms the foundation for the creation of the West Lincoln Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan, outlining the legislative and policy context and best practices, as well as identifying options for the creation of the Community Improvement Plan itself.

What does “affordable housing” mean for the Township of West Lincoln?

There are many ways to define “affordable housing,” depending on whether the focus is on market conditions, household income, or local housing needs. During initial engagement on the project, there was significant focus on how West Lincoln residents and stakeholders define affordability within the community. The responses indicate a need for a common, agreed-upon understanding of affordability. Recent direction from

the Provincial government has underscored a need to align Official Plan definitions with the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 definition of Affordable Housing for clarity and consistency.

Under this definition, “affordable housing” means:

- 1. In the case of ownership housing, the least expensive of:
 - a. Housing for which the purchase price results in annual accommodation costs which do not exceed 30 percent of gross annual household income for low and moderate income households; or*
 - b. Housing for which the purchase price is at least 10 percent below the average purchase price of a resale unit in the municipality;**
- 2. In the case of rental housing, the least expensive of:
 - a. A unit for which the rent does not exceed 30 percent of gross annual household income for low and moderate income households; or*
 - b. A unit for which the rent is at or below the average market rent of a unit in the municipality.**

In practical terms, this means that affordable ownership housing is either at least 10% below the average resale price in West Lincoln or affordable to low- and moderate-income households based on their income levels. Similarly, affordable rental housing is housing where the rent is at or below the average market rent in the municipality or does not exceed 30% of a household’s income.

Defining a Community Improvement Plan (CIP)

A Community Improvement Plan (CIP) is a tool that helps municipalities like the Township of West Lincoln improve their communities. It allows the Township to offer grants, loans, or other forms of support to encourage projects that meet local goals, such as creating more affordable housing. The CIP gives the Township a structured way to partner with residents, developers, and community organizations to make it easier and more affordable to build the types of housing and amenities that meet the community’s needs.

This Background Study Report represents the first phase of the Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan process (see **Figure 1**) and establishes the foundation for the development of the Plan. It includes a review of relevant Provincial, Regional, and local policy frameworks, such as the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024, the Niagara Region Official Plan, and the Township of West Lincoln Official Plan and Zoning By-law. This study also outlines a jurisdictional scan of comparable affordable housing CIPs from municipalities across Ontario.

Figure 1: Affordable Housing CIP Study Process



The purpose of this Report is to establish the policy basis for an Affordable Housing CIP, create preliminary goals and directions for the Plan, and present a suite of potential financial and non-financial incentives for consideration. The findings will guide the next phase, which involves drafting program options and identifying the Community Improvement Project Area.

Legislative Context

The following section explores the legislative framework that governs the use and implementation of Community Improvement Plans.

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

The Township of West Lincoln legally cannot mandate private developers to build affordable housing, however the *Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990 c. P.13*, section 28 provides the authority for a Council to enact a Community Improvement Plan (CIP). An Affordable Housing CIP is a tool that encourages private landowners and developers to build affordable housing units by offering financial and non-financial incentives to overcome obstacles that may prevent the creation of these units.

Section 28 Community Improvement Project Area

Section 28 of the *Planning Act* provides the framework for CIPs, such as Community Improvement Project Areas (CIPA), community improvement tools, and eligible costs.

The first step to enact a Community Improvement Plan under section 28 of the *Planning Act*, is to identify a Community Improvement Project Area. A Community Improvement Project Area, per Section 28(1), is an area that will benefit from community improvement, such as areas that are dilapidated, overcrowded, has unsuitable buildings, or for any other environmental, social, or community economic reason.

Once West Lincoln defines a Community Improvement Project Area, it may then prepare and use a “community improvement plan” to:

- Acquire, hold, clear, grade or otherwise prepare land (Section 28(3)(c));
- Construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on land acquired or held by the Municipality (Section 28(6)(a));
- Sell, lease or dispose of any land and buildings acquired or held by the Municipality (Section 28(6)(b)); and
- Make grants or loans to owners and tenants of land and buildings within the community improvement project area to pay for the whole or any part of ‘eligible costs’ related to community improvement (Section 28(7)).

“Eligible costs” are specified in Section 28 (7.1) of the *Planning Act*, and include costs related to: “*environmental site assessment, environmental remediation, development, redevelopment, construction and reconstruction of lands and buildings for rehabilitation*”

purposes or for the provision of energy efficient uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements or facilities”.

Importantly, Section 28 (7.3) states that the total of the grants and loans provided in respect of the lands and buildings shall not exceed the eligible cost of the community improvement project with respect to those lands and buildings.

Section 69 Tariff of Fees

In addition to Section 28 of the *Planning Act*, Section 69 of the Act has an impact on housing affordability and the creation of an Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan. Section 69(2) of the *Planning Act* permits a Council, planning board, or a committee of adjustment to reduce or waive the payment of a fee in respect to an application if the Council, planning board, or committee of adjustment is satisfied that it would be unreasonable to require payment. This establishes a basis to allow for financial flexibility regarding formal planning applications. West Lincoln, through the creation of the Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan, can offer incentive programs that provide for municipal fee waivers to exempt certain types of development as a financial incentive.

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

The Development Charges Act, section 5(1), provides the framework to develop a development charge By-law, which is used to determine development charges that may be imposed. This By-law can also be used to make full or partial exemptions for different types of development (section 5(1)(10)). *The Development Charges Act*, section 4.1, currently provides for development charge exemptions for the development of affordable and attainable residential units, non-profit housing, inclusionary zoning units, and long-term care homes.

Development charges form one piece of the puzzle through which the Township can offer incentives for housing development. Any incentives offered through an Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan would be above and beyond the base exemptions that are provided under the *Development Charges Act* in accordance with the Provincial Planning Statement’s definition of Affordable Housing outlined above.

For example, if the Township wished to incentivize market rate development towards a more attainable level of affordability, a CIP could be used to offer development charge exemptions for units that achieve affordability levels closer to average market rents.

Policy Context

The following section provides an overview of Provincial, Regional, and local policies that will guide the creation of the Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan in West Lincoln.

Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 (PPS)

The PPS sets out Ontario's overall direction for land use planning, including the need for a full range and mix of housing options that are affordable to residents (section 2.2.1(b)). It encourages municipalities to use local planning tools to help remove barriers and support the development of affordable and attainable housing.

The vision the PPS sets out as it relates to housing affordability is as follows:

More than anything, a prosperous Ontario will see the building of more homes for all Ontarians. This is why the province has set a goal of getting at least 1.5 million homes built by 2031. Ontario will increase the supply and mix of housing options, addressing the full range of housing affordability needs.

One tool the Township has to accomplish this is the implementation of Community Improvement Plans that can remove financial and non-financial barriers to building affordable residential units.

Niagara Region Official Plan, 2022 (NOP)

As of March 31, 2025, the Niagara Official Plan is no longer a Regional Plan, and responsibility for its management and implementation has been transferred to the Township of West Lincoln and other respective lower-tier municipalities. This change

has had the effect of removing Niagara Region's ability to establish CIPs or fund lower-tier municipal CIPs. To remedy this, on November 24, 2025, the province passed changes to the *Planning Act* through Bill 60 *Fighting Delays, Building Faster Act, 2025*. With these new changes, Niagara Region will regain the ability to participate in Community Improvement Planning. An excerpt from the legislation's explanatory text is as follows:

Currently, subsection 28 (2) of the Act permits the council of a local municipality or of a prescribed upper-tier municipality to pass a by-law designating a community improvement project area, if there is an official plan in effect in the municipality that contains provisions relating to community improvement. An amendment provides that the subsection no longer applies to prescribed upper-tier municipalities.

While the Niagara Region Official Plan, 2022 does not contain extensive Community Improvement Plan policies, this newly proposed legislation will enable Regional participation in West Lincoln's Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan, should there be an opportunity to do so.

Community Improvement Policies

An excerpt of the Niagara Region Official Plan policies as they relate to Community Improvement are outlined below:

- 7.5.1.1 For the purpose of promoting healthy communities, the Region may support community improvement through Regional programs enabled by plans, policies and by-laws it may establish, and by participation in eligible programs in Local Area Municipalities.*
- 7.5.1.2 The Region will regularly engage with Local municipal staff regarding administration and enhancement of programs designed to promote community improvement.*

Furthermore, while the Region's Official Plan (NOP) continues to inform local policy and align with Provincial objectives, it no longer acts as a binding planning instrument. The Township of West Lincoln now has greater autonomy to establish and implement its

own land use and housing strategies. Within this new context, the Region's Official Plan serves as an important reference document that supports municipal initiatives like the Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan.

Housing Policies

The NOP recognizes that access to a diverse and affordable range of housing options is essential to maintaining a high quality of life, supporting economic growth, and creating complete and inclusive communities.

Section 2.3 of the NOP sets out three main objectives as they relate to housing and implementation:

- 1. To provide a mix of housing options that address current and future needs;*
- 2. To increase the availability of affordable and attainable housing across the Region; and,*
- 3. To achieve these goals through the use of land use and financial incentive tools.*

To achieve these objectives, the Region established minimum affordable housing targets of 20 per cent of all new rental housing and 10 per cent of all new ownership housing. The NOP prioritized the use of surplus Regional property for housing and promoted the redevelopment of underutilized sites for mixed-use and residential purposes. Section 2.3.3 of the NOP outlines mechanisms to help meet these objectives, such as flexible zoning, streamlined approvals, and financial incentives like grants, development charge deferrals, and property tax reductions.

General implementation tools in section 7.5.4 of the NOP identifies Community Improvement Plans as one of the key tools that municipalities can use to support these housing objectives.

For West Lincoln, the Affordable Housing CIP will build directly on this framework by providing a local implementation tool to advance the Township's housing goals.

Township of West Lincoln Official Plan, 2021

The Township of West Lincoln Official Plan (2021 Consolidation) provides the local policy foundation for housing and community improvement planning. It aligns with the

Region of Niagara Official Plan and the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 by promoting housing diversity, affordability, and community revitalization. The Plan recognizes affordable housing as a fundamental component of a complete and inclusive community and supports both ownership and rental options that are attainable for a range of income levels.

Community Improvement Policies

Within Section 18.10 of the West Lincoln Official Plan: Community Improvement, direction is provided for how the Township identifies, designates, and manages community improvement areas.

Section 18.10.1 outlines the Township's objectives for community improvement planning, including:

- To preserve, rehabilitate and redevelop the existing built environment.
- To maximize the use of existing public infrastructure, facilities, lands and amenities.
- To coordinate private and public community improvement activities.
- To guide the Township in setting priorities for municipal expenditure respecting community improvement projects.
- To participate, wherever possible, in Federal, Provincial and/or Regional programs to facilitate community improvement.
- To reconcile existing land use conflicts and minimize future land use conflicts.

Housing Policies

Section 17 of the West Lincoln Official Plan establishes the Township's commitment to ensuring an adequate supply and mix of housing types, sizes, and tenures that meet the needs of current and future residents. Policies under this section direct the Township to:

- encourage a broad range of housing forms and densities in appropriate locations, including infill and intensification opportunities within settlement areas;
- support the development of affordable and rental housing through partnerships with the private, public, and non-profit sectors;

- promote innovative and alternative housing solutions, such as additional residential units, conversions, and adaptive reuse; and
- use municipal tools, such as planning approvals and financial incentives, to facilitate the provision of affordable housing.

Through the implementation of an Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan, the Township will be enabling participation in Federal, Provincial and/or Regional programs to facilitate all levels of government investment in community improvement through affordable housing.

A broad range of criteria for the selection of Community Improvement Project Areas is listed in Section 18.10.2. For an area to be identified as a Community Improvement Project Area, one or more of the criteria outlined must be present. Specifically, the proposed Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan and Project Area will align with the following conditions:

- ii) Vacant lots and/or underutilized properties and buildings which have potential for infill, redevelopment or expansion to better utilize the land base;*
- vii) Deterioration or deficiencies in the level of community and social services such as public open space, municipal parks, neighbourhood parks, indoor/outdoor recreational facilities, and public social facilities;*

While Affordable Housing is not explicitly outlined as a reason for community improvement, it could be categorized as a deficiency “in the level of community and social services.” Nevertheless, consideration should be given towards implementing an Official Plan Amendment as part of the implementation of the Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan to establish clear direction for Community Improvement as it relates to Affordable Housing.

Together, Sections 17 and 18.10 in the Township’s Official Plan provide the starting point of a policy foundation for preparing the Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan. This CIP will directly support these objectives by establishing a

framework of programs and incentives that support the creation of affordable and attainable housing, and help reinforce West Lincoln's character as a complete, inclusive, and sustainable community.

The establishment of the Community Improvement Project Area will be discussed further in a subsequent section.

Township of West Lincoln Zoning By-law 2017-70

The Township of West Lincoln's *Comprehensive Zoning By-law 2017-70*, as amended, provides the primary regulatory framework for land use, building form, and density within the Township. It implements the Official Plan by defining specific zones, permitted uses, and performance standards for residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, and agricultural areas. The Township's Zoning By-law plays a key role in shaping how and where housing can be developed, including provisions for additional residential units, accessory apartments, and a variety of dwelling types across different settlement areas.

Recent Provincial changes also require municipalities to allow up to three residential units on most urban residential lots, removing the need for rezoning or minor variances in many cases.

For West Lincoln, the Zoning By-law serves as a key tool for implementing these Provincial directions at the local level. The Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan could be designed to complement these regulatory changes by providing financial and procedural incentives that help make new or renovated affordable units financially viable.

West Lincoln Strategic Plan, 2023–2026

The Township's Corporate Strategic Plan presents a long-term vision for West Lincoln as a safe, thriving, and connected community that supports growth while maintaining its rural character. The objectives of the Strategic Plan include building a safe, connected, caring, and active community, championing strategic and responsible growth, enriching the Township's strong agricultural legacy, and advancing organizational capacity and effectiveness. The Affordable Housing CIP will encourage the development of mixed

forms of housing and contribute to strategic and responsible growth within the Township. By working collaboratively with developers, builders, and nonprofits through the Affordable Housing CIP, the Township can support residential growth, including infill and intensification within Smithville.

Economic Development Strategy Refresh, 2020

The Economic Development Strategy Refresh (2020) updated the Township's 2016 Plan to reflect current economic conditions and priorities under the Strategic Plan. It emphasizes business retention and attraction, infrastructure readiness, community engagement, and partnerships that promote local prosperity. Affordable, attainable housing is identified as a critical factor in workforce attraction and retention, particularly for small businesses, manufacturers, and agricultural employers.

During the course of community engagement for this strategy update, the Township polled residents on their opinions of success factors in starting and growing a business in West Lincoln. The results were clear: participants voted that affordable housing is an *Important* factor, while they perceived the Township's performance in housing availability and affordability as *poor*.

The Affordable Housing CIP will provide the Township with tools to increase housing choice, improve affordability for workers, and as a result, strengthen the Township's overall economic competitiveness.

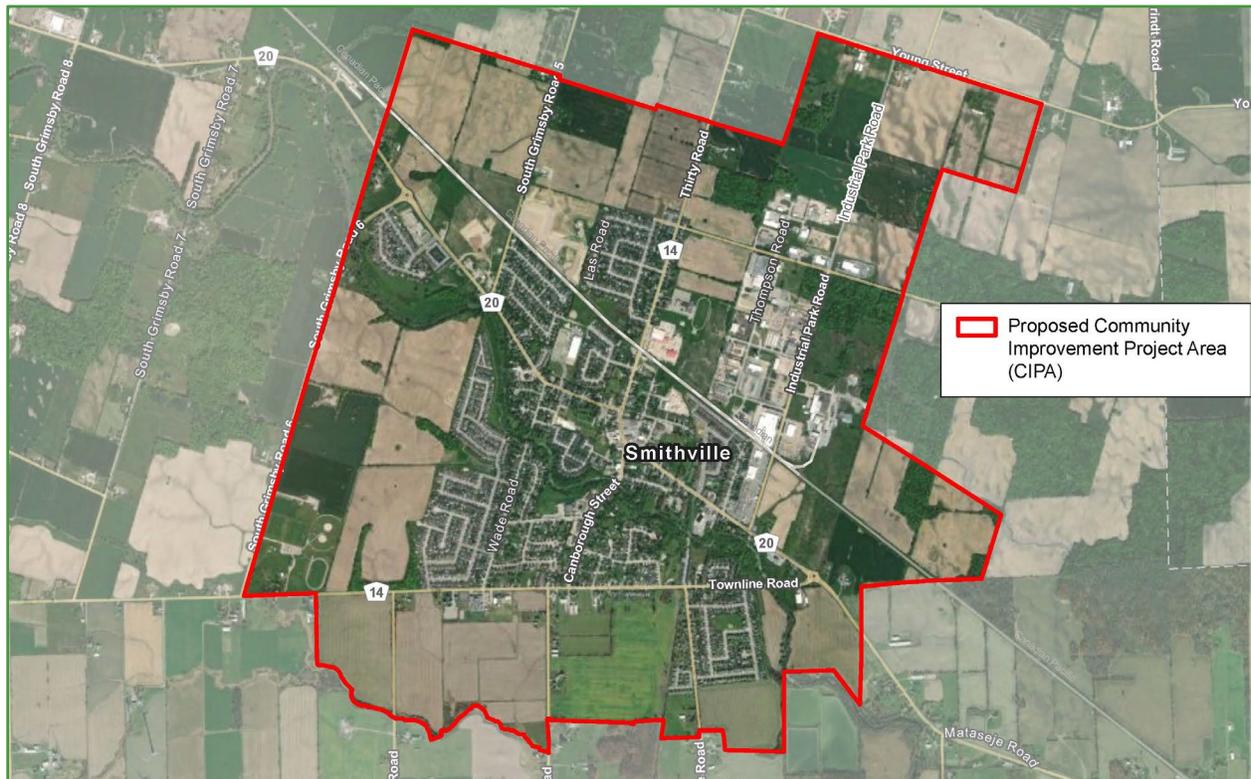
Community Improvement Project Area

Per Section 28 of the *Planning Act*, the first step in preparing a Community Improvement Plan is for Council to designate a Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA). A CIPA may apply Township-wide or be focused on a specific settlement area based on the intent of the Plan. West Lincoln is comprised of fourteen hamlets, of which the largest include: Caistorville, Fulton, Bismark, Grassie, Silverdale, St. Ann's, and Wellandport. There is one primary urban centre: Smithville. As the Township's only Urban Settlement Area, Smithville has been identified by the Region of Niagara as the primary focus for long-term residential and employment growth, with West Lincoln forecast to reach a population of 38,370 by 2051, and the majority of this growth directed to Smithville.

Significant public investment has already been directed toward planning for Smithville's long-term urban structure, infrastructure, and servicing needs. Through the Master Community Plan (MCP), Subwatershed Study, Transportation Master Plan, and Master Servicing Plan, the Township and Region have undertaken comprehensive, multiyear planning work to ensure that Smithville can support the full range of future community uses, infrastructure, and housing types.

The Township's substantial policy groundwork, infrastructure planning, and long-term growth allocation positions Smithville as the logical focus for a Community Improvement Project Area (see map in **Figure 2**). Furthermore, the selection of Smithville for the project area most closely aligns with the Official Plan's Criteria for Selection of Community Improvement Areas. Concentrating the CIP within the Smithville Urban Settlement Area will support the Township's strategic objectives of accommodating growth on full municipal services, promoting intensification and affordable housing opportunities, aligning capital investments, and supporting a sustainable, complete community structure.

Figure 2: Proposed Community Improvement Project Area Boundary Map



CIP Best Practices

To understand how other municipalities are creating and implementing affordable housing CIPs, three case studies have been conducted that will help to inform the design for the new West Lincoln Affordable Housing CIP.

Municipality of North Perth – Attainable Housing CIP (2024)

North Perth is a community located in Perth County in southwestern Ontario. It is a predominately rural community with its main urban centre being the Town of Listowel. It is the home of approximately 15,500 residents, making it comparable to West Lincoln, which is the home of 15,454 residents. The Municipality's economy is strongly tied to its agricultural sector, and like West Lincoln, it has experienced significant population growth and is the fastest-growing municipality in Perth County. This booming growth has increased pressure to develop more attainable workforce housing. It's Attainable

Housing CIP offers practical insights into tools that work for low- to mid-density communities.

Council adopted the North Perth Attainable Housing CIP in August 2024, with the goal of minimizing financial barriers to creating affordable and attainable housing.

The municipality implemented several municipal programs, including:

1. **Secondary Dwelling Unit Advertising Program** to raise awareness of existing permissions for additional residential units (ARUs) by providing public education materials, online mapping, and guidance to property owners, encouraging them to add rental units that increase local housing supply.
2. **County TIEG Program Partnership** to coordinate with Perth County on the delivery of the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant (TIEG) Program, aligning local and Regional incentives to maximize financial support for attainable housing developments and redevelopment projects.
3. **Residential Rental Registry Program** to create and maintain a database of rental properties, improving transparency for tenants and landlords, supporting By-law compliance, and providing data that can inform housing policy and CIP program delivery.
4. **Strategic Land Banking Program** to enable the municipality to acquire, hold, and prepare surplus or strategic lands for future affordable or attainable housing projects, either through municipal development, partnerships, or resale to builders committed to affordability objectives.

The North Perth CIP also provides for financial incentive programs that may be available for eligible applicants. The Plan outlines the general eligibility criteria, summarized below:

- a) Properties must be located within the Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA) designated by by-law for the CIP.
- b) Only residential projects that provide affordable or attainable housing, as defined in the Plan are eligible.
- c) Projects must support one or more community improvement objectives.

- d) Projects must increase the supply of affordable or attainable housing, with grant values proportional to the number of qualifying units.
- e) Proposed work must result in visible improvement or rehabilitation beyond standard maintenance or replacement.
- f) Property owners, assessed owners, or tenants (with written owner consent) are eligible to apply.
- g) Total grant funding cannot exceed the total value of eligible project costs.
- h) Applicants may access multiple grants, but total funding in any 24-month period cannot exceed \$20,000 per project, excluding deferral or rebate programs.
- i) Incentives cannot be applied retroactively to projects started before application approval.
- j) Applicants must have no outstanding taxes or municipal obligations on the property.
- k) All other funding sources must be disclosed and may reduce the value of municipal incentives at Council's discretion.
- l) Projects must comply with all applicable municipal policies, by-laws, and building or planning approvals.
- m) Affordable or attainable units must remain as such for at least 20 years, secured through a registered agreement with the Municipality.
- n) If a property with attainable rental units is sold, the new owner must assume the existing agreement to maintain affordability for the original term.
- o) Units developed through this Plan cannot be used for short-term accommodations; this restriction will be registered on title.

The sum of the eligibility criteria ensures regard for development aligned with the goals and objectives of the CIP, high-quality design principles, transparency of funding and outstanding debts, and long-term affordability enforced through legal agreements.

Financial Incentive Programs outlined in this CIP include:

1. **Planning and Building Permit Fee Grant** to offset Planning Act application and building permit fees that are typically required by the municipality.

2. **Tax Increment Equivalency Grant** to provide a grant that is equivalent to a percentage of the municipal portion of property taxes where a tax increase has occurred because of the attainable housing project.
3. **Development Charge Rebate Program** with the intention to waive the cost of municipal development charges to promote community improvement, as outlined in the Development Charges Act.
4. **Additional Dwelling Unit Grant Program** that provides a grant for 50% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$10,000 per property to create an additional dwelling unit.
5. **Commercial and Rental Housing Conversion and Expansion Grant** to assist with the conversion of small-scale vacant or underutilized spaces for eligible uses, including commercial, rental housing, and mixed-use projects.

The North Perth Attainable Housing CIP also outlines alternative funding options for housing, including incentives programs offered by the Federal government, the Ontario government, the City of Stratford Social Services Department, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM).

Town of the Blue Mountains – Housing Within Reach (2021)

The Town of the Blue Mountains is situated along the southern shore of Georgian Bay and is characterized as a rural and recreation-oriented community with a 2021 population of 9,400 residents. The pressures of growth in the Town are unique as its affordability challenges are driven by tourism, seasonal residents, and the high cost of living.

The Town of the Blue Mountains “Housing Within Reach” Community Improvement Plan was adopted by Council in January 2021 with the goal of reducing housing barriers and promoting the development of attainable housing.

Their CIP focuses solely on “attainable’ housing.” They distinguish attainable housing and affordable housing as separate entities through defining affordable as *“housing that is subsidized through one-time funding or an on-going basis”*.

Attainable shall mean below or near market housing that is offered and maintained to remain within reach of the following for a set time period, regardless of market pressures:

- *In the case of home ownership, housing for which the purchase price results in annual accommodation costs which do not exceed 30% of the gross annual income for households within the income range of 50 – 130% of median income for the Town of The Blue Mountains. Annual household income information will be based upon the most recent Census of Canada statistics for the Town of The Blue Mountains and is updated at least every five years and may be updated more frequently in consultation with the Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation.*
- *In the case of rental housing, housing which is provided defined as at least 20% below area median rent. Area median rent information will be based on the most recent Census of Canada statistics for the Town of The Blue Mountains and is updated at least every five years and may be updated more frequently in consultation with the Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation.*

The Town associates attainable housing with private sector and non-profit investment, and as such, the financial incentives are targeted towards private and non-profit sectors. The Plan prioritizes the partnership with their upper-tier municipality, Grey County, to facilitate their Plan's attainable housing objectives and provide support for the financial incentives offered. The Town's non-financial incentives focus on public education and awareness to encourage homeowners to support the development of gentle density attainable housing.

The eligibility criteria differ for each program but generally apply to all properties within the Community Improvement Project Area.

The CIP's non-financial incentives include:

1. **Marketing and Education** where the Town promotes this Plan with education and awareness; providing engagement with the community to facilitate a better understanding of how the Plan assists in developing attainable housing.

2. **Pre-Zoning** to permit higher density, mixed-use, and attainable housing forms as-of-right in select areas to reduce approval timelines, lowering development uncertainty and encouraging projects that align with the Town's long-term housing objectives.
3. **Community Planning Permit System** provides a streamlined process for zoning, site plan, and minor variance approvals into a single process, enabling faster and more predictable approvals for attainable housing projects.

The CIP's financial incentives include:

1. **Attainable Housing Feasibility Grant Program** provides a grant to offset early-stage feasibility and technical study costs to help determine whether a site can support attainable housing.
2. **Development Charges Grant Equivalent Program** provides a grant equivalent to some or all of the Town's development charges to reduce upfront development costs for eligible attainable housing projects.
3. **Tax Increment Equivalent Program (TIEG)** provides an annual grant equal to a portion of the municipal tax increase resulting from an attainable housing development to assist with long-term project viability.
4. **Municipal Fees Grant or Loan Equivalent Program** provides support by reimbursing or deferring eligible municipal fees, such as planning, building, and engineering fees, through either a grant or interest-free loan.
5. **Downtown Apartment Rehabilitation or Conversion Program** provides funding to convert or rehabilitate vacant or underused upper-storey downtown spaces into new attainable rental units.
6. **Additional Residential Unit Program** provides a grant to assist homeowners in constructing legal additional residential units, such as basement suites or garden suites, to increase attainable rental supply.
7. **Surplus Land Grant Program** provides municipally owned surplus land at a reduced cost or through favourable terms to facilitate the development of attainable housing.

8. **Landbanking Policy** enables the Town with the ability to acquire, hold, and prepare strategic lands for future attainable housing projects in partnership with private or non-profit developers.

Town of Fort Erie – Affordable Housing CIP (2025)

The Town of Fort Erie is a larger municipality of approximately 32,900 residents, located in south Niagara Region along the border with Buffalo, New York. Situated roughly 75 kilometres from West Lincoln, it serves as a nearby Regional comparator with shared housing challenges.

The Town of Fort Erie has prioritized affordable housing in their 2023–2026 Strategic Plan and outlines several key strategies to address constraints in building affordable housing. The Town’s Housing Action Strategy and Housing Needs Study recognized that a CIP can encourage the development of affordable housing projects within the municipality by reducing and eliminating barriers for private sector and non-profit sector projects. This CIP works to complement the efforts of Niagara Region’s housing services.

The Town of Fort Erie defines affordable housing as:

Market and non-profit housing developments costing less than or equal to the “Made in Fort Erie” threshold, excluding income security aspects of regional programs for the following:

- *Home Ownership: Affordable housing is defined as housing with a purchase price at or below the “Made in Fort Erie” threshold purchase price of a resale unit in the Town of Fort Erie.*
- *Rental Housing: Affordable housing is defined as a unit with rent at or below the “Made in Fort Erie” threshold.*

The “Made in Fort Erie” threshold is a local affordability benchmark that defines whether a housing unit qualifies as “affordable.” The threshold is calculated using local market data from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and the Canadian Real Estate Association (CREA) and is updated annually. For rental units, the threshold is based on Fort Erie’s average market rent (AMR). For ownership units, the threshold is

set at 70% of the average residential sale price for southern Ontario. This benchmark was created to more accurately define affordable housing by grounding it in the local context and updating it annually to reflect current market conditions.

Each program in the Fort Erie CIP outlines the requirements for nonprofit and charitable organizations that must be met, along with additional requirements for for-profit/market developers. Each requirement outlines the minimum number of affordable units, affordability, types of housing permitted, housing tenure, and affordability period.

The Town of Fort Erie offers the following financial programs:

1. **Affordable Housing Per Door Grant (APD)** supports the creation of new affordable rental or ownership units by offering a flexible per-unit grant that helps offset eligible development or redevelopment costs, with grant amounts determined through an affordability evaluation process.
2. **Affordable Housing Study Grant (ASG)** helps applicants complete necessary early-stage studies, such as feasibility analyses, conceptual designs, structural assessments, or servicing reviews that explore opportunities to incorporate affordable units or cost-efficient building practices into a proposed development.
3. **Additional Dwelling Unit Grant (ADU)** assists homeowners or property owners in creating additional dwelling units, either within existing buildings or as detached accessory units, by supporting eligible construction activities, building upgrades, and improvements needed to bring the new unit into compliance with applicable codes and standards.

The Town of Fort Erie Affordable Housing CIP does not include any non-financial incentives.

Other Programs

Through a scan of municipal CIPs across Ontario, several additional incentive programs have been identified that may be of interest for consideration. These programs are used in various municipalities to address local housing needs, although they may not be feasible or effective for the local community in West Lincoln.

Figure 3: Other CIP Incentive Programs

Program	Description
Development Charge Deferral Program	A program that allows eligible affordable housing projects to defer municipal development charges until a later stage of development.
Extended Benefit Grant	A grant designed to bridge the financial gap between different affordability levels, such as between “affordable” and “deeply affordable” rents. The City of Welland uses this program to provide additional support for units that serve households with lower incomes and greater affordability needs.
Study Grant	A grant that supports early due diligence by helping fund feasibility studies, concept design work, or technical assessments needed to advance an affordable housing project. This type of program is often paired with other incentives and is used in communities such as the City of Barrie and other urban municipalities.

What We Heard – Online Survey Results

The Township invited residents, community partners, and stakeholders to provide input on affordable housing needs and potential directions for the Affordable Housing CIP through an online survey open from October 23 to November 13, 2025. A total of eighty-eight responses were received. The survey included a combination of multiple-choice and open-ended questions, as well as an option for participants to provide contact information for future project updates.

Overall, respondents expressed strong support for the development of an Affordable Housing CIP and identified a range of local housing needs. Common themes included the desire to see more affordable rental units and attainable homeownership opportunities, particularly family-sized units. Many participants noted the importance of increasing housing options for seniors and young adults to support aging in place and community retention. Respondents also expressed interest in partnerships with nonprofit housing providers and social service organizations to deliver supportive housing, community spaces, and related services.

The diagrams and charts below provide a more detailed overview of the responses collected through the survey.

Figure 4: “What Type of Housing is Most Needed in West Lincoln?” – Survey Results

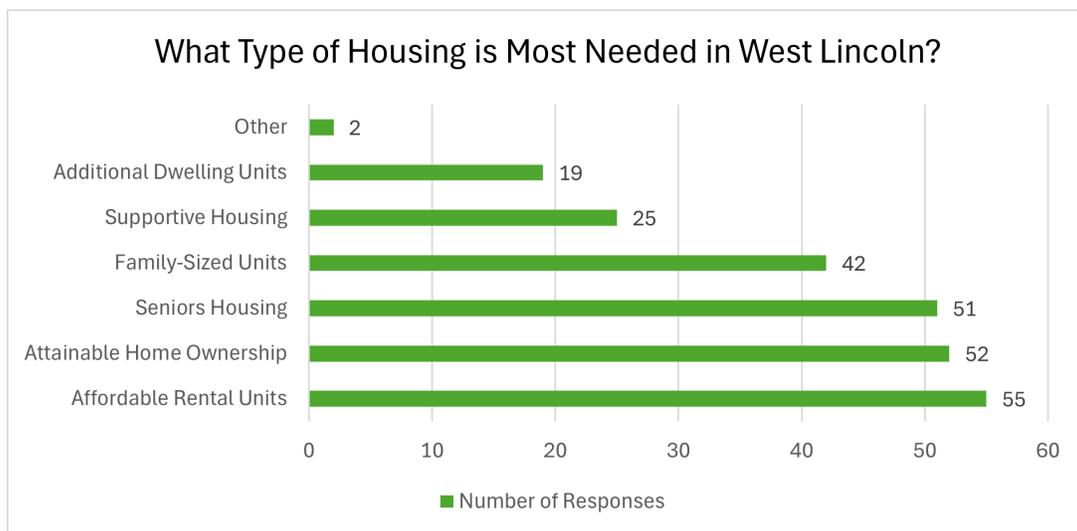


Figure 4 illustrates the results for “What type of housing is most needed in West Lincoln?” and responses indicate strong support for the development of additional affordable rental units and attainable homeownership opportunities. Respondents emphasized the need for family-sized homes, as well as housing options suitable for seniors and young adults. The results reflect a desire for a broader range of moderately priced housing to support residents at different life stages.

Figure 5 presents the most frequently identified affordability ranges for rental and ownership housing as reported by survey respondents in West Lincoln.

Figure 5: Word Map of Affordability Ranges



Survey responses regarding affordability thresholds showed broad variation but clear overall patterns. For homeownership, most respondents identified an affordable purchase price within the \$200,000 to \$400,000 range, with common responses clustering around \$200,000, \$250,000, \$300,000, and \$400,000. Fewer respondents identified thresholds below \$200,000 or above \$500,000. For rental housing, respondents generally viewed \$1,000 to \$1,500 per month as an affordable rent level, with values such as \$1,200 and \$1,500 cited most frequently. A smaller number of responses suggested amounts below \$800 or above \$2,000. Overall, the results indicate that residents perceive affordable homeownership to fall between \$200,000 and \$400,000, and affordable rent to fall primarily between \$1,000 and \$1,500 per month.

Respondents were asked to select the types of financial and non-financial incentives they thought would be most likely to encourage the development of more affordable housing.

Figure 6: “What Type of Financial Incentives Do You Think are the Most Likely to Encourage the Development of More Affordable Housing?” – Survey Results

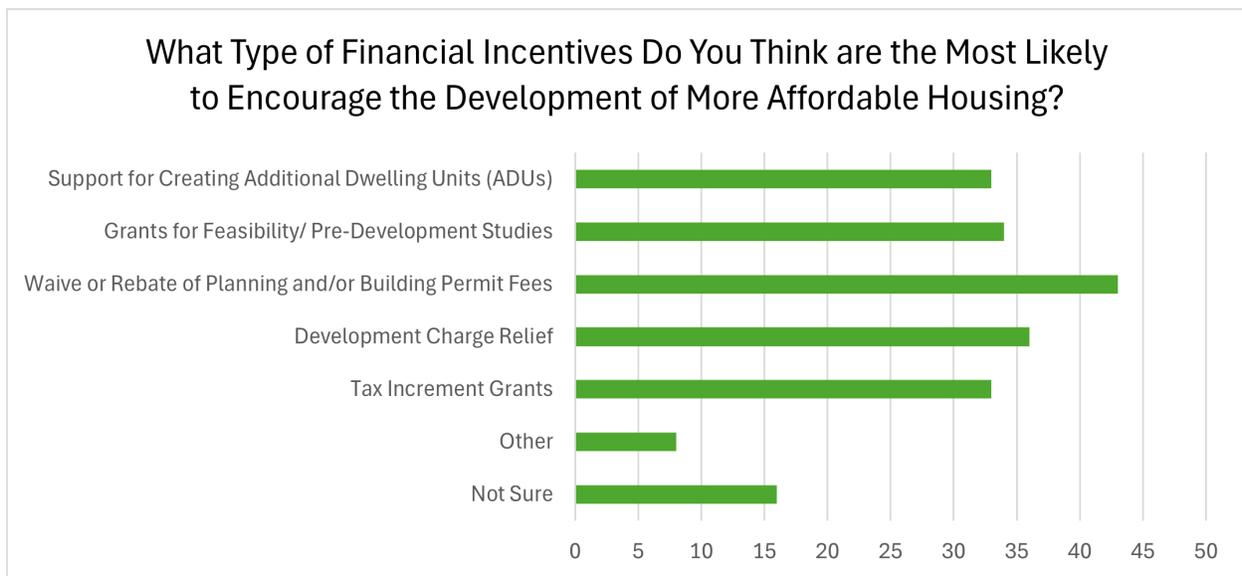


Figure 6 illustrates the responses to “*What type of financial incentives do you think are the most likely to encourage the development of more affordable housing?*” Responses show clear support for tools that directly reduce the cost of building affordable and attainable housing. Respondents identified capital grants as the most effective option, particularly those targeted toward rental housing, attainable homeownership, or projects led by nonprofit organizations. Many participants also supported development charge reductions or waivers, permit fee rebates, and tax-based incentives, such as tax increment grants, as ways to improve project feasibility. Several respondents noted that financial incentives should prioritize developments that deliver long-term affordability, family-sized units, or housing that supports seniors and young adults. Overall, respondents view financial incentives as an important mechanism for lowering development barriers and encouraging a broader range of housing options in West Lincoln.

Figure 7: “What Type of Non-Financial Incentives Do You Think are the Most Likely to Encourage the Development of More Affordable Housing?” – Survey Answers

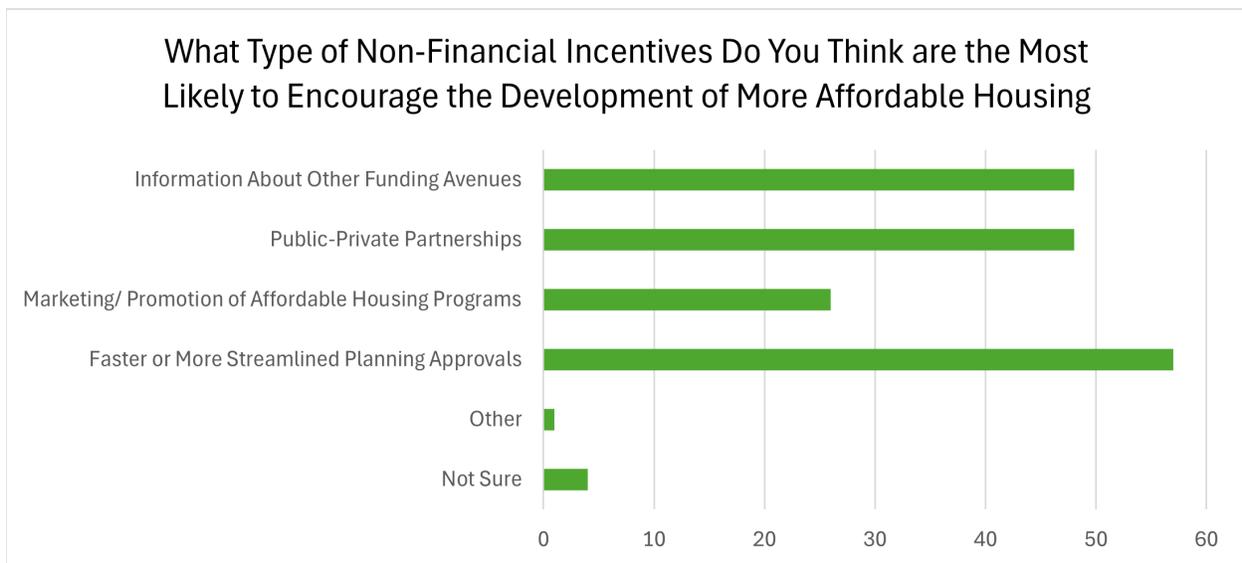


Figure 7 illustrates the responses to “*What type of non-financial incentives do you think are the most likely to encourage the development of more affordable housing?*”

Responses indicate strong interest in tools that improve efficiency, reduce uncertainty, and strengthen partnerships. Many respondents emphasized the value of streamlined or faster planning approvals, noting that clearer processes and shorter timelines would help reduce costs and encourage a more supportive development environment. There was also significant interest in enhanced communication and collaboration, including public–private partnerships, partnerships with nonprofit housing providers, and coordination with social service organizations to deliver community spaces, supportive housing, and resident services. Participants also highlighted the potential for land use and zoning flexibility, such as allowing a wider range of housing forms, encouraging gentle density, and supporting mixed-income developments. Overall, the feedback demonstrates strong support for non-financial tools that make the development process more predictable, accessible, and aligned with community needs.

Recommended Options for the Affordable Housing CIP

This section presents a range of potential directions for the Affordable Housing CIP, intended to guide discussion and help shape the final Plan. Across Ontario, municipalities tailor their affordable housing CIPs to meet local needs, market conditions, and community priorities. The options outlined include potential vision statements, goals and objectives, financial and non-financial incentives, and implementation approaches. These are provided for consideration so that West Lincoln can strategically select the tools that best support its unique housing context and long-term community goals.

Potential Vision, Goals, and Objectives

Potential vision statement:

To invest in the liveability of our communities by providing the Township with a toolbox of incentive programs for affordable and attainable housing for people of all ages and stages, connecting people to amenities, and creating a more inclusive West Lincoln for all.

► **Goal 1: Expand the Supply of Affordable Housing in Smithville**

Objectives:

- Support the development of new affordable rental units, with emphasis on family-sized and seniors' units.
- Encourage the creation of purpose-built rental housing to address current market gaps.
- Promote gentle density solutions such as additional dwelling units and secondary suites.

► **Goal 2: Diversify Housing Options to Serve All Ages and Stages**

Objectives:

- Increase the range of unit types, including multi-unit buildings, accessible units, family-sized dwellings, seniors' housing, and supportive housing.
- Encourage accessible housing forms that align with West Lincoln's rural character while meeting community needs.

- Support housing that enables residents to live, grow, and age within the community.

► **Goal 3: Reduce Barriers to Affordable and Attainable Housing Development**

Objectives:

- Provide flexible, predictable incentive programs that reduce development costs.
- Streamline processes and clarify requirements for applicants, including homeowners and small-scale builders.
- Support partnerships with nonprofits, private developers, and other levels of government.

► **Goal 4: Encourage Homeowner Participation in Housing Solutions**

Objectives:

- Promote the development of additional dwelling units, garden suites, and other small-scale affordable housing options on existing lots.
- Provide information, guidance, and incentives to homeowners to increase uptake of small-scale rental opportunities.

► **Goal 5: Maximize the Impact of Municipal Funding**

Objectives:

- Fully and strategically utilize the annual CIP funding allocated by Council.
- Prioritize incentives that deliver the greatest community benefit and support long-term affordability.
- Monitor program outcomes to ensure funding is directed to the most effective programs.

Options for Affordable Housing Incentives for West Lincoln

The financial incentive programs, non-financial incentive programs, and implementation options outlined in this section are presented as a menu of potential options to support the development of affordable and attainable housing, rather than a list of programs that will all be implemented. Their purpose is to provide Township staff with a broad catalogue from which to select the most appropriate and achievable tools for West Lincoln. The final CIP will include only a refined set of incentives that align with local needs, administrative capacity, and available funding.

Financial Incentives

Financial incentives play a key role in supporting affordable and attainable housing by reducing the financial barriers that often make these projects challenging to deliver, ensuring that a wider range of housing forms can be achieved in West Lincoln. The following financial options in **Figure 9** are included to spark discussion around what type of grants or programs might be most effective for the Township of West Lincoln.

Figure 9: Financial Incentive Options

<p>1. Additional Residential/Dwelling Unit (ADU/ARU) Grant</p>	<p>Supports the creation of new additional residential units such as basement suites, garden suites, or coach houses by assisting with eligible construction, finishing, or building code compliance costs, helping expand small-scale rental supply throughout the Township.</p>
<p>2. Planning and Building Waiver Program</p>	<p>Reduces the upfront cost of creating affordable or attainable housing by waiving municipal planning and building fees for eligible projects, encouraging homeowners, landlords, and developers to bring forward applications that add to the local housing supply.</p>
<p>3. Accessible Design Top-Up Grant</p>	<p>Encourages barrier-free and age-friendly housing by offering a top-up to eligible projects that incorporate accessible design elements, such as widened doorways, no-</p>

	step entries, or accessible bathrooms to support residents of all ages and abilities.
4. Family-Sized or Seniors’ Unit Top-Up Grant	Provides additional support to projects that create purpose-built family-sized or seniors’ units, recognizing the growing need for multi-bedroom and attainable housing options.
5. Home Upgrade Support Grant	Assists eligible projects with minor home upgrades, such as upsizing water connections, improving electrical capacity, or upgrading HVAC systems when such improvements are necessary to accommodate new affordable or attainable units.

Non-Financial Incentives

Non-financial incentives are equally important because they help create the conditions for success by improving awareness, streamlining processes, and providing technical support. Having a toolbox of non-financial incentives allows the Township to encourage more builders, homeowners, and community partners to pursue affordable and attainable housing opportunities. The following non-financial options in **Figure 10** are included to spark discussion around what type of programs might be most effective for the Township of West Lincoln.

Figure 10: Non-Financial Incentive Options

1. Marketing and Media Strategies	Promotes awareness of the CIP through proactive marketing, public information campaigns, and targeted outreach to homeowners, landlords, builders, and community organizations
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	to increase participation and support attainable housing initiatives.
2. Education and Capacity-Building Workshops	Provides workshops, guides, and technical support materials to help residents, landowners, and builders understand the process of creating additional residential units, undertaking gentle density, and accessing available incentives.
3. Housing Concierge / Client Support Service	Improves the applicant experience by offering a dedicated staff contact to guide proponents through approvals, help troubleshoot issues, and streamline the application and permitting process.
4. Pre-Zoning or As-of-Right Permissions	Identifies opportunities to pre-zone key areas or expand as-of-right permissions for gentle density and low-rise multi-unit forms, reducing the need for site-specific amendments and supporting faster, more predictable approvals for housing projects that align with Township goals.

Implementation Options

The following outlines potential approaches for administering the Affordable Housing CIP, ensuring transparency, predictability, and efficient use of municipal resources.

Application Intake Options

Several intake models can be considered for how the Township receives and processes applications:

- Open/Closed Application Windows: Applications may be accepted during defined intake periods established by staff (e.g., quarterly or semi-annually). This approach allows staff to assess applications in batches, allocate funds strategically, and ensure alignment with program goals.

- **First-Come, First-Served:** Applications may also be reviewed as they are received, with funding allocated until the annual budget is exhausted. This method provides predictability for applicants but may require strict completeness and eligibility checks to ensure fairness.

Eligibility Criteria

To ensure that CIP funding supports projects that meaningfully contribute to affordable housing objectives, the following eligibility criteria may be considered:

- ***Property Ownership:*** Applicants must be the registered homeowner or property owner or have written authorization from the owner.
- ***Project Readiness and Timeline:*** Applicants should demonstrate the ability to commence work within a specified timeframe and complete the project within a set number of years (e.g., two years), ensuring that funds support projects that can be delivered in a timely manner.
- ***Affordability Requirements:*** Projects must commit to achieving defined affordability outcomes. For example, meeting or exceeding the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 “Affordability” definition for rental rates, duration of affordability, and target populations (e.g., families, seniors).
- ***Planning Compliance:*** Proposed projects must comply with applicable zoning, building codes, and planning requirements or demonstrate a clear pathway to obtaining required approvals.
- ***Financial Feasibility:*** Applicants should provide a basic pro forma, cost estimate, or other financial documentation to show that the project is viable and that CIP funds are necessary to close the affordability gap.
- ***Alignment with CIP Goals:*** Projects should contribute to the CIP’s goals, such as increasing affordable rentals, creating family-sized or seniors’ units, or adding gentle-density options like ADUs.

A clear and accessible application form should be developed to support applicants in providing the materials necessary to meet these eligibility requirements.

Delegated Authority for Funding Decisions

To streamline administration and reduce delays for applicants, it is recommended that approval authority for CIP incentives be delegated to municipal staff. Under this approach, Council would establish the program framework, funding limits, and eligibility criteria through the adoption of the CIP. Once those parameters are in place, staff would be responsible for reviewing applications, determining eligibility, and issuing approvals.

A system of regular reporting, including annual or semi-annual summaries presented to Council, would maintain transparency and allow elected officials to monitor program uptake, funding allocations, and community outcomes. This approach reduces administrative burden while ensuring accountability and alignment with Council's direction.

Next Steps

As the Township moves into the next phase of the project, several key considerations outlined in this Background Study Report should guide the development of the Affordable Housing CIP. The upcoming work will focus on refining the proposed incentive programs and preparing the draft CIP, which will be presented to stakeholders and the public alongside this Background Report at an engagement session in January 2026. As part of this process, Council may consider reallocating funds from existing Township CIPs to help create a stronger initial funding base, as an early infusion of resources may support program uptake and demonstrate municipal commitment. In addition, the Township should explore opportunities to leverage external funding to expand CIP impact through other government programs at the Federal, Provincial, and Regional levels. Selecting a focused suite of incentives that aligns with local needs, administrative capacity, and available resources will be essential.

West Lincoln

Your Future Naturally



Smithville

The Township of West Lincoln

*Affordable Housing Community
Improvement Plan*

DRAFT Program for Public and Council Review

February 2026

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1 Introduction

The Township of West Lincoln is facing an increasing gap in household income and housing costs. Along with limited rental availability and a high cost of living, the Township can use a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) to encourage a diverse mix of housing options, particularly for low-to-moderate income households. This proposed Affordable Housing CIP will provide the Township with a toolbox of options that can be used to meet the Township’s housing goals.

1.1 Defining a Community Improvement Plan (CIP)

A CIP is a tool that the Township of West Lincoln can use to improve the community. It provides the Township with the opportunity to offer grants or other forms of financial and non-financial support to meet local goals. A CIP can also provide the foundation to partner with local residents, developers, and community organizations to reduce financial barriers in building a range of housing options, including affordable housing and adding Additional Residential Units (ARUs).



2 Creation of the Affordable Housing CIP

To launch the creation of this CIP the Township hosted an online survey in October 2025 to gather community feedback and identify current housing challenges impacting residents. A background report was prepared in December 2025 to support the creation of this Affordable Housing CIP. The report discussed the current legislative context, including Provincial, Regional and Local policies, options for incentive programs, CIP best practices and case studies, and drafted the vision and goals for this CIP.

The background report was made available online to the public in January 2026 and a local, in-person engagement session on January 14 followed. Feedback from public engagement has informed the creation of this newly released **DRAFT** of the Township of West Lincoln's Affordable Housing CIP. This draft will be refined based on community input following the February 9, Statutory Public Meeting. **All programs presented within this CIP are subject to change and will be based on funding availability.**

2.1 Legislative Authority

The Township of West Lincoln legally cannot mandate private developers to build affordable housing, however the *Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990 c. P.13*, section 28, provides the authority for a Council to enact a Community Improvement Plan (CIP). An Affordable Housing CIP is a tool that encourages private landowners and developers to build affordable housing units by offering financial and non-financial incentives to overcome obstacles that may prevent the creation of these units.

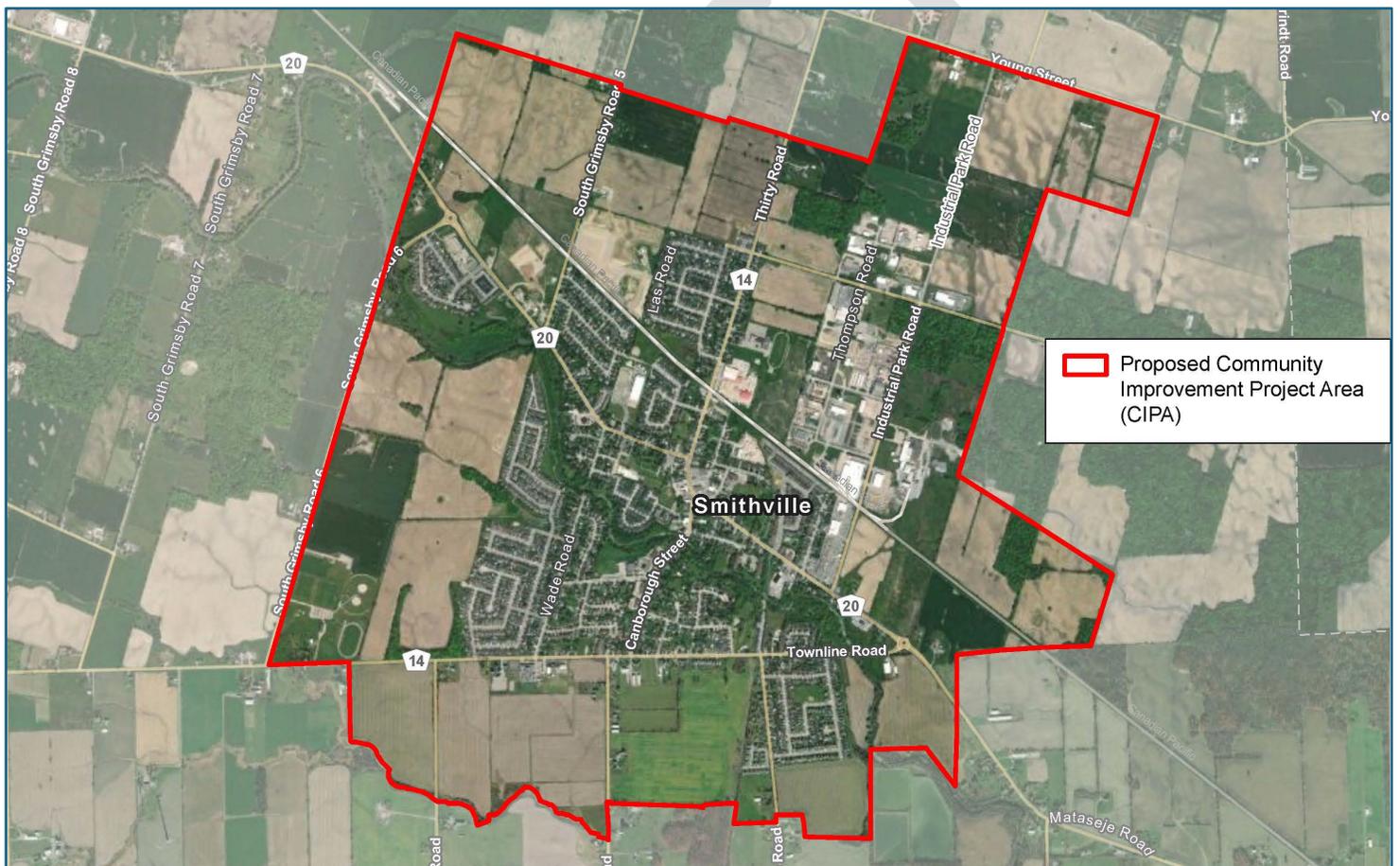
The Township's Official Plan outlines its directions for Community Improvement Policies in Section 18.10, including the criteria for implementing a Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA). This Affordable Housing CIP encourages redevelopment of the existing built environment and contributes to coordinated public and private community improvement.

The Affordable Housing CIP is designed to conform with current Provincial, Regional, and Local legislation and policies.

3 Community Improvement Project Area

The Affordable Housing CIP applies to the whole of Smithville, with its boundaries aligned with the boundaries of the designated urban area of Smithville (see *Figure 1*). The Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA) is established through a separate By-law and administered separately from the CIP. This allows for the adjustment of CIPA boundaries without amendment to the CIP itself, but through Township amendment to the CIPA By-law itself.

Figure 1: Community Improvement Project Area Boundary



4 Vision, Goals, and Objectives

The Township is building towards complete communities that offer a diverse range of affordable housing options that will meet the needs of current and future West Lincoln residents. The vision of this CIP is:

To invest in the liveability of our community by providing the Township with a toolbox of incentive programs for affordable housing for people of all ages and stages, connecting people to amenities, and creating a more inclusive West Lincoln for all.

This Affordable Housing CIP will support the creation of affordable housing units through the following goals and objectives:

► **Expand the Supply of Affordable Housing in Smithville**

- Support the development of new affordable units, with emphasis on family-sized and seniors' units.
- Encourage the creation of purpose-built rental housing to address current market gaps.
- Promote gentle density solutions such as additional residential units (ARUs) and secondary suites.

► **Diversify Housing Options to Serve All Ages and Stages**

- Increase the range of unit types, including multi-unit buildings, accessible units, family-sized dwellings, seniors' housing, and supportive housing.
- Encourage accessible housing forms that align with West Lincoln's rural character while meeting community needs.
- Support housing that enables residents to live, grow, and age within the community.

► ***Reduce Barriers to Affordable Housing Development***

- Provide flexible, predictable incentive programs that reduce development costs.
- Streamline processes and clarify requirements for applicants, including homeowners and small-scale builders.
- Support partnerships with non-profits, private developers, and other levels of government.

► ***Encourage Resident Participation in Housing Solutions***

- Promote the development of additional dwelling units, garden suites, and other small-scale affordable housing options on existing lots.
- Provide information, guidance, and incentives to homeowners to increase uptake of small-scale rental opportunities.

► ***Maximize the Impact of Municipal Funding***

- Fully and strategically utilize the annual CIP funding allocated by Council.
- Prioritize incentives that deliver the greatest community benefit and support long-term affordability.
- Monitor program outcomes to ensure funding is directed to the most effective programs.



5 Financial Incentive Programs

As part of the Township's Affordable Housing CIP, the Township may utilize any of the programs listed below. These financial incentive programs are subject to available funding, the Township's capital budget, and other available resources.

To be eligible for any of the incentive programs listed in this CIP, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- a) The lands and buildings specified in the application must be located within the By-law designated CIPA.
- b) Applicants must be the registered homeowner or property owner or have written authorization from the owner to apply for any programs in this CIP.
- c) Applicants should demonstrate the ability to commence work within a specified timeframe and complete the project within a set number of years (e.g., two years), ensuring that funds support projects that can be delivered in a timely manner. This may be done in accordance with the incentive program's application form.
- d) Projects must commit to achieving defined affordability outcomes. For example, meeting or exceeding the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 Affordability definition for rental rates, duration of affordability, and target populations (e.g., families, seniors).
- e) Proposed projects must comply with applicable zoning, building codes, and planning requirements or demonstrate a clear pathway to obtaining required approvals.
- f) Applicants should provide a basic pro forma, cost estimate, or other financial documentation to show that the project is viable and that CIP funds are necessary to close the affordability gap.
- g) Projects should contribute to the CIP's goals such as increasing affordable rentals, creating family-sized or seniors' units, or adding gentle-density options like ARUs.

5.1 Municipal Fees Grant Program

A municipal fee grant program to reduce the costs of creating affordable housing by providing a grant through the form of a rebate to cover municipal planning and building fees for eligible projects, encouraging homeowners, landlords, and developers to bring forward applications that add to the local housing supply. Providing a grant to cover the costs of municipal fees does not ensure the project will be approved by the Township.

Eligible Costs: Up to 100% of the costs incurred to seek approvals for affordable housing providers and non-profits to develop new affordable housing units, specifically Township Planning Application Fees and Building Permit Fees.

5.2 Additional Residential Unit (ARU) Grant

A grant to support the creation of new additional residential units such as basement suites, garden suites, or coach houses by assisting with eligible construction, finishing, or building code compliance costs, helping expand small-scale rental supply throughout the Township.

Eligible Costs: Up to \$5000 of the costs incurred to construct or convert an ARU where permitted. This includes legalizing and/or bringing up to code existing basement ARUs.

5.3 Accessible Design Top-Up Grant

A top-up grant to incorporate a universal or barrier-free design within a new residential unit (e.g. apartment, ARU, secondary suite) receiving one of the other financial incentives in this CIP. The grant would be available to landowners for creating new housing units in a way that is designed for accessibility beyond the minimum standards of the Ontario Building Code. This grant would be provided to the applicant upon proof of completion of construction of the new accessible unit.

Eligible Costs: Up to \$3,000 of the costs incurred on design and construction of an accessible or barrier free unit.

5.4 Family-Sized or Seniors' Unit Top-Up Grant

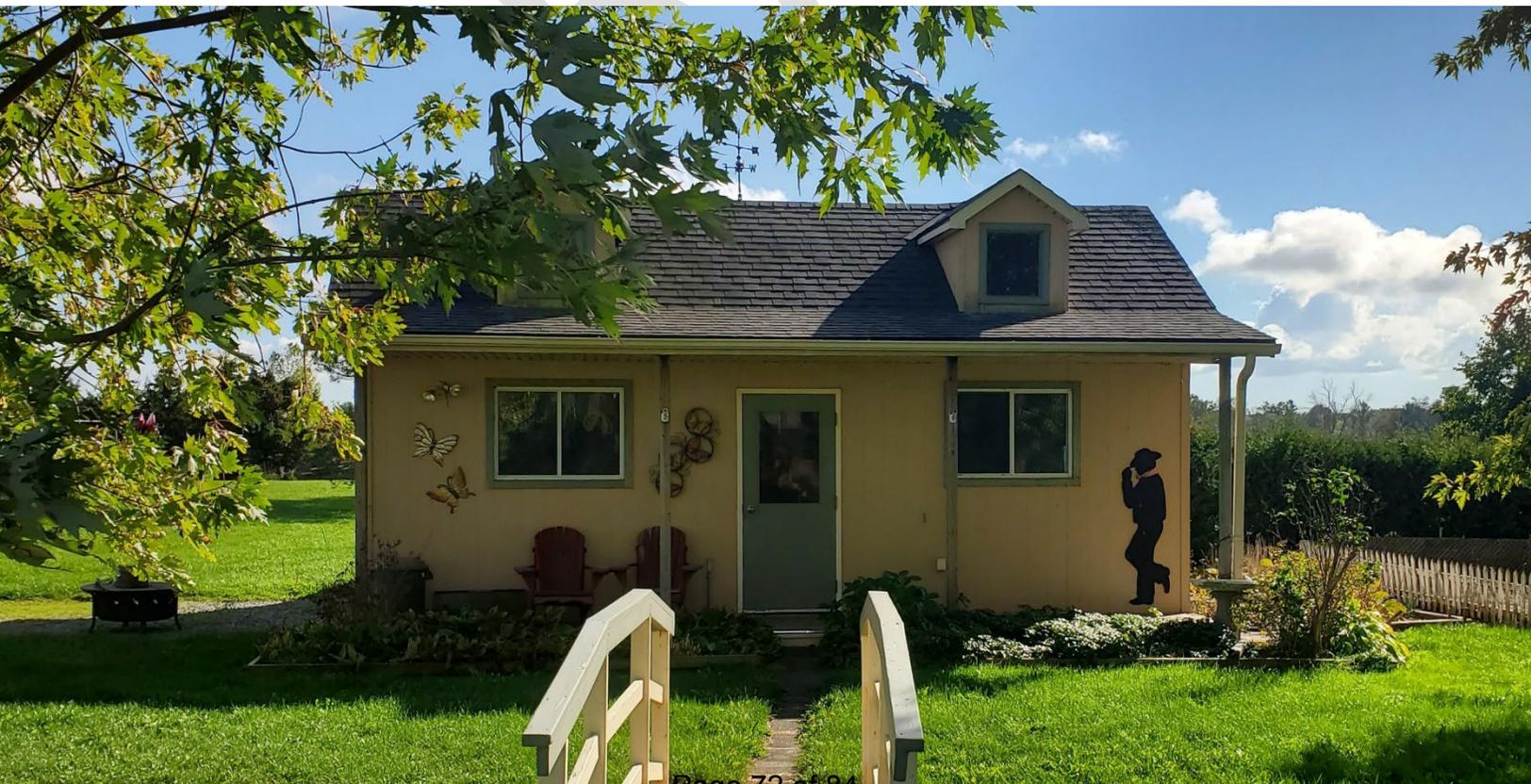
A top-up grant for projects receiving one of the other financial incentives in this CIP. This grant provides additional support to projects that create purpose-built family-sized or seniors' units, recognizing the growing need for multi-bedroom and attainable housing options.

Eligible Costs: Up to \$1500 of the costs incurred for the construction of a family-sized or seniors' unit, as defined in this CIP.

5.5 Home Upgrade Support Grant

A grant to assist eligible homeowners with minor home upgrades when such improvements are necessary to accommodate new affordable or attainable units.

Eligible Costs: Up to \$1500 of the costs incurred to upgrade home services to accommodate the addition of affordable dwelling units to existing residential homes. Upgrades could include upsizing water connections, improving electrical capacity, or upgrading HVAC systems.



6 Non-Financial Incentive Programs

In addition to the financial incentives outlined above, the Township may use other non-financial incentive programs that are developed as part of the Township's CIP.

6.1 Education and Capacity-Building Workshops

The Township may consider providing workshops, guides, and technical support materials to help residents, landowners, and builders understand the process of creating additional residential units, undertaking gentle density, and accessing available incentives.

6.2 Housing Concierge / Client Support Service

To support homeowners applying for Additional Residential Units, the Township may offer a dedicated staff contact to guide applicants through approvals, help troubleshoot issues, and streamline the application and permitting process.

6.3 Housing Reserve

The Township may consider establishing an annual reserve fund dedicated to supporting housing initiatives that require additional funding beyond what is available through the existing CIP program budgets. This reserve will act as a safety net for projects that address urgent housing needs, ensuring that financial barriers do not hinder the development of essential affordable units.

7 Implementation Plan

The Affordable Housing CIP will require the allocation of municipal resources and staff time to effectively implement.

7.1 Implementation Period

The Affordable Housing CIP is planned to be implemented over a five-year period, beginning in March 2026. Council may choose to open an application period for a specified amount of time (e.g. from January to March annually) or accept rolling applications and review them on a first-come, first-served basis, closing the application period when available funding is exhausted.

Council may choose to review the implementation period at any time, revising it through an amendment to the CIP. Council shall review the Affordable Housing CIP as appropriate and consider continuing the funding of the financial incentive programs through the municipal capital budget process or alternate funding opportunities.

7.2 Administration

The roles and responsibilities of the Township Council for implementing this Affordable Housing CIP include:

- a. **Establishing the Active Financial Incentive Programs:** Council may choose which incentive programs are active for any given year, and each program's duration.
- b. **Recognize an Annual CIP Budget:** Annually, Council will be responsible for determining the community improvement budget for each active incentive as part of the annual municipal budget process.
- c. **Designate a Plan Administrator for the CIP:** Council shall delegate responsibility for the CIP and its implementation to the Director of Growth and Sustainability, or designate.

Once the above steps have been met by Township Council, responsibility for the CIP and its implementation will rest with the Plan Administrator. The Plan Administrator is an assigned Township staff member, responsible for:

- a. Conducting pre-application meetings with interested applicants to discuss eligibility;
- b. Reviewing incentive applications for approval or refusal;
- c. Marketing the CIP;
- d. Monitoring the CIP and providing update reports to Council which provide data on CIP uptake, including project costs and resulting benefits;
- e. Providing recommendations on incentive programs, including timelines and budgets, to Council; and
- f. Providing reasons for application refusal or approval in the form of a staff report in the case of an appeal.

The Plan Administrator will accept applications and distribute financial incentives as approved by Council on a first-come, first-served basis until funding for that year has been fully allocated. Alternatively, the Plan Administrator may set an annual or bi-annual deadline for application submissions, with all applications evaluated according to that deadline. In cases where an application is refused or accepted, the applicant has a right to appeal the decision to Council who may then make a decision on whether to approve or refuse the application. If the decision is appealed to Council, a staff report will be prepared to outline the Plan Administrator's decision.

7.3 Applying for Incentives

Both the applicant and the Plan Administrator must follow the steps outlined below for submitting, processing, evaluating and approving or denying a CIP application.

An applicant is required to take the following steps:

- a. Book a pre-application meeting with Township staff to go over requirements for the application;
- b. Use the appropriate application form to submit the application and any other necessary documentation to the Township;
- c. The applicant must be the registered property owner or have written consent from the registered property owner;

- d. The application will be reviewed by the Plan Administrator for completion and compliance with general and program-specific eligibility requirements;
- e. If approved:
 - i. Municipal Fees Grant Program: the applicant will be notified, enter into a financial agreement with the Township, and may begin work;
 - ii. Additional Residential Unit (ARU) Grant: the applicant will be notified, enter into a financial agreement with the Township, with funding payable to the applicant upon proof of completion;
 - iii. Family-sized or Seniors' Unit Top-Up Grant: the applicant will be notified and enter into a financial agreement with the Township, with funding payable to the applicant upon proof of completion;
 - iv. Accessible Design Top-up Rebate: the applicant will be notified, enter into a financial agreement with the Township, with funding payable to the applicant upon proof of completion;
 - v. Home Upgrade Support Grant: the applicant will be notified, enter into a financial agreement with the Township, with funding payable to the applicant upon proof of completion;
- f. If rejected, the applicant may appeal to Township Council; and
- g. When the applicant has completed the project, they must submit a statement of project completion to the Township.

The Plan Administrator is required to take the following steps:

- a. Conduct pre-application meetings with interested applicants to confirm application processes, eligibility and requirements for a complete application (e.g. documentation, studies, plans);
- b. Review and evaluate submitted applications and supporting materials for approval or refusal;
- c. Inform applicants of their application status (e.g. approved, rejected, pending);

- d. Review statements of project completion.

Note: The Township reserves the right to inspect any property and building, or audit final costs at the owner's expense. Further, should the applicant fall into default of any of the requirements of the incentive program or other requirements established by the Township, incentives may be delayed, reduced, or cancelled. Applicants may be required to repay benefits to the Township.

7.4 Application Requirements

Applications for the incentives provided through the Affordable Housing CIP are required to meet the following requirements, as outlined below:

- Submit a copy of a signed and completed application form and any other supporting documents, as required by the Plan Administrator including:
 - A statement describing how the proposed project meets CIP goals and objectives;
 - Photographs of the existing buildings or property condition;
 - Where available, historical drawings or photographs;
 - Building permit or site development application;
 - Design drawings, rendering, elevation, grading, or any other specifications of the proposed project, as determined by the Township and prepared by a qualified professional;
 - A minimum of three cost estimates for the proposed project work, done by a licensed consultant or contractor;
 - A detailed budget for the proposed project;
 - Any additional documentation or information deemed necessary by the Plan Administrator as determined during the pre-application meeting.

Application requirements will be outlined in a tailored application form for each financial incentive program. Once an application has been approved, the landowner will be required to enter into a financial or legal agreement with the Township to implement the incentive program requirements and may be required to register the agreement on title.

The Township is not responsible for any costs incurred through the preparation of an application for any of the financial incentive programs, or the costs for the preparation or registration of any required agreement(s) on title.

7.5 Plan and By-law Amendments

When there is an identified need for amendment to this Plan or its implementing By-law, Township Council must approve these changes through an amendment to the CIP and/or implementing By-laws.

An amendment to the CIP will not be required to:

- a. Reduce funding levels for the financial incentive programs;
- b. Discontinue or cancel any of the programs identified.

An amendment will be required to the CIP and/or implementing By-laws to:

- a. Redefine the Community Improvement Project Area;
- b. Extend the implementation period of the CIP;
- c. Increase the maximum funding levels of the financial programs; and/or,
- d. Add any new financial incentive programs.



8 Monitoring Plan

The purpose of the Monitoring Plan is to ensure that CIP programs are receiving uptake, creating benefits, and determine whether the CIP vision, goals and objectives are being reached. The Monitoring Plan will assist in:

- Tracking and identifying allocated CIP funding and where in the community it has been applied for;
- Assessing the completion of the CIP vision, goals and objectives to evaluate program strengths and areas for improvement;
- Considering whether changes or amendments to program criteria, eligibility, finances, or the CIP and/or CIPA itself should be made; and
- Tracking CIP Financial Incentive Program uptake and results for Council review.

As part of the CIP reporting process, data will be collected on an on-going basis during implementation to keep Township staff and Council up to date on CIP application statuses, funding amounts, and outcomes of the CIP. On-going data collection will include:

- a. Successful Applications:** number of applications, incentive programs applied for, approved value of grants by program, approved value of grants total, project completion timing and payments, project completion photos, and property tax assessment after completion of project (if relevant).
- b. Promotional and Marketing Tracking:** number of outreach activities, website visits, inquiries received, and social media engagements.
- c. Economic and Community Outcomes:** number of units of housing created, by type and level of affordability.

8.1 Annual Reporting

The Plan Administrator will be responsible for the creation of an annual report to Township Council which summarizes the data collected on the CIP uptake and successes, as described below.

1. Expand the Supply of Housing in Smithville

- Number of new housing units and ARUs created.
- Percentage of affordable housing share in the Township.
- Percentage of affordable owner-housing.
- Percentage of affordable renter-housing.

2. Diversify Housing Options to Serve All Ages and Stages

- Number of new seniors' units created.
- Number of new family-sized units created.
- Number of new housing units created by housing type.
- Total value given to the Family-sized or Seniors' Units Top Up Grant and Accessibility Top Up Grant programs.

3. Reduce Barriers to Affordable Housing Development

- Record length of time from the receipt of an application for an affordable housing unit to the date of approval.
- Overview of partnerships created as a result of a CIP program application.

4. Encourage Resident Participation in Housing Solutions

- Number of applications completed annually.

5. Maximize the Impact of Municipal Funding

- Monitor the total allotment of funding annually and the amount provided to incentive applications.

This report may include, but is not limited to, case studies, landowner and tenant feedback, how the CIP's goals/objectives are being met, recommendations for adjustments of programs or budgets, or recommendations for amendment.

9 Marketing Plan

The Marketing Plan is a set of recommendations for how the Township may choose to promote uptake of the Affordable Housing CIP and its incentives. The Marketing Plan identifies target markets, materials for marketing, and potential strategies to be used by the Township.

9.1 Target Markets

The following groups have been identified as target markets for the CIP:

- Affordable Housing providers;
- Homeowners and property owners within the CIPA;
- Non-profit organizations;
- ARU construction companies or vendors;
- Housing developers and real estate professionals; and
- Investors (individual or organizations) who wish to invest in the Township of West Lincoln or enhance investments through the programs offered.

9.2 Marketing Materials

The following materials and programs may be utilized by the Township to promote the CIP:

- **Direct outreach to developers and housing providers:** such as email newsletters, presentations tailored to organizations, information packages delivered to developer and housing provider offices, and one-on-one meetings to discuss the CIP and how they can benefit from it.
- **Information sessions or workshops:** such as hosting workshops and other events dedicated to promoting the uptake of the CIP and include information such as panels, banners, or other displays at municipal buildings and community and Township-led events to promote the CIP.

- **Partnerships with local organizations:** such as collaborating with community groups or individuals interested in housing advocacy to bring the CIP to a wider audience and amplify the outreach and engagement.
- **Online resources and guides:** such as a section of the Township’s website dedicated to the CIP, social media campaigns showing project successes and opportunities to engage with the CIP, and accessible digital packages detailing CIP information.

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10 Definitions

Additional Residential Unit (ARU) means a self-contained dwelling unit with a private kitchen, bathroom facilities and sleeping areas within a single detached, semi-detached or townhouse dwelling, or a building or structure ancillary to a single detached, semi-detached or townhouse dwelling.

Community Improvement means the planning or replanning, design or redesign, resubdivision, clearance, development or redevelopment, construction, reconstruction and rehabilitation, improvement of energy efficiency, or any of them, of a community improvement project area, and the provision of such residential, commercial, industrial, public, recreational, institutional, religious, charitable or other uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements or facilities, or spaces therefor, as may be appropriate or necessary, as defined in the Planning Act, 1990.

Community Improvement Plan means a plan for the community improvement of a community improvement project area, as defined in the Planning Act, 1990.

Community Improvement Plan Area means a municipality or an area within a municipality, the community improvement of which in the opinion of the council is desirable because of age, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement, unsuitability of buildings or for any other environmental, social or community economic development reason, as defined in the Planning Act, 1990.

Eligible Costs means costs related to environmental site assessment, environmental remediation, development, redevelopment, construction and reconstruction of lands and buildings for rehabilitation purposes or for the provision of energy efficient uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements or facilities, as defined in the Planning Act, 1990.

Family-Sized Unit means a unit that is designed to accommodate a family, including multi-generational families, with a minimum of 3+ bedrooms.

Seniors' Unit means a unit specifically designed for older adults (ages 65+) with age-friendly and accessible features.

Township means the Corporation of the Township of West Lincoln.

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