



Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands Community Improvement Plan

November 2023

DRAFT





Township of
Leeds and the
Thousand Islands

**Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands
Community Improvement Plan | November 2023**

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1.0 | Introduction



Lyndhurst Bridge

1.1 Purpose

This is the Community Improvement Plan for the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands. This Plan will be used as a toolbox to help guide public and private investment, redevelopment, and revitalization efforts across the municipality over the next decade and will complement existing Township grant programs. The primary focus of the Plan is to articulate a collective vision and goals for community improvement, which will be largely achieved through two complementary components: financial incentives and municipal leadership initiatives. Firstly, the CIP will extend new grant funding opportunities to the private sector in support of exemplary improvement projects in our community. In addition to this new catalogue of incentives, the Plan also provides strategic direction for Township-led municipal initiatives tailored largely to investing in and improving the public realm.

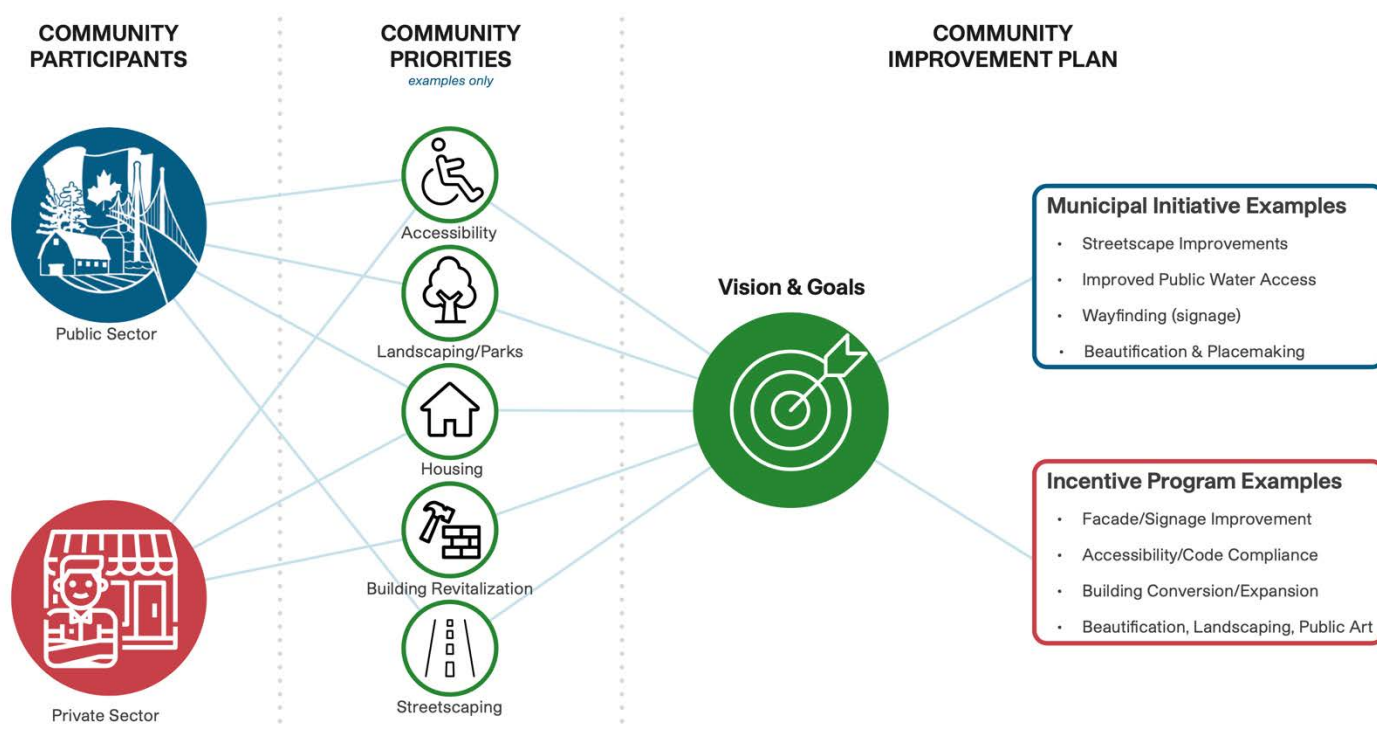
Through the establishment of a coordinated vision for community improvement, along with the tools to help achieve it, the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands CIP will be a powerful tool in helping effect positive change.

1.0 | Introduction

1.2 What is a Community Improvement Plan?

A Community Improvement Plan or “CIP” is a planning and economic development tool used by municipalities in Ontario to guide strategic investment, development, and revitalization initiatives that support the physical improvement of a municipality or areas within a municipality. A CIP can focus on addressing a range of key issues such as main street revitalization, affordable housing development, tourism, or brownfield redevelopment. To do this, a CIP seeks to coordinate improvement efforts between the public sector (Township) and private sector (businesses, community organizations, developers, and landowners), through the administration of incentive programs and municipal initiatives. The primary authority to prepare and adopt these plans is established in Section 28 of the *Planning Act*.

Two primary components of a CIP include incentive programming and municipal leadership initiatives – these are specifically tailored to facilitating specific improvement projects aligned with the CIP’s vision. Incentive programs typically offer financial grants to assist businesses and property owners with eligible improvement projects (e.g., façade improvements). This is a valuable tool as, without a CIP, municipalities are generally prohibited from offering financial assistance to private parties in any way for projects of this nature. On the other hand, municipal leadership initiatives are generally actions or initiatives that can be fully or partially financed and lead by the Township itself. These typically involve improvements to public lands, infrastructure, facilities, and/or the development of strategies to facilitate such improvements in the future (in the case of larger projects). Municipal initiatives could involve streetscaping, improving public water access, or improving pedestrian facilities on main streets, for example.



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1.0 | Introduction



Looking North on Prince Street in Lansdowne

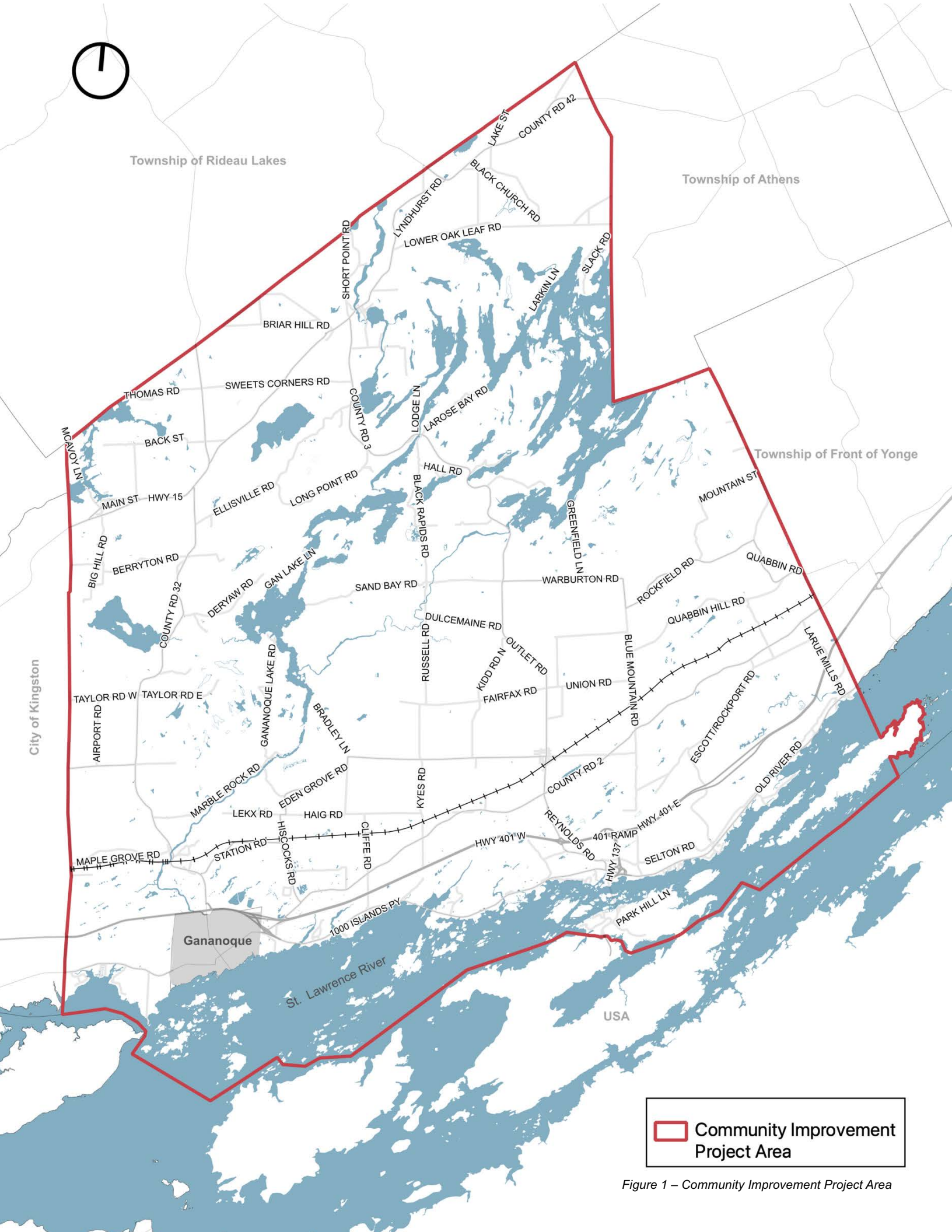
1.3 Community Improvement Project Area

Subsection 28(1) of the Planning Act defines a Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA) as “...a municipality or an area within a municipality, the community improvement of which in the opinion of the council is desirable because of age, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement, unsuitability of buildings or for any other environmental, social or community economic development reason.”

Subsection 28(2) of the Planning Act states that where there is an official plan in effect in a municipality containing provisions relating to community improvement, council may by by-law designate the whole or any part of the municipality as a Community Improvement Project Area. Where such a by-law has been passed, the council may provide for the preparation and adoption of a community improvement plan for implementation in the respective area.

Through the background work and consultation carried out in the early stages of this Plan’s development, it was determined that a municipal-wide CIP would be ideal to meet the needs of the Township. The diverse geography of the Township called for a more flexible approach to community improvement planning, where support could be provided in settlement areas, rural areas, and everywhere in-between. As such, the entirety of the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands is designated a Community Improvement Project Area for the purpose of this Plan. Notwithstanding this broad designation, the subsequent sections of this Plan will provide more structured guidance as to where financial incentives will be available, and where municipal projects/investment will be focused.

The CIPA is shown in Figure 1 on the following page.



 Community Improvement Project Area

Figure 1 – Community Improvement Project Area

2.0 | The Case for Community Improvement

2.1 Municipal Context

Nestled along the picturesque St. Lawrence River in the heart of the renowned "1000 Islands," the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands boasts a rich history as a cherished summer retreat dating back to the late 19th century. Situated within the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, the municipality, formerly comprising three distinct townships - Front of Leeds and Lansdowne, Rear of Leeds and Lansdowne, and Front of Escott - amalgamated in 2001 to form the vibrant community we know today. With a permanent population of 9,800 and a seasonal increase to around 12,300, the Township remains a popular summer destination exuding a primarily rural charm, punctuated by quaint villages and hamlets. The settlement areas designated in the Township Official Plan are Lansdowne, Seeley's Bay, Lyndhurst, and Rockport and Ivy Lea.

The Township enjoys a strategic geographic location situated near the halfway point between Toronto and Montreal along one of Canada's busiest corridors (Highway 401). Flanked on the south by the St. Lawrence River, the Township is also home to the Thousand Islands International bridge, linking Ontario to New York State. The unique blend of history, natural beauty, and strategic location makes the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands a truly special place.

2.1.1 Lansdowne

Lansdowne is the administrative centre of the Township and home to the municipal offices. Historically located south along Highway 2 in the mid-1800's, the arrival of the railway triggered a relocation of the Village north to its present location, building out from the then new Lansdowne Railway Station. Today, the Village is anchored around the intersection of King Street (County Road 34) and Prince Street (County Road 3) and flanked by the railway to the south. The Village of just over 1,000 people is built on a rich agricultural history, acting as a service centre for area farmers and related industries, as well as a link to the broader region through the railway and Highway 401 access to the south. Lansdowne is the only settlement area in the Township serviced via municipal piped water and sewer, making it increasingly attractive for new growth.

2.1.2 Lyndhurst

The Village of Lyndhurst is in the northern-central part of the Township along County Road 33 (Lyndhurst Road). Lyndhurst's roots date back to 1801 with the founding of Lansdowne Iron Works by Wallis Sunderlin on the west bank of what are now known as the Upper and Lower Mill Ponds. While the Iron Works only survived until being destroyed by fire in 1811, a grist mill was established in the late 1820s, along with the planning of a Village that would be named "Furnace Falls." Shortly thereafter in 1846, the community was renamed "Lyndhurst". Today the community maintains a humble main street but boasts excellent opportunities for recreation and outdoor activities. Along with the heritage designated Lyndhurst Bridge – the oldest bridge in Ontario – Furnace Falls Park provides a central public gathering space and waterfront trail connecting Jonas Street to Water Street. Additionally, Lyndhurst Lake offers quieter opportunities for water recreation. Lyndhurst is not serviced by municipal water or sewer, and all development is on private services.

2.0 | The Case for Community Improvement

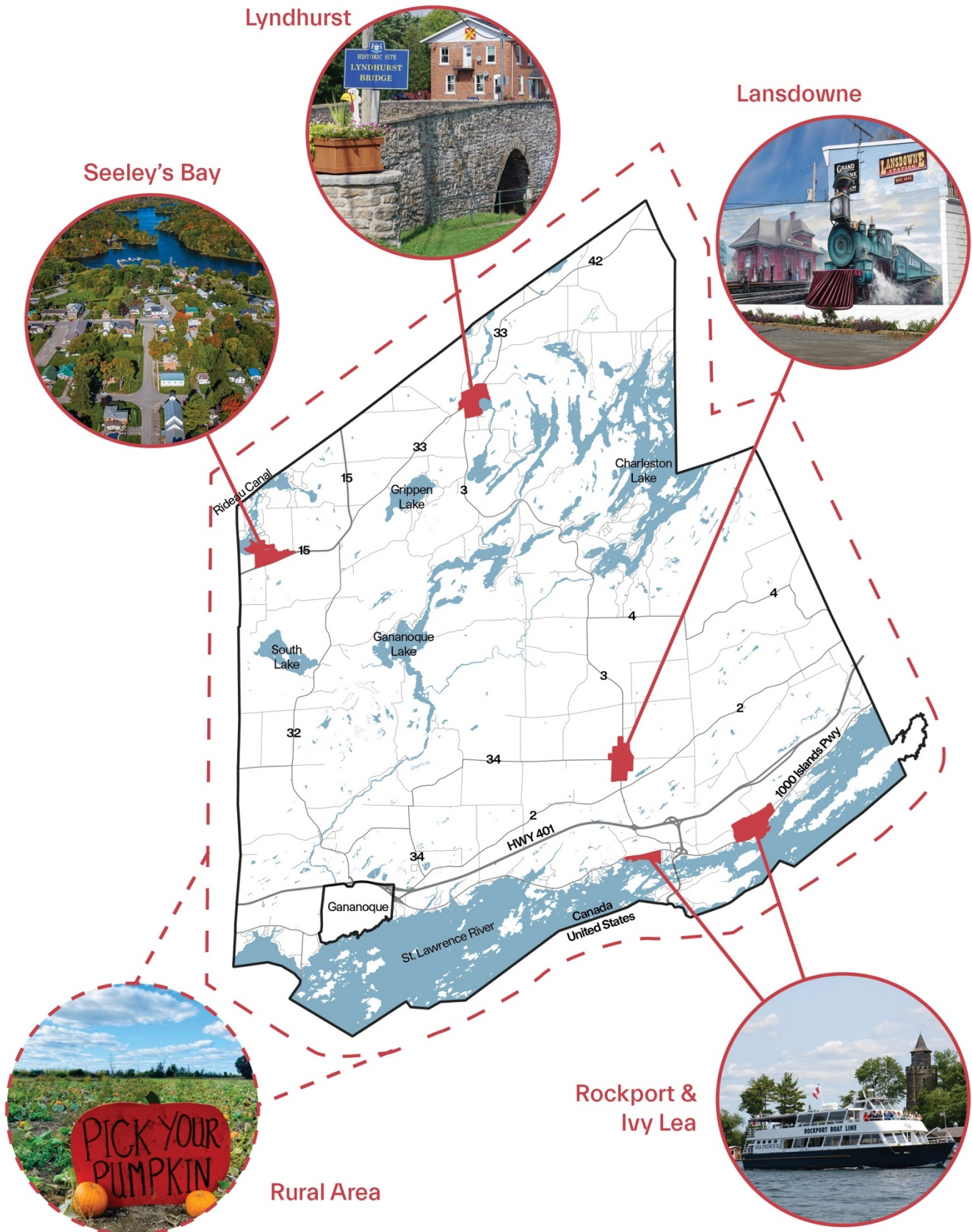


Figure 2 – CIP Focus Areas

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2.0 | The Case for Community Improvement

2.1.3 Seeley's Bay

Seeley's Bay is located in the northwest corner of the Township, along the Rideau Canal, designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The actual Bay was created during the time of the construction of the Rideau Canal in the 1830s as a result of new dam construction and subsequent controlled flooding. With the construction of the canal and establishment of the Seeley's Bay trading post by the Haskins family, the community grew into a well-known destination for water-based recreation and community activities. Both the Seeley's Bay Boat Ramp/Harbour and Haskin's Point are popular amenities for visitors and residents to take in the sights of the Rideau Canal and enjoy access to the water. There are two primary land-based gateways to the community from Provincial Highway 15 via Main Street (County Road 47) at the east and west ends of the community. A secondary gateway also exists from Highway 15 via Bay Street. The community is largely based around Main Street (County Road 47) which bisects the community generally into north and south halves. Seeley's Bay does not contain municipal water or sewer, and all development is on private services.

2.1.4 Rockport / Ivy Lea

The villages of Rockport and Ivy Lea are both located along the shores of the St. Lawrence River and served by the 1000 Islands Parkway. Rockport's strategic location on the river historically made it a desirable rest and resupply stop for ships and has evolved to serving as more of an active tourist village and water recreation hub in the present day. Ivy Lea's location has also contributed to its popularity as a waterfront recreational hub, albeit with a quieter day-to-day given the community is made up primarily of residential/cottage users. Both villages are similar in their built form, land uses, and economic landscape, with commercial tourist cores along the waterfront and linear main streets served by the 1000 Islands Parkway. Neither of the communities contain municipal water or sewer, and all development is on private services.

2.1.5 Rural Area

The Township's rural area is quite substantial, and boasts a range of landscapes and uses spanning hamlets, rural residential strips along County Roads, agricultural lands, and natural areas, lakes and rivers.

For the purpose of this Plan, the Rural Area can be generally described through one of three sub-areas:

St. Lawrence/South of the 401 – these lands are unique in that they consist of special policy area lands in the OP and contain the 1000 Islands Parkway and multi-use path that runs parallel to the River.

Lake Development Areas – there is a range of different sized lakes and rivers throughout the Township which have attracted concentrated areas of cottage and recreational development over the years along their shorelines.

Agricultural/Farmland Areas – The centre of the Township around Lansdowne and the western part of the Township is comprised of prime agricultural farmland, and

2.0 | The Case for Community Improvement

most of the remaining rural area is characterised by municipal, national, and conservation authority parks, general rural lands, and low-density rural settlements in the form of hamlets and large lot development.

The primary land-based gateways to the Township and Rural Area are found along the east and west extents of Highway 401, which generally runs *parallel* with the St. Lawrence River. Secondary gateways exist along the 1000 Islands Parkway, closer to the river, as well as the various County Roads maintained by the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville.

2.2 Background Work and Community Engagement

2.2.1 Background and Needs Assessment

The comprehensive background report prepared at the outset of the project helped set the stage for a context-based and informed approach to enhancing the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands. Its thorough analyses combined with concurrent community engagement efforts (further outlined in Section 2.3) enabled the project team, Township staff, and public gain a deeper understanding of the municipality, its communities, and their assets, opportunities, needs, and challenges.

The report drew extensively from a combination of background research, in-person site visits, and community engagement, culminating in a multifaceted document. It included a high-level overview of the CIP framework and capabilities, identified key legislative and policy components at various governance levels, and delved into the economic and real estate market indicators for the Township, employing available data to discern demand, needs, and early priorities. The background report also presented comprehensive assessments of the five focus areas identified in Section 2.1 — Lansdowne, Lyndhurst, Seeley's Bay, Rockport/Ivy Lea, and the Rural Area. These assessments provided detailed insights into land use, built form, public spaces, and businesses, distilling key takeaways for each area. Overall, the background report played a crucial role in the identification of pivotal priorities, overarching themes, and strategic directions that would guide the CIP's vision.

The Background Report is attached to this Plan under Appendix A4 and should be referenced as source of additional information and context for this Plan.

2.2.2 Community Engagement

No one understands a community quite like those who live, work, and play there! In addition to the statutory requirements outlined in the Planning Act, an inclusive public engagement program was followed alongside the development of this Plan. This program featured a range of active engagement opportunities, including a community survey, open house, stakeholder workshop, incentives and initiatives workshop, and a public meeting. Moreover, passive engagement methods were also employed, utilizing a dedicated project website, social media updates, and presentations to Council.

2.0 | The Case for Community Improvement

Throughout the process, the project team actively engaged with various stakeholders, including the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands staff and Council, local business owners, community champions, as well as the general public.

As the Plan neared its final drafting stages, it underwent a thorough review by Township staff, as well as the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville. The draft Plan was also more broadly circulated to prescribed agencies and persons defined under the Planning Act and posted for public review in November 2023, ahead of the public meeting in December. Subsequently, on December 4, 2023, the draft document was presented to Council and the public at a statutory public meeting hosted by the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands. These events not only provided a platform for community feedback but also ensured that any issues or concerns were addressed prior to Council adoption. **Additional text may be required following public meeting.**

2.2.3 Community Improvement Priorities

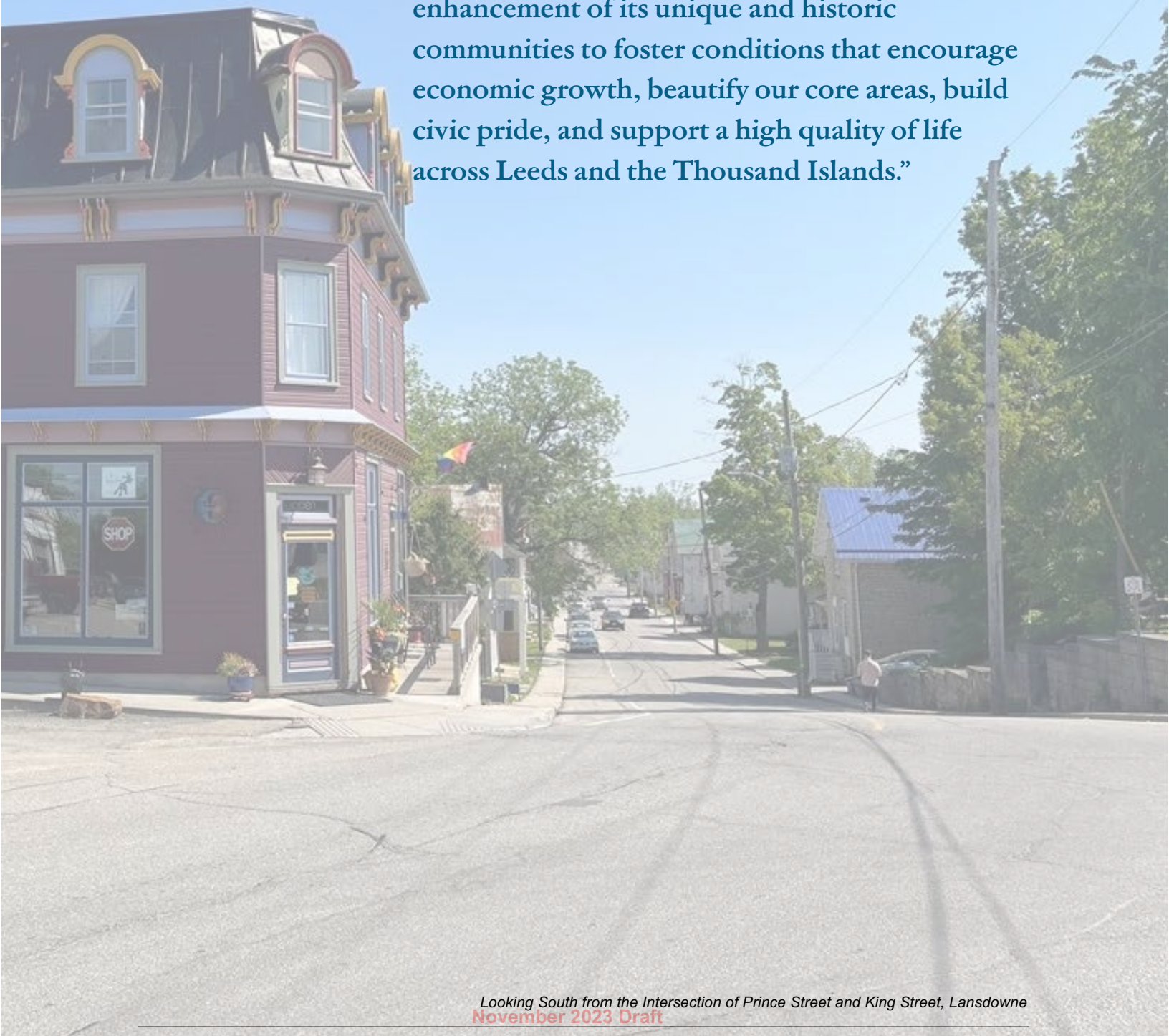
The following were the main priorities identified through the backgrounding and consultation process, which are reflected in the vision and goals for this CIP:

- *Consolidate & coordinate existing community improvement initiatives*
- *Property standards & maintenance is important*
- *Main streets are the backbone the communities*
- *Collaboration & coordination with partners and agencies in community*
- *Strategic business attraction and retention*
- *Heritage conservation & celebration*
- *Improving community character through building stock*
- *Establishing stronger connections in settlement areas*
- *Improvements to public amenities and facilities*
- *Addressing housing attainability and diversity*
- *Support for agri-tourism & rural economic development*
- *Breathing new life into existing buildings*
- *Quality access to nature*

3.0 | Vision & Goals

3.1 Community Improvement Vision

“Through a combination of financial incentives and community improvement initiatives, the Township will support the revitalization and enhancement of its unique and historic communities to foster conditions that encourage economic growth, beautify our core areas, build civic pride, and support a high quality of life across Leeds and the Thousand Islands.”



Looking South from the Intersection of Prince Street and King Street, Lansdowne
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3.0 | Vision & Goals

3.2 Community Improvement Goals

The following goals were identified to address the community's priorities for improving the Township over the next ten years, presented in no particular order of priority or importance. These goals will help the Township review applications for incentives, prioritise improvement projects, and evaluate successes and shortcomings of the Plan.

Enhance the vitality of the Township's main streets through improvements to the building stock and infrastructure along primary corridors in settlement areas.

Increase the number of designated heritage properties in the Township and support ongoing heritage conservation efforts.

Cultivate inviting public spaces that are accessible to everyone through improvements to public amenities, parks, and associated infrastructure.

Promote community pride and responsibility in upholding a high standard of property maintenance and care.

Establish cooperative partnerships among the Township, Community Groups, United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, First Nations, and the public to realize the Township's vision for community improvement.

3.0 | Vision & Goals

3.2 Community Improvement Goals (cont'd)

Facilitate the development of more affordable and attainable housing options in the Township, focusing on support for rental units and secondary dwelling units (SDUs).

Ensure the fair allocation of improvement efforts, funding, and resources across all communities in the Township.

Use physical improvements within the private and public realms to further build the Township's identity and branding across its distinct communities.

Encourage the establishment and growth of businesses, including those in the agri-tourism sector, that contribute to the economic diversity and vitality of our community.

Create opportunities to educate, involve, and support the community with initiatives focused on the preservation, restoration, and sustainable use of the Township's natural heritage resources and ecosystems.

4.0 – Financial Incentive Programs

4.1 Overview

Subsection 28(7) of the Planning Act authorizes the Township to develop and issue grants to owners and tenants of lands or buildings in the community improvement project area for the purpose of carrying out a community improvement plan.

There are a total of five financial incentive programs defined in this CIP, each tailored to encourage improvements to buildings and properties in key areas of the Township. The availability of programs from year to year will be determined by Council on an annual basis and may be influenced by budget capacity and community priorities. The issuance of grants will be subject to the application process described in subsection 6.2, which will evaluate proposals against program-specific and general eligibility criteria and ensure alignment with the vision and goals of the CIP.

The financial incentive programs adopted under this CIP are summarized in the table below and are further described in subsections 4.2 – 4.6 wherein more information regarding program intent, applicable area, eligibility criteria, and eligible combinations is provided:

CIP Incentive Programs	Maximum Amount
Façade Improvement	\$5,000
Accessibility and Code Compliance	\$5,000
Secondary Dwelling Unit Support	\$5,000
Building Conversion and Expansion	\$15,000
Agri-tourism	\$5,000

All incentive programs are subject to the application and approval process defined in this Plan and shall conform to all applicable eligibility criteria.

Complementary Township Grant Programs

In addition to the financial incentive programs offered under this CIP, the Township also administers several other grant programs. While adopted under separate and distinct by-law and policy frameworks (including legislative authorities), these grants complement the vision and goals of this Plan and are worth mentioning within the context of this Plan. As of the date of adoption for this CIP, these grants include:

- *Community & Cemetery Grants Program;*
- *Heritage Conservation and Celebration Program;*
- *Private Road Grant, Capital and Maintenance Streams;*
- *Recreation Subsidy; and*
- *Water and Wastewater Rebate for Seniors*

For more information on the above complementary grant programs, the respective by-laws and policies should be consulted.

4.0 – Financial Incentive Programs

4.2 Façade Improvement Program

4.2.1 Program Summary

Our main streets form the backbone of our communities. They accommodate a range of land uses and activities, serve as core gathering spaces and focal points, and often play an important role in representing the broader community to visitors. It is crucial then, that we support improvements that enhance the vitality, beauty, and interest of our main streets – particularly the building stock. This program will assist eligible applicants with the cost of improving the façade(s) of a non-residential or mixed-use building in within a settlement area.



4.2.2 Grant Details

Maximum Grant Amount	50% of Eligible Project Costs, up to \$5,000
Grant Limitations	No more than \$1,000 of the grant shall be used for Professional Fees associated with the eligible project

4.2.3 Eligible Areas

- (1) To be eligible for this program, the subject property must be located within **Eligibility Area A**, as shown on the eligibility area maps in Appendix A1.
- (2) Notwithstanding (1), the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands may consider projects outside of this area to accommodate exemplary and/or unique projects which go significantly above and beyond minimum expectations/eligibility requirements for this program.

4.2.4 Eligible Projects

- (1) The following non-exhaustive list is intended to provide guidance on the types of projects intended for support under this program:
 - Façade Improvements, such as, but not limited to:
 - painting (including wall murals/art)
 - restoring façade masonry and brickwork
 - restoring architectural features
 - replacing or repairing windows

4.0 – Financial Incentive Programs

- improvement of the appearance of entrances
 - re-design of storefronts
 - installation or repair of canopies and awnings
 - installation or repair of exterior lighting
 - any other permanent façade improvements which may be approved by the Township
 - New/Improved Signage
 - Permanent Artwork (murals, plaques, installments)
- (2) The final determination of an **Eligible Project** shall be at the sole discretion of the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands.

4.2.5 Program-Specific Eligibility Criteria

In addition to subsections 4.2.3, 4.2.4, and the general eligibility requirements under Section 4.7, all proposals under the façade improvement program shall conform with the following:

- (1) Only non-residential or mixed-used buildings are eligible for this program; this includes community/institutional buildings.
- (2) Projects must be directly related to facades and/or site areas which front onto, or are highly visible from, a public right-of-way or other lands legally and reasonably accessible to the general public (i.e. parks, parking lots, laneways, etc.).
- (3) This program is not intended to facilitate end-of-life cycle replacements for building or other materials such as vinyl siding, lightbulb replacement.
- (4) The Eligible Project must be directly associated with a building, property, or use that is open and accessible to the public, or which provides local employment.
- (5) Eligible Project compliance/noncompliance with any or all applicable eligibility criteria shall be determined by the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands in their sole discretion.

4.2.6 Eligible Combinations

The Façade Improvement Program may be combined with the following other programs in this CIP:

- Accessibility and Code Compliance Program
- Building Conversion and Expansion Program

For clarity, this Program may also be combined with any other incentives or grants offered by the Township, in accordance with subsection 4.7.9 of this Plan.

4.0 – Financial Incentive Programs

4.3 Accessibility and Code Compliance Program

4.3.1 Program Summary

Many of the existing built-up areas and buildings in our community were constructed prior to widespread implementation of minimum requirements for universal accessibility, resulting in barriers for those in the community with limited mobility or living with a disability. To tackle this issue, the creation of a more accessible, inclusive, and welcoming environments throughout the Township has been made a key priority for this Plan. This program will assist eligible applicants with the cost of introducing or improving building and site elements that contribute to achieving minimum universal accessibility standards/code compliance.



4.3.2 Grant Details

Maximum Grant Amount	50% of Eligible Project Costs , up to \$5,000
Grant Limitations	No more than \$1,000 of the grant shall used for Professional Fees associated with the eligible project

4.3.3 Eligible Areas

- (1) To be eligible for this program, the subject property must be located within **Eligibility Area A or B** as shown on the eligibility area maps in Appendix A1.

4.3.4 Eligible Projects

- (1) The following non-exhaustive list is intended to provide guidance on the types of projects intended for support under this program:
 - Works undertaken to improve universal accessibility and/or otherwise allows the building or site to achieve or exceed standards for code compliance with respect to accessibility, such as but not limited to:
 - installation of accessibility ramps or lifts;
 - improvements to site/building circulation (paths, walkways, entries);
 - creation or improvement of on-site barrier-free parking spaces;
 - barrier-free improvement/retrofitting of washroom facilities; and/or,
 - general storefront accessibility improvements as approved by the Township

4.0 – Financial Incentive Programs

- (2) Notwithstanding the above, the final determination of an Eligible Project shall be at the sole discretion of the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands.

4.3.5 Program-Specific Criteria

In addition to subsections 4.3.3, 4.3.4, and the general eligibility requirements under Section 4.7, all proposals under the Accessibility and Code Compliance Program shall conform with the following:

- (1) Only non-residential, mixed-use, and residential buildings containing 6 or more dwelling units are eligible for this program. This includes community/institutional buildings.
- (2) Improvements shall be permanent (i.e. not moveable/removable), unless permitted by the Township in its sole discretion.
- (3) The Eligible Project must be directly associated with those parts/areas of a building, property, or use that is open and accessible to the public, employees, and/or inhabitants.
- (4) Eligible Project compliance/noncompliance with any or all applicable eligibility criteria shall be determined by the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands in their sole discretion.

4.3.6 Eligible Combinations

The Accessibility and Code Compliance Program may be combined with the following other programs in this CIP:

- Façade Improvement Program
- Building Conversion and Expansion Program
- Agri-tourism Program

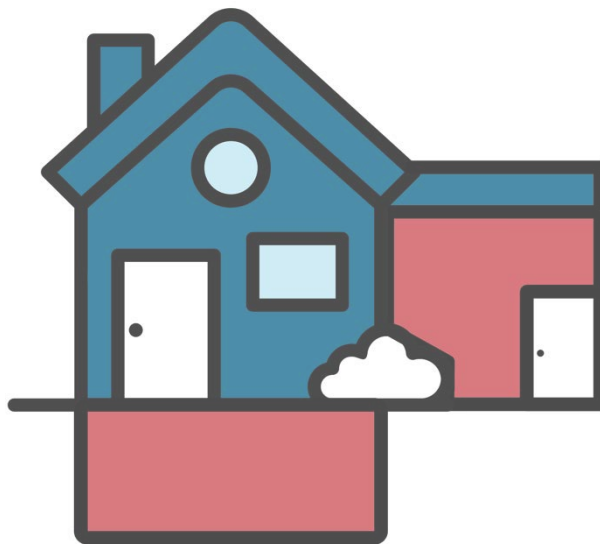
For clarity, this Program may also be combined with any other incentives or grants offered by the Township, in accordance with subsection 4.7.9 of this Plan.

4.0 – Financial Incentive Programs

4.4 Secondary Dwelling Unit Support Program

4.4.1 Program Summary

As of the 2021 Canadian Census, the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands had a total of 3,995 dwellings, 94% of which were single-detached. Further, the Township also had an owner / renter split of 91.5% / 8.5%, respectively. While the Township's geography and servicing level is largely rural, there have been growing concerns with housing affordability and availability, which could benefit positively from a diversification of the housing stock. Secondary dwelling units can help fill some of the gaps in the housing market by offering more affordable and diverse housing options in the community, often for a fraction of the cost of constructing a new dwelling. This program will assist eligible applicants with the cost of creating a new secondary dwelling unit or bringing an existing secondary unit 'up to code' if it was not established in accordance with applicable code, policy, or zoning requirements.



4.4.2 Grant Details

Maximum Grant Amount	50% of Eligible Project Costs , up to \$5,000
Grant Limitations	No more than \$1,000 of the grant shall be used for Professional Fees associated with the eligible project

4.4.3 Eligible Areas

To be eligible for this program, the subject property must be located within **Eligibility Area A or B** as shown on the eligibility area maps in Appendix A1.

4.4.4 Eligible Projects

- (1) The following non-exhaustive list is intended to provide guidance on the types of projects intended for support under this program:
 - creation of a new secondary dwelling unit in conformity with the Township's Official Plan and Zoning By-law;
 - permanent works or upgrades required to achieve compliance with building/fire codes, official plan policy, and/or the zoning by-law, in order to "legalize" an existing secondary dwelling unit.
- (2) Notwithstanding the above, the determination of an Eligible Project shall be at the sole discretion of the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands.

4.0 – Financial Incentive Programs

4.4.5 Program-Specific Criteria

In addition to subsections 4.3.3, 4.3.4, and the general eligibility requirements under Section 4.7, all proposals under the Secondary Dwelling Unit Support Program shall conform with the following:

- (1) Prior to any grant monies being issued, the secondary dwelling unit must comply with the Zoning By-law, and any other applicable codes/legislation.
- (2) Costs associated with cosmetic, material life-cycle replacement, or otherwise decorative or visual improvements to an existing dwelling or secondary dwelling unit are not eligible for funding.
- (3) Eligible Project compliance/noncompliance with any or all applicable eligibility criteria shall be determined by the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands in their sole discretion.

4.4.6 Eligible Combinations

The Secondary Dwelling Unit Support Program may be combined with the following other programs in this CIP:

- Agri-tourism Program

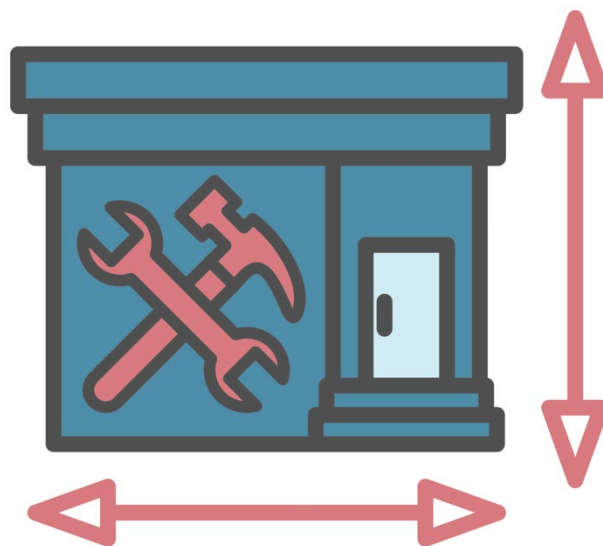
For clarity, this Program may also be combined with any other incentives or grants offered by the Township, in accordance with subsection 4.7.9 of this Plan.

4.0 – Financial Incentive Programs

4.5 Building Conversion and Expansion Program

4.5.1 Program Summary

Through a market survey of the Township as part of the 2023 CIP Background Report, it was estimated that the commercial vacancy rate in the Township is approximately 9%. Additionally, it was found that some of the non-residential stock was found to have potential for accommodating other uses through redevelopment or renovation. Improvement projects focusing on breathing new life into the existing non-residential building stock will contribute to a healthy and vibrant economic base in our settlement areas. This program will assist eligible applicants with the cost of converting, expanding, or redeveloping a building for the purpose of accommodating a new or expanded commercial, mixed-use, or other non-residential use. This program is intended to complement and encourage substantial investments to vacant or underutilized buildings, creating or expanding economic opportunities in our settlement areas.



4.5.2 Grant Details

Maximum Grant Amount	50% of Eligible Project Costs , up to \$15,000
Grant Limitations	No more than \$2,500 of the grant shall be used for Professional Fees associated with the eligible project

4.5.3 Eligible Areas

- (1) To be eligible for this program, the subject property must be located within **Eligibility Area A** as shown on the eligibility area maps in Appendix A1.
- (2) Notwithstanding (1), the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands may consider projects outside of this area to accommodate exemplary and/or unique projects which go significantly above and beyond minimum expectations/eligibility requirements for this program.

4.5.4 Eligible Projects

- (1) The following non-exhaustive list is intended to provide guidance on the types of projects intended for support under this program:
 - Works associated with the improvement, redevelopment, renovation, and/or conversion of the ground floor of existing buildings necessary to accommodate the establishment, expansion, or enhancement of a

4.0 – Financial Incentive Programs

commercial, office, institutional, or mixed-use. Such works may be associated with, but are not limited to:

- Fire safety
 - Electrical systems
 - Ventilation
 - Plumbing/fixtures
 - Other reasonable works necessary to meet the requirements of the Building Code
 - Renovation and/or redevelopment of the space
- Infill development on partially developed properties, such as but not limited to:
 - new main building construction on a partially developed lot;
 - additions to an existing building, resulting in a minimum 25% increase in gross non-residential floor area.
- (2) Notwithstanding the above, the determination of an Eligible Project shall be at the sole discretion of the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands.

4.5.5 Program-Specific Criteria

In addition to subsections 4.3.3, 4.3.4, and the general eligibility requirements under Section 4.7, all proposals under the Secondary Dwelling Unit Support Program shall conform with the following:

- (1) Only non-residential and mixed-use buildings/properties are eligible for this program.
- (2) Decorative, finishing, or otherwise visual-only elements are not eligible under this program (ex. painting, finished flooring surfaces, drywall, etc.).
- (3) Non-permanent or moveable components used by the business, such as appliances, furnishings, interior signage, and light fixtures are not eligible.
- (4) This program is not intended to support greenfield development - new development is generally not to be supported under this program.
- (5) Conversion of ground-level non-residential floor space to residential is not eligible for funding under this program.
- (6) The Eligible Project must be directly associated with a building, property, or use that is open and accessible to the public, or which provides local employment.

4.0 – Financial Incentive Programs

- (7) Eligible Project compliance/noncompliance with any or all applicable eligibility criteria shall be determined by the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands in their sole discretion.

4.5.6 Eligible Combinations

The Building Conversion and Expansion Program may be combined with the following other programs in this CIP:

- Façade Improvement Program
- Accessibility and Code Compliance Program

For clarity, this Program may also be combined with any other incentives or grants offered by the Township, in accordance with subsection 4.7.9 of this Plan.

4.0 – Financial Incentive Programs

4.6 Agri-tourism Program

4.6.1 Program Summary

A significant portion of the Township's geography is rural. In addition to its agricultural base, the rural area provides value through agriculture-related economic development, tourism, and recreation. Support for these rural sectors through the community improvement plan will help ensure a healthy and resilient rural economy. This program will assist eligible applicants with the cost of improving buildings and properties used for agriculture-related, agri-tourism, and/or on-farm diversified uses permitted in the Township's rural area. This program is not intended to fund projects associated with general agricultural uses (standard livestock operations, dairy farms, cash cropping, horticulture, etc.), but more diverse farm/rural area-related uses that align with the vision and guiding principles for the CIP.



4.6.2 Grant Details

Maximum Grant Amount	50% of Eligible Project Costs , up to \$5,000
Grant Limitations	No more than \$1,000 of the grant shall be used for Professional Fees associated with the eligible project

4.6.3 Eligible Areas

- (1) To be eligible for this program, the subject property must be located within **Eligibility Area B** as shown on the eligibility area maps in Appendix A1.
- (2) Notwithstanding (1), the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands may consider projects outside of this area to accommodate exemplary and/or unique projects which go significantly above and beyond minimum expectations/eligibility requirements for this program.

4.6.4 Eligible Projects

- (1) Eligible projects under this program shall generally include the establishment, expansion, and/or improvement of an agriculture-related or on-farm diversified use permitted by the Official Plan. The following non-exhaustive list is intended to provide further guidance on the types of projects intended for support under this program:

4.0 – Financial Incentive Programs

- New building construction, addition(s) to an existing building, or internal renovations to an existing building, directly associated with the use;
- Works associated with the improvement, redevelopment, renovation, and/or conversion of existing buildings necessary to accommodate the establishment, expansion, or enhancement of the use, addressing matters such as:
 - Fire safety
 - Electrical systems
 - Ventilation
 - Plumbing/fixtures
 - Requirements of the Building Code
- Façade improvements to an existing building, such as, but not limited to:
 - painting (including wall murals/art)
 - restoring façade masonry and brickwork
 - restoring architectural features
 - replacing or repairing windows
 - improvement of the appearance of entrances
 - re-design of storefronts
 - installation or repair of canopies and awnings
 - installation or repair of exterior lighting
- New/improved signage;

- (2) Notwithstanding the above, the determination of an Eligible Project shall be at the sole discretion of the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands.

4.6.5 Program-Specific Criteria

In addition to subsections 4.3.3, 4.3.4, and the general eligibility requirements under Section 4.7, all proposals under the Secondary Dwelling Unit Support Program shall conform with the following:

- (1) Projects must be clearly and directly associated with a bona-fide agriculture-related or on-farm diversified use.
- (2) No part of a dwelling is eligible unless it can be demonstrated that it is directly occupied by, and integral to the business.
- (3) Projects must conform with Provincial, County, and Township land use planning policies and regulations applicable to agricultural and rural lands.

4.0 – Financial Incentive Programs

- (4) The use must be open and accessible or provide a good or service to the public, and/or provide demonstrated local employment.
- (5) Furnishings, interior decoration, and appliances shall generally not be eligible for funding.
- (6) Eligible Project compliance/noncompliance with any or all applicable eligibility criteria shall be determined by the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands in their sole discretion.

4.6.6 Eligible Combinations

The Building Conversion and Expansion Program may be combined with the following other programs in this CIP:

- Accessibility and Code Compliance Program

For clarity, this Program may also be combined with any other incentives or grants offered by the Township, in accordance with subsection 4.7.9 of this Plan.

4.0 – Financial Incentive Programs

4.7 General Eligibility for Incentives

All applications for funding under this CIP shall satisfy the eligibility requirements of this section.

4.7.1 Application Mandatory

No project shall be considered for funding through any of the financial incentive programs of this CIP unless an application for funding has been completed and submitted to the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands.

4.7.2 Complete Application

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

- Original copy of all required application forms signed and completed;
- A minimum of two cost estimates/quotes for the proposed works, provided by a qualified source (example: project contractor). A detailed breakdown of costs per project/ phase may be required. The Township may require additional quotes at their discretion;
- Concept drawings, renderings, or other design information as determined necessary by the Township for the proposed works (plot plan, elevations, renderings, floor plans, etc.);
- Current/recent photos of the existing property and

building(s)/area(s) that are the subject of the proposed works;

- Any historical information or documents available (as necessary);
- A cover letter describing how the project is aligned with the vision of the CIP and how it will contribute to the achieving the goals of the CIP, as applicable;
- Other supporting materials such as, but not limited to work plans, applicable reports (traffic impact, inspection report, etc.), public funding sources, and/or approvals, that may be required to supplement the application, as determined by the Township in its sole discretion as part of the pre-consultation process.

4.7.3 Applicant Eligibility

- (1) Applicants must be the owner of the property that is the subject of the application for CIP funding. If the applicant is not the owner of the lands, they must provide written the consent of the owner to submit the application on their behalf.
- (2) For properties with multiple owners, all registered owners of the subject property must provide written authorization for the submission of an application.

4.0 – Financial Incentive Programs

4.7.4 Consistency with CIP Vision & Goals

All proposed works shall be consistent with and contribute to achieving the vision and goals of the CIP, outlined in Section 3 of this Plan, to the satisfaction of the Township in its sole discretion.

4.7.5 Observable & Permanent Improvement

All projects shall represent an observable, permanent improvement to the property and/or building; life cycle replacement of existing materials, fixtures, structures, paving, etc. are not eligible for funding under the program.

4.7.6 Community Improvement Project Area

A project must be located within the Community Improvement Project Area to be eligible for funding under the CIP.

4.7.7 Program-Specific Eligibility Criteria

All projects shall satisfy the program-specific eligibility requirements of the incentive being applied for.

4.7.8 Maximum Grant Funding Amounts

Notwithstanding the limits outlined in the individual incentive programs, under no circumstances will the total amount of financial incentives issued under one or a combination of programs in this Plan exceed 50% of the eligible costs of a project.

4.7.9 Incentive Program Combinations

- (1) Where a proposed project meets the eligibility requirements for more than one incentive program, applicants may apply for grants under one or a combination of incentive programs, unless otherwise specified in the incentive program.
- (2) All of the incentive programs offered under this Plan may be combined with other incentives or grants offered by the Township, where applicable, subject to conformity with all applicable eligibility requirements, approval of the Township, and subsection 4.7.9(3) below.
- (3) Notwithstanding (1) and (2), under no circumstances will the same costs/works be funded under multiple grant programs (i.e. “double-dipping”).

4.7.10 Good Standing

- (1) All applicants shall be in good standing with regard to any municipal fees or other levies liable on the subject property/building. Properties in tax arrears and/or having outstanding municipal bills (water, wastewater, fines) are ineligible for funding.
- (2) Properties having any issues with noncompliance, outstanding work orders (fire, building) and/or zoning orders are ineligible for financial incentives under this Plan. Notwithstanding this, if the proposal is directly associated

4.0 – Financial Incentive Programs

with eligible works that would allow the improvements to reach compliance the application may be accepted.

- (3) Applicants who are currently involved in active litigation with the Township are ineligible for financial incentives under this Plan.

4.7.11 Conformity with Applicable By-laws, Policies, Guidelines, & Legislation

- (1) Proposed works shall conform to the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville Official Plan, Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands Official Plan, Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands Zoning By-law, and any other applicable planning legislation/documents.
- (2) Proposed works shall be carried out in accordance with, or exceed, the applicable minimum requirements of any applicable acts, including, but not limited to the Planning Act, Municipal Act, Ontario Building Code Act, or Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.
- (3) Conformity with applicable by-laws, policies, guidelines, and legislation shall be determined by the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands in its sole discretion.

4.7.12 Adherence to Approved Project

- (1) Project works approved for incentive funding under the CIP shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the

description of project provided in the application and associated supporting materials.

- (2) Should any works, in the opinion of the Township, be inconsistent with the original description of the project, the Township may delay, reduce, or otherwise cancel any approved incentives and may require the applicant to repay any incentives dispersed to date.

4.7.13 Works Completed Prior to Funding Approval

- (1) Those parts of projects or site works commenced and/or completed prior to the submission and approval of an application shall be generally ineligible for funding unless otherwise determined eligible by the Township in its sole discretion.
- (2) Notwithstanding (1), part or all of the remaining work for a project that has already been started may be considered eligible for funding at the discretion of the Township.

4.7.14 Disclosure of other Public Funding Sources

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

4.7.15 Requirement to Obtain Approvals or Permits

Where applicable, the release of grant funding may be subject to the issuance of any permits or approvals required for

4.0 – Financial Incentive Programs

the proposed works (i.e. building permit, rezoning, minor variance, etc.).

4.7.16 Conflict of Interest/Pecuniary Interest

- (1) It shall be the responsibility of the applicant to declare any potential conflict of interest / pecuniary interest at the time of application submission; however, the Township shall maintain full discretion in determining whether a conflict of interest/pecuniary interest exists at any point in the application process.
- (2) The Township shall reserve the right to refuse an application or payment of grant monies should a conflict of interest/pecuniary interest be identified with a project. Such an interest may involve parties such as, but not limited to, the applicant or any agents/subsidiaries thereto, any members of staff or Council involved in the approval/decision-making process, and/or any businesses/contractors retained to carry out a project.

5.0 – Municipal Leadership Initiatives

5.1 Overview

To complement the financial incentive programs outlined in Section 4, this CIP also provides strategic direction for nine high-level “Municipal Leadership Initiatives” for the Township to consider pursuing. These initiatives are aligned with the vision and goals of the CIP and represent opportunities for the Township and its partners to facilitate community improvement in the public realm, alongside grant programming targeting private property.

The municipal leadership initiatives contemplated under this CIP are summarized in the table below. Recommended implementation time frames have been provided to help guide decision-making as follows:

short-term: 1-3 years | mid-term: 3-6 years | long-term: 6-10 years | ongoing: 1-10 years

Municipal Initiative	Timeframe
Adopt Land Acknowledgement and Communications Policy	Short-Term
Improve Public Parks and Water Access	Short-Term
Support Property Standards Management	Ongoing
Main Street Revitalization	Mid-Term
Improve Wayfinding in the Township	Mid-Term
Support Attainable and Affordable Housing Development	Mid-Term
Assess Opportunities for Unopened Right-of-Ways	Mid-Term
Support Environmental Stewardship	Long-Term
Explore Opportunities for Re-Use or Redevelop Seeley’s Bay Fire Hall	Long-Term

Further details, including a summary and recommended action items for each of the above initiatives is provided in subsections 5.2 – 5.10. Notwithstanding this, it is important to note that these initiatives do not represent a “to-do” list or firm commitment of Council to pursue them, as their implementation will be contingent on available funding, community appetite, and Council priorities from year-to-year. As such, Council shall maintain full discretion in determining what, if any, of the initiatives are to be pursued, as well as the final scope of any initiatives, including their action items and implementation time frames.

5.0 – Municipal Leadership Initiatives

5.2 Adopt Land Acknowledgement and Communications Policy

A land acknowledgement is a formal statement that recognizes and respects the Indigenous peoples and their traditional territories on which an event, gathering, or institution is located. It is a way of acknowledging the historical and ongoing connection of Indigenous peoples to the land and is also an important step towards reconciliation, as it encourages respectful relationships between non-Indigenous and Indigenous peoples. It's important to note that a land acknowledgement should not be a one-time gesture, but rather part of an ongoing commitment to learning about and supporting Indigenous communities.

Through this initiative, the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands would seek to develop a formal policy and guidelines for land acknowledgements and communications with the Indigenous community. Such a policy should be developed collaboratively between the Township and Indigenous community to ensure that it is accurate and sets the tone for meaningful communication going forward.

Action Items and Implementation Time Frames to Consider

Action Item	Time Frame
Undertake review of best practices on developing a meaningful land acknowledgement policy	Short-term
Consult with neighbouring Indigenous communities to better understand context, priorities, expectations, and gaps with respect to communication	Short-term
Work collaboratively with neighbouring Indigenous communities to develop meaningful Township land acknowledgement policy and communications protocol	Short-term

5.0 – Municipal Leadership Initiatives

5.3 Improve Public Parks and Water Access

The Township is an active community with a wealth of natural and recreational assets that are enjoyed by residents and visitors alike. As a complement to the built-form improvements encouraged by the financial incentives, the Township should be seeking to improve public natural and recreational spaces. A good starting point for this initiative would be the Joint Recreation Master Plan, adopted in 2020, which provides direction for a range of improvements to assets in the community. In general, existing public parks and water access points should be improved, and new opportunities for additional water access should be explored as the CIP is implemented. Working with the community and local organizations will help to identify priority areas for improvement throughout the life of the CIP.

Action Items and Implementation Time Frames to Consider

Action Item	Time Frame
Review and Identify implementation projects as part of budget discussions for the Joint Recreation Master Plan	Ongoing
Evaluate and prioritise improvement projects based on evaluations from the Joint Recreation Master Plan	Short-term
Consult with community stakeholders on vision and priorities for existing/new asset improvements	Short-term

5.0 – Municipal Leadership Initiatives

5.4 Support Property Standards Management

In many cases, a community only has one chance to make a good first impression on visitors or prospective residents, businesses, and organizations. A big part of that impression often has to do with the visual ‘look and feel’ of a community, and well-maintained properties and public spaces can communicate stronger senses of confidence, pride, and vitality.

A high standard of property maintenance and upkeep was identified as a priority by the community in the development of this CIP. While this Plan is not intended to directly incentivize or financially support the general clean-up and maintenance of private properties, it does support the fostering of a stronger culture of high property standards. Through this initiative, the Township should seek to explore opportunities for alternative property standards enforcement approaches as well as community programming and participation that contribute to a high standard of maintenance and upkeep across the municipality.

Action Items and Implementation Time Frames to Consider

Action Item	Time Frame
Catalogue challenging properties or sites for follow-up in respect of property standards	Ongoing
Meet with property owners to determine issues and explore amicable solutions toward addressing them	Ongoing
Designate a “Spring Clean-up” or similar event in the Township, with complementary programming to support the effort	Short-term
Explore ongoing programming that will encourage stronger participation in ongoing maintenance and upkeep of public and private properties in the Township	Short-term

5.0 – Municipal Leadership Initiatives

5.5 Main Street Revitalization

Main Street revitalization is crucial for fostering economic vitality, preserving local heritage, creating a sense of community, and enhancing the overall quality of life for residents. It is a multifaceted approach that not only benefits businesses but also contributes to the well-being and prosperity of the entire community. One of the primary focuses of this CIP is the improvement of buildings and properties within our settlement areas, particularly along our main streets. As a complement to the incentive programming offered to private properties, the Township should seek to lead by example in contributing to main street revitalization and streetscape improvements.

The majority of the Township's main streets are maintained and owned by the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville. As such, a crucial key to success in revitalizing the Township's main streets will rest within a collaborative and coordinated relationship between the Township and County. The Township should be seeking to work with the County to improve main streets through infrastructure upgrades, introducing or improving amenities, and working collaboratively with local organizations and the general public to identify opportunities to create more active public spaces that cater to more than just vehicles.

Action Items and Implementation Timeframes to Consider

Action Item	Time Frame
Organize a collaborative main street working group between Township and County staff to explore joint opportunities for improvement and revitalization	Mid-term
Explore potential improvements to Township streetscapes that may not be impacted by cross-jurisdictional factors, ranging from smaller 'quick-wins' to longer-term/scale investments	Mid-term

5.0 – Municipal Leadership Initiatives

5.6 Improve Wayfinding in the Township

Wayfinding is a strategic tool that supports local businesses, fosters community engagement, and contributes to the overall vitality and attractiveness of an area for residents and visitors alike. Wayfinding is defined as a strategic system of signage, landmarks, and navigational aids designed to guide residents, visitors, and customers efficiently through a community. The primary goal of wayfinding is to enhance the accessibility and visibility of businesses, attractions, and amenities, ultimately driving economic activity, all of which are of key priorities of this CIP.

The Township's current wayfinding system is relatively limited and due to the rural nature of the municipality. The Township should consider how a coordinated municipal wayfinding strategy could entice travelers to further explore the community and better connect with its various amenities, businesses, and destinations. Such a strategy would provide consistency and guidance in wayfinding, signage, and navigation improvements throughout the Township and would be helpful in better connecting the various settlement areas which each have their own unique character.

Action Items and Implementation Time Frames

Action Item	Time Frame
Catalogue existing wayfinding elements in the Township and identify 'quick-win' improvements that can be undertaken while a strategy is prepared	Short-term
Develop a coordinated wayfinding strategy for the Township that seeks to tie together all of the communities as well as the rural area	Mid-term

5.0 – Municipal Leadership Initiatives

5.7 Support Attainable and Affordable Housing Provision in the Township

Affordable housing across Ontario has become increasingly difficult to find in recent years; this includes the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands. While this CIP is not designed nor intended to tackle housing issues head-on, it can provide some guidance as to how the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands can address housing issues at the local level through direct action and collaboration. Diversification of housing supply should be a key focus of this initiative, particularly in the settlement areas.

The Township should be seeking to collaborate with all levels of government, the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, non-profit organizations, and private sector to leverage funding, expertise, and ideas in the development of housing strategies. Additionally, the Township should focus on diversifying the housing supply, especially in the settlement areas, through updates to policy and regulation. All these efforts should involve the community more actively to find inclusive, practical solutions for affordable housing.

Action Items and Implementation Time Frames

Action Item	Time Frame
Work with the County to better identify, communicate, and address housing affordability challenges in the Township	Short-term
Promote County-level incentive programming and supports for affordable housing	Ongoing
Foster more open dialogue with the community on housing issues relating to attainability and affordability	Ongoing
Review and update Township Official Plan, Zoning By-law, and other regulatory documents to align with legislation/provincial policy and create friendlier housing environment	Mid-term

5.0 – Municipal Leadership Initiatives

5.8 Assess Opportunities for Unopened Road Allowances

There are around 287 kilometres of unopened road allowances owned by the Township, amounting to approximately 344 hectares of land. These parcels may present unique opportunities for improvement as linear trails or parks, or public access points to water, which could be connected or tied into existing natural areas, parks, or amenities. In any case, the Township should consider undertaking a broad evaluation of unopened road allowances throughout the municipality to explore the potential opportunities they may offer.

Evaluation criteria should be established for any review, to which a scoring system could be applied to help identify those parcels with the highest potential. The Township could then develop and weigh options for action (e.g., ‘maintain as-is’, ‘improve’, or ‘dispose’) depending on community priorities and the strategic value of a given parcel. This initiative would ideally be undertaken in consultation with the community and local stakeholders to help identify preferred alternative.

Action Items and Implementation Time Frames

Action Item	Time Frame
Undertake unopened road allowance opportunity assessment with input from community on criteria and priorities	Mid-term
Main database of unopened road allowances and scoring	Ongoing
Present options to community and Council for improvement, maintain as-is, or disposal for selected ROWs	Mid-term
Plan for improvements to selected ROWs as identified through review process (linear parks, recreational trails, water access, etc.)	Long-term

5.0 – Municipal Leadership Initiatives

5.9 Support Environmental Stewardship

The community has expressed a strong desire to protect and support the Township's natural heritage system made up of many forests, wetlands, lakes, rivers, valleylands, areas of natural and scientific interest, habitat of endangered and threatened species. Accordingly, the incorporation of environmental stewardship as a priority in the CIP was a direct response to support community well-being, economic vitality (particularly for tourism), and a positive legacy for future generations. Given the expressed interest and passion of the community, the Township should be seeking opportunities to work collaboratively with community stakeholders and non-profit organizations to refine priorities and develop tailored approaches to supporting the preservation, restoration, monitoring, and analysis of natural heritage resources in the municipality.

Action Items and Implementation Time Frames

Action Item	Time Frame
Consult with conservation authorities and local organizations in community to identify priorities for environmental stewardship	Mid-term
Review existing studies/literature, development regulations, and best practices for opportunities to address gaps in environmental stewardship as part of the planning process	Mid-term
Explore the development of an environmental stewardship grant program, either under the existing CIP or through alternative channels	Long-term

5.0 – Municipal Leadership Initiatives

5.10 Explore Opportunities for Re-Use or Redevelopment of Seeley's Bay Fire Hall

The Seeley's Bay Fire Hall and Community Centre presents an excellent opportunity for adaptive re-use and/or redevelopment. The facility was identified in the Township's asset management plan as having reached the end of its life cycle as a fire hall, and the Township is currently in the process of establishing a new hall on another site. Given the site's central location in Seeley's Bay, lot size (2,800m²) and dual road frontage as a through lot, there are a range of new uses that could be established here to meet the needs of the community. The future needs of Seeley's Bay and priorities of the Township will need to be carefully considered as part of exploring any potential opportunities. This will undoubtedly involve consultation with the community and the involvement of experts in design/redevelopment to ensure realistic, successful vision for the site.

Action Items and Implementation Time Frames

Action Item	Time Frame
Engage real estate/market expert to determine site potential	Mid-term
Work with an architect, designer, or planner to host a design charrette and needs exercise with the community to determine vision for the site	Long-term
Present alternatives for the site that consider Adaptive Re-use, Redevelopment, and/or sale	Long-term

6.0 – Administration & Implementation

6.1 Administering the Plan

6.1.1 General Administration & Interpretation

- (1) This CIP will be administered by the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands, Township Council, and the CIP Coordinator. Interpretation of this Plan will be at the sole discretion of the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands.
- (2) This Plan must be read and interpreted in its entirety, and in conjunction with other applicable legislation including, but not limited to the Municipal Act and Planning Act.

6.1.2 Plan Horizon

This CIP is intended to be implemented over a ten-year period from the date of adoption. Notwithstanding this, the Plan may continue to be implemented beyond the 10-year plan horizon at the discretion of the Township. However, it is recommended that the Plan be updated appropriately to reflect any changes in community priorities or legislation during this period.

6.1.3 Community Improvement Project Area

- (1) The Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA) identified in Section 1.3 constitutes the applicable area of this Plan. Properties not located within the CIPA are not eligible for CIP funding. The CIPA may be amended by By-law from time to

time, at the sole discretion of Council.

- (2) Council may dissolve the CIPA if, in their opinion, the Plan has been carried out and/or no longer aligns with the goals and objectives of the Township for community improvement. Should Council opt to dissolve the CIPA, this CIP must be repealed.

6.1.4 CIP Coordinator

The Township shall appoint a CIP Coordinator to administer the CIP. The CIP Coordinator will act as a day-to-day liaison between the community and the Township, championing the Plan, providing guidance to applicants on the interpretation of the Plan, and coordinating intake of applications. The CIP Coordinator will also organize the review of funding applications with Council and/or their designate, as well as arrange for the issuance of decisions. The CIP Coordinator will also be responsible for marketing, monitoring, and evaluating the Plan throughout its life cycle.

6.1.5 Approval Authority & Responsibilities

- (1) Township Council is the approval authority responsible for making final decisions on CIP funding applications. The responsibilities of Council as the approval authority are as follows:
 - (a) reviewing CIP funding applications, supporting

6.0 – Administration & Implementation

- information, and/or associated reports/packages prepared by the CIP Coordinator, and providing comments;
- (b) participating in the formulation of a recommendation for approval or refusal of CIP funding applications;
- (c) participating in the monitoring and evaluation activities of the Plan and providing recommendations on amendments which may be identified from time to time.
- (2) Notwithstanding (1), Township Council may, in its sole discretion, opt to delegate some or all of the approval authority responsibilities listed above (excluding final decisions) to an Implementing Committee, which may be an existing committee of Council, a new CIP-specific committee, or a member of staff.
- (3) Should Council delegate approval authority responsibilities in accordance with (2) to an Implementing Committee, the committee is encouraged to be made up of a combination of Township staff, council, and/or local organizational leaders/professionals to ensure diverse backgrounds and perspectives. The size, role, and composition of any Implementing Committee shall be determined by Council in its sole discretion. Any Council responsibilities outlined in Section 6 of this Plan shall be modified as needed to reflect any delegated authority.

6.1.6 CIP Budget & Incentive Program Funding

- (1) Council is responsible for establishing the annual CIP budget to fund the financial incentive programs. Each year Council may, at their sole discretion, opt to fund some, all, or none of the financial programs outlined in the CIP.
- (2) The annual CIP budget should be informed by the program monitoring/evaluation data gathered under Section 7, to ensure community uptake and interest in programming is reflected appropriately.
- (3) Council may, in their sole discretion, opt to restrict any portion of the annual CIP budget to one or more specific programs to ensure adequate/reserved funding for certain types of projects.
- (4) All applications for grant funding will be evaluated and determined on a "first come, first served" basis. However, Council reserves the right to limit funding (as well as the time limits within which they are issued) for individual applications/projects if, in their opinion, it would unduly limit the availability of funding for other projects seeking funding throughout the budget year.

6.1.7 Implementation of Municipal Leadership Initiatives

- (1) Council will maintain full discretion with respect to determining whether to budget,

6.0 – Administration & Implementation

plan for, and/or pursue any of the Municipal Leadership initiatives in Section 5.

- (2) Council may dedicate a part or all of the annual CIP budget toward one or more of the Municipal Leadership Initiatives identified in Section 5. Alternatively, Council may wish to budget for one or more Municipal Leadership Initiatives outside of the CIP budgeting process.
- (3) Despite the above, nothing in this Plan is intended to commit the Township or any other public authority to funding, participating in, or pursuing any one of the Municipal Leadership Initiatives outlined in Section 5.

6.1.8 Powers of Council under Section 28 of the *Planning Act*

There are certain authorities and powers granted to Council under Section 28 of the *Planning Act* for the purpose of community improvement and implementing the community improvement plan. The following excerpts from the *Planning Act* have been identified as the most relevant to the implementation and pursuit of the municipal leadership initiatives outlined in Section 5 of this Plan.

- (1) Planning Act Subsection 28(3): Acquisition and Clearance of Land
For the purposes of undertaking community improvement, the

Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands may:

- (a) acquire land within the community improvement project area;
- (b) hold land acquired before or after the passing of the by-law within the community improvement project area; and
- (c) clear, grade or otherwise prepare the land for community improvement.

- (2) Planning Act Subsection 28(6): Powers of Council re Land
For the purpose of implementing the community improvement plan, the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands may:

- (a) construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on land acquired or held by it in the community improvement project area in conformity with the community improvement plan, and sell, lease or otherwise dispose of any such buildings and the land appurtenant thereto; and/or,
- (b) sell, lease or otherwise dispose of any land acquired or held by it in the community improvement project area to any person or governmental authority for use in conformity with the community improvement plan.

6.0 – Administration & Implementation

6.2 Application Process

The following section outlines the standard application submission/approval process for the CIP funding programs. An illustration of the process is provided for convenience at the end of this section.

6.2.1 Application Intake Period

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

6.2.2 Pre-Consultation

All applicants are required to arrange for a pre-consultation with the CIP Coordinator to discuss their project(s) and identify eligibility, review applicable streams, clarify process, and receive preliminary feedback prior to submission. The CIP Coordinator should also advise of any additional information and materials required for a complete application, beyond the standard requirements outlined in subsection 4.7.2

6.2.3 Submission and Review for Complete Application

- (1) Following pre-consultation, the applicant prepares and submits their application, including any

required supporting information and materials identified at the pre-consultation.

- (2) The CIP Coordinator then reviews the application to determine completeness, screening for general eligibility criteria, and ensuring all required supporting information identified at the pre-consultation meeting has been included and is acceptable.
- (3) If the application is deemed complete, the CIP Coordinator will notify the applicant accordingly. If the application is deemed incomplete, the application will be returned to the applicant with comments and/or instructions related to satisfying the requirements for the application to be deemed complete.

6.2.4 Application Review & Recommendation

- (1) Upon deeming an application complete, one of the following will take place, depending on whether Council has delegated approval authority responsibilities to an Implementing Committee or member of staff under subsection 6.1.5:

6.0 – Administration & Implementation

- (a) **If Council HAS delegated approval authority responsibilities:**
the CIP Coordinator will circulate the application and all associated information/materials to the Implementing Committee or delegated member of staff for review. For the committee, it is recommended to schedule a meeting date for all Implementing Committee members to review the application against the general and program-specific eligibility criteria and form a recommendation on the application.
- (b) **If Council HAS NOT delegated approval authority responsibilities:**
the CIP Coordinator will review the application and all associated information/materials against the general and program-specific eligibility criteria and form a recommendation on the application.
- (2) In the event of a recommendation for refusal, the applicant must be notified prior to the application being considered by Council, provided with reasons for refusal, and given an opportunity to resubmit their application for review within a reasonable time frame. If an applicant disagrees with the proposed recommendation and wishes to have the application heard by Council anyway, the application will continue through the process.
- (3) Following the above, the CIP Coordinator will prepare a report to Council containing an overview of the application and recommendation for approval or refusal. The application and all associated information/materials should be included with the report. Council will then consider and decide on the application during their regular or other scheduled meeting.
- ### 6.2.5 Council Decision
- (1) As outlined in Section 6.1.5, Council is the approval authority responsible for making final decisions on CIP funding applications. The decision by Council to fund (or not fund) improvements through the programs of this CIP is entirely at the discretion of Council, unless delegated in accordance with Section 6.1.5.
- (2) Council or their delegate reserves the right to determine the level of funding which shall be received by an applicant, whether to fund at all or in part, and what conditions, obligations and other requirements may be attached to any funding allocation and/or agreement(s).
- (3) Considering the above, Council or their delegate will make one of the following two decisions on a CIP funding application:
- (a) **Approval:** If an application is approved, the applicant will be notified accordingly. The CIP

6.0 – Administration & Implementation

Coordinator will arrange for a funding agreement to be prepared for execution between the Township and Applicant respecting the approved project/funding, as outlined in Section 6.2.6.

- (b) **Refusal:** If an application is refused, the applicant will be notified accordingly and provided with reasons for the refusal. There is no opportunity for appeal where an application has been refused by the Township; however, a refusal does not disqualify the applicant from submitting a new CIP funding application in accordance with the provisions of this Plan.

6.2.6 Funding Agreement

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

6.2.7 Project Commencement

Upon execution of a CIP Funding Agreement, the applicant may commence the works associated with

the improvement project, in accordance with the provisions of the agreement and approved proposal.

6.2.8 Project Initiation/Completion

- (1) Unless otherwise outlined in the Funding Agreement described in 6.2.6, the approval of any application for funding will expire if works are not substantially commenced within six (6) months and completed within twelve (12) months from the date of execution of the Funding Agreement, as determined by the Township in its sole discretion.
- (2) It is the responsibility of the applicant to notify the Township when the project has been completed.
- (3) Upon completion of the improvement project, and prior to the issuance of any financial incentives outlined under the CIP Funding Agreement, the applicant may be required to submit supporting information and materials documenting the completion of the works, including but not limited to:
 - Original invoices for all costs associated with eligible works;
 - Proof of payment for all costs claimed for eligible works;
 - Photographs of the completed project;
 - Certificates of occupancy or other similar documents;
 - Required inspection reports; and

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- Any applicable licenses or other approvals.
- (4) Further to the above, prior to the issuance of any financial incentives, the CIP Coordinator, in coordination with other municipal staff which may be necessary, will conduct a site inspection of the completed works to confirm the works have been carried out in accordance with the CIP Funding Agreement and consistent with the approved application. The Township will address the non-completion or non-compliance of any works in accordance with the CIP Funding Agreement.

6.2.9 Payment of Grant

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

6.0 – Administration & Implementation

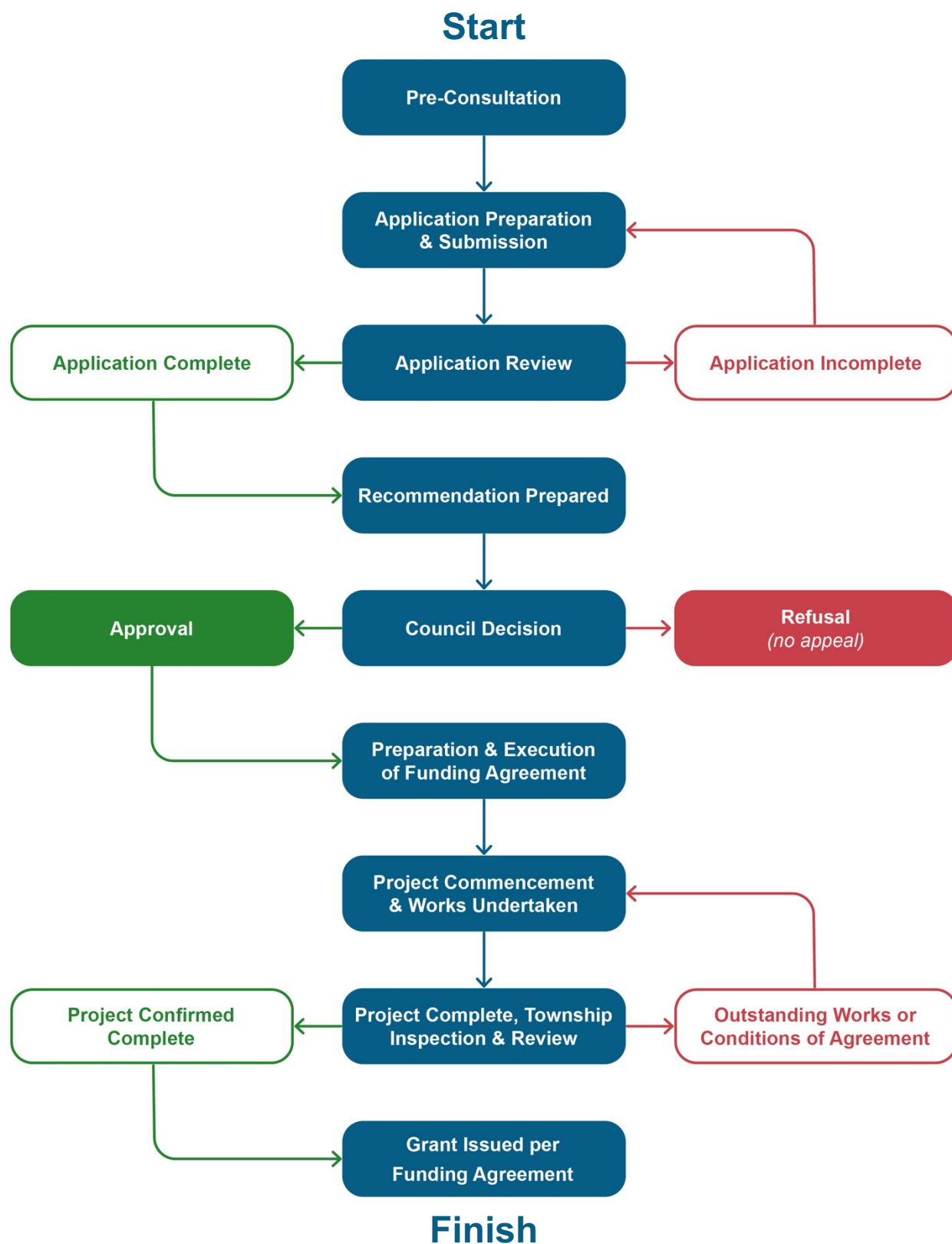


Figure 3 - Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands CIP Application Process

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7.0 – Marketing, Monitoring, & Modifying the Plan

7.1 Marketing the Plan

A large part of the success of this Plan will be determined by its accessibility and familiarity to the community. Marketing of the Plan and the various incentive programs/initiatives will play an important role in encouraging broader uptake and community buy-in. It is therefore recommended that the Township take advantage of all opportunities to provide more information about the Plan, projects, and incentive programs through a range of methods, such as, but not limited to:

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

7.0 – Marketing, Monitoring, & Modifying the Plan

7.2 Monitoring & Evaluating the Plan

7.2.1 Annual Report to Council

To track the implementation and performance of this Plan, various baseline data will be gathered and measured throughout its life cycle, and Township staff will prepare and present findings in an annual report to Council and make the findings available to the greater community. The report should contain an overview of statistics, trends, as well as recommendations for improvements to the structure or framework of the Plan. The report should also summarize any progression on the municipal leadership initiatives outlined in Section 5.

7.2.2 Baseline Data

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

- Floor area of commercial space;
- Number of active businesses in each focus area;
- Number of new secondary dwelling units created and/or improved;
- Commercial vacancy rates in the community;
- Number of building and planning applications submitted for certain types of development (accessibility, internal redevelopment, façade improvement, etc.);
- Any other baseline data that may be beneficial to tracking the implementation and evaluation of this Plan (application numbers, funding amounts, investment amounts, etc.).

7.2.3 Monitoring Statistics & CIP Goals

- (1) The following measures of success should also be tracked and monitored by the CIP Coordinator, for inclusion in the annual monitoring report described above:
 - Number of applications received;
 - Number of applications approved and for which respective stream(s);
 - Total value of grants issued;
 - Total value of investment dollars leveraged;
 - Observable trends and relationship to the baseline data noted in 7.2.2.
- (2) In addition to the above, the Township may also wish to track measures directly related to the goals of this Plan outlined in Section 3 to assist in monitoring success and identifying any recommendations for changes.

7.0 – Marketing, Monitoring, & Modifying the Plan

7.3 Amending/Modifying the Plan

Based on the results of the monitoring exercises above or feedback gathered throughout the implementation of the CIP, it may be necessary to modify or amend this Plan from time to time as community priorities and goals change or as the Plan is implemented. The table below provides guidance as to what Plan adjustments or changes would trigger an amendment to the Plan in accordance with the requirements of the Planning Act.

Adjustment or Change to Plan	Amendment Required?
Add, modify, or remove any part of the Vision or Goals of the Plan	Yes
Modification to Community Improvement Project Area	No, but requires by-law passed by Council
Repeal of Community Improvement Project Area	No, but requires by-law passed by Council
Addition, modification, or removal of one or more financial incentive programs or municipal leadership initiatives from the Plan	Yes, except for technical changes, clarification, or error correction
Add, modify, or remove any general eligibility criteria in Section 4.7	Yes
Budgetary allocation changes (overall budget, or program/initiative-specific)	No
Cancelling funding for one or more incentive programs	No
Administering the Plan beyond the 10-year planning horizon	No
Delegation of Council approval authority responsibilities under Section 6.1.5 to an Implementing Committee	No, but requires by-law passed by Council



Appendices

A1 | Incentive Eligibility Areas

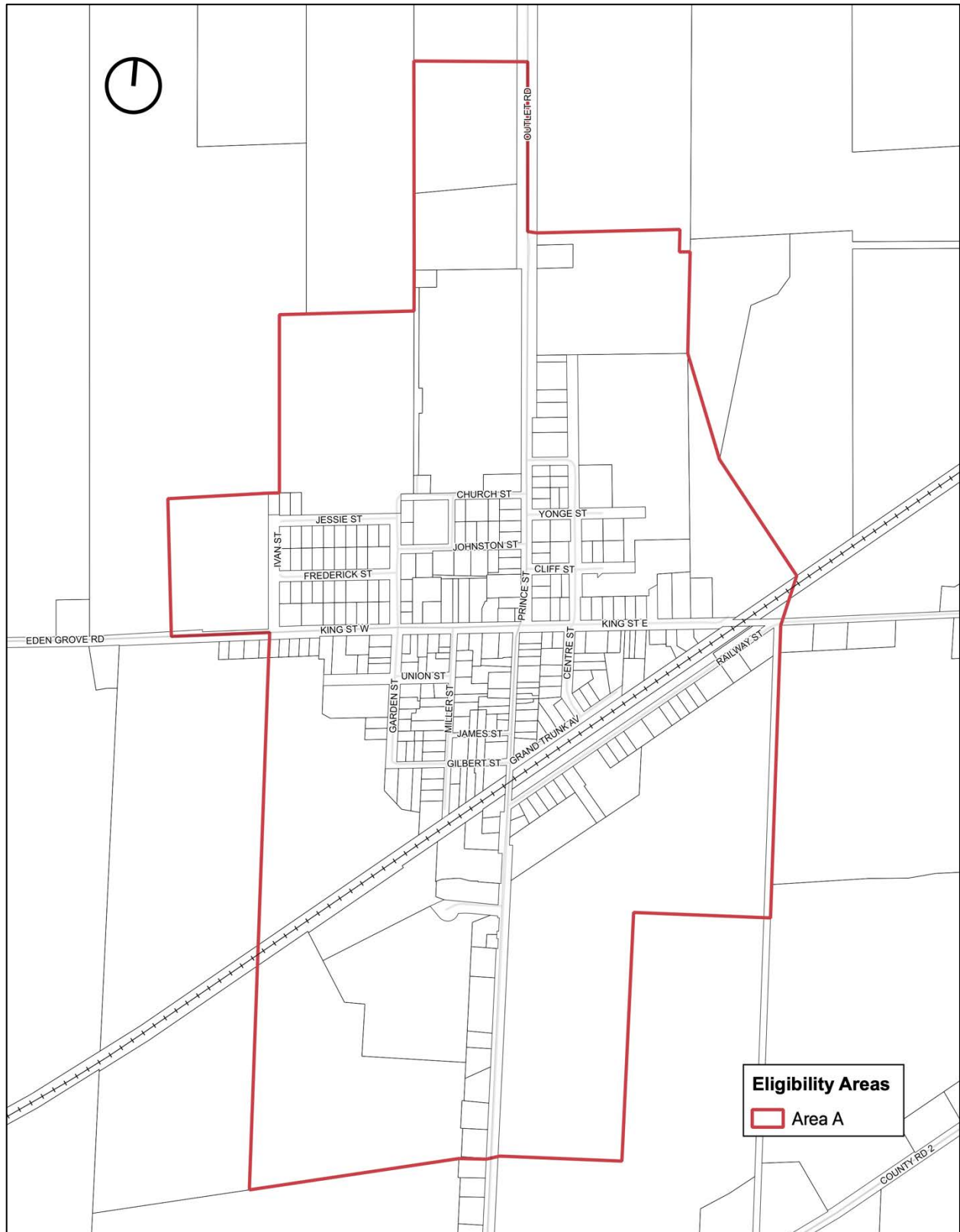
A2 | Incentive Application Review Guide

A3 | Glossary

A4 | CIP Background Report

A1 – Incentive Eligibility Areas

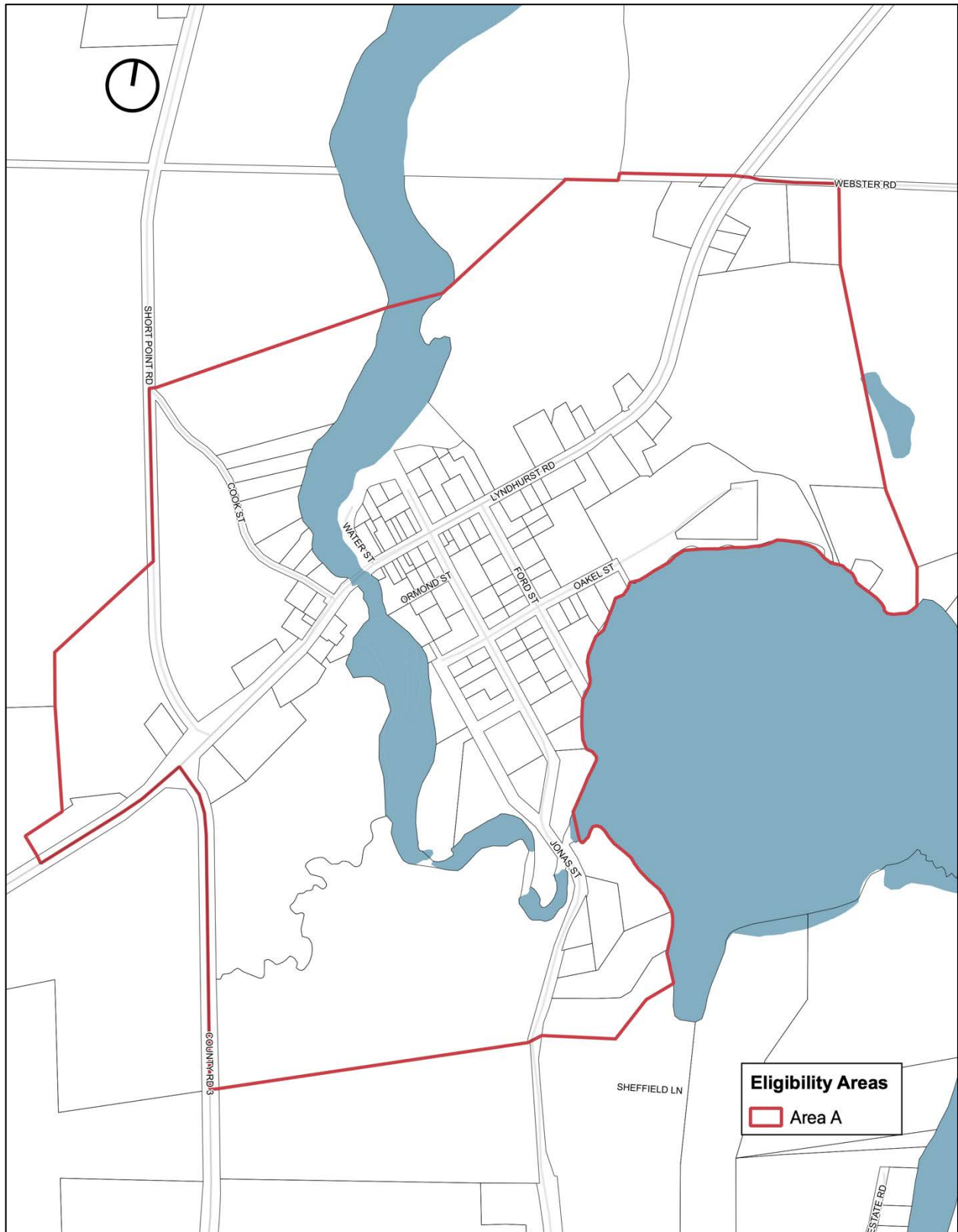
Map 1: Lansdowne



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A1 – Incentive Eligibility Areas

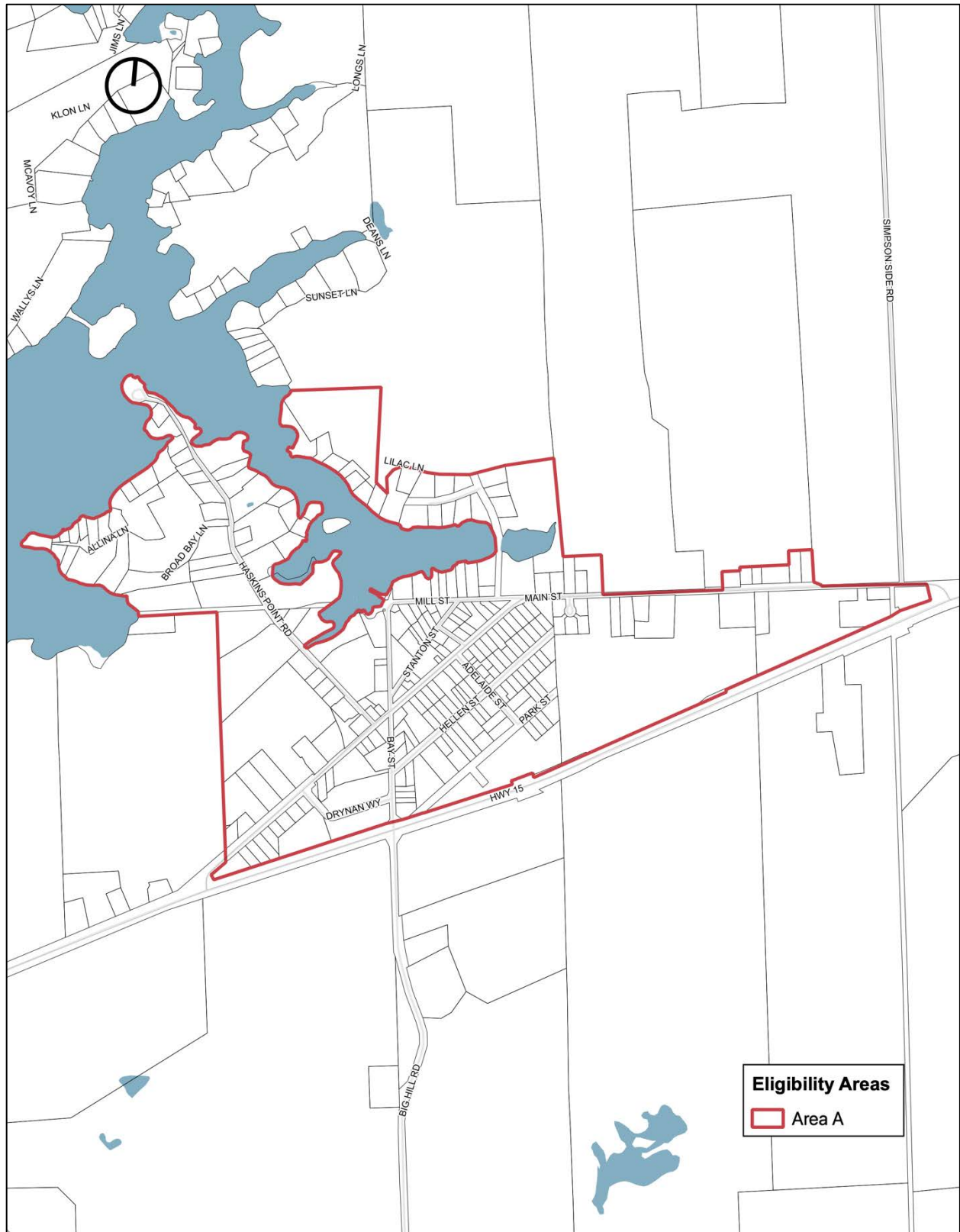
Map 2: Lyndhurst



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A1 – Incentive Eligibility Areas

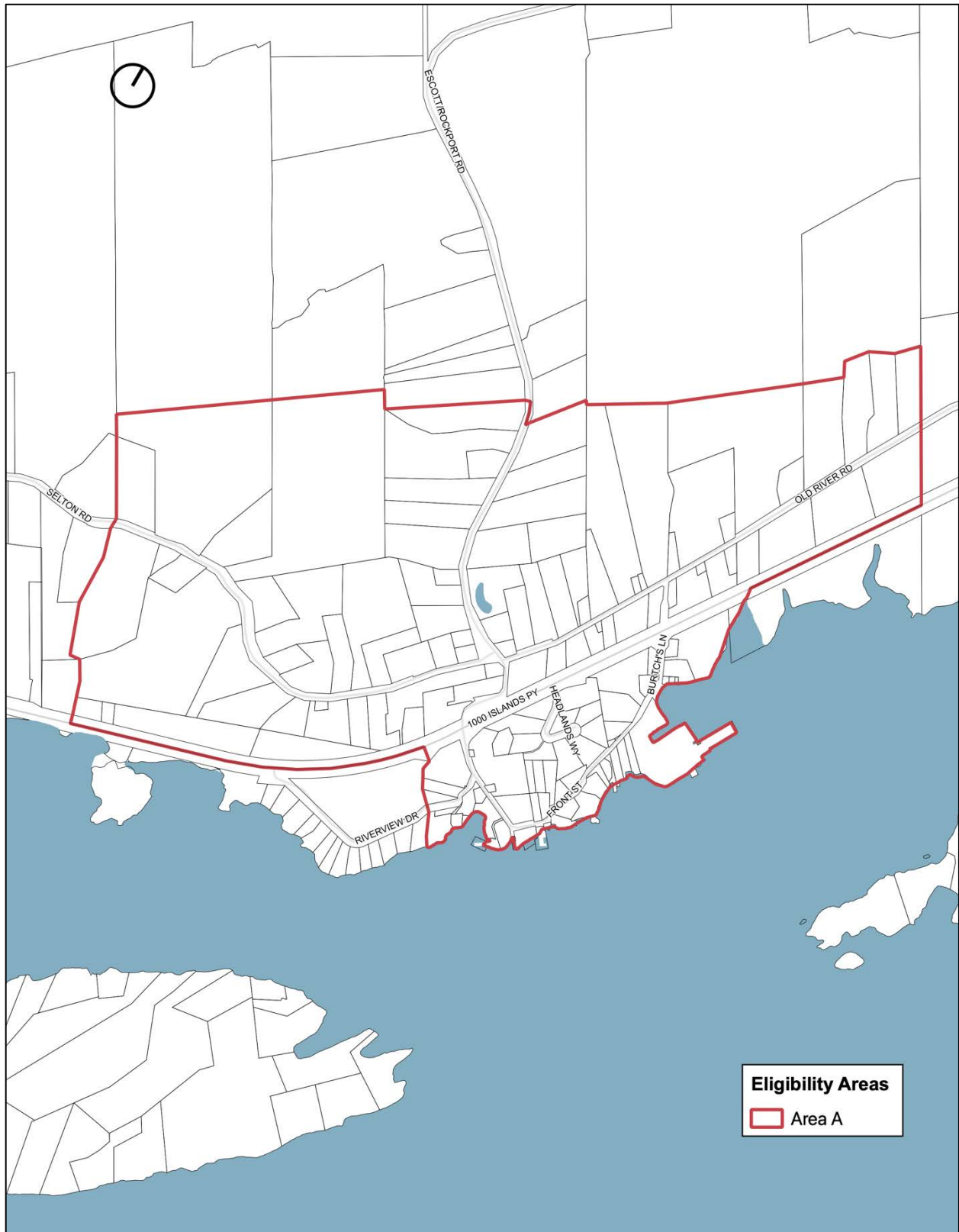
Map 3: Seeley's Bay



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A1 – Incentive Eligibility Areas

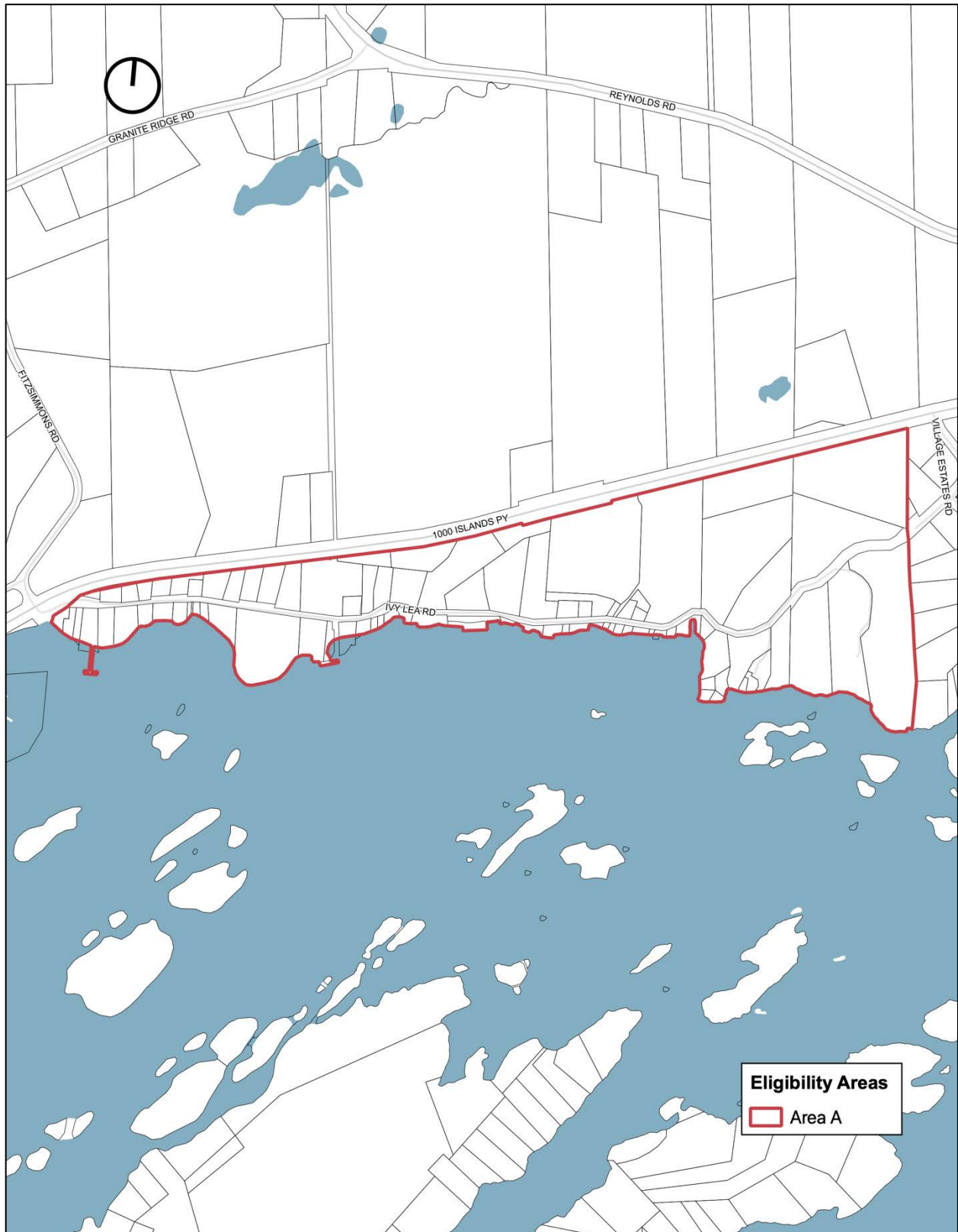
Map 4: Rockport



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A1 – Incentive Eligibility Areas

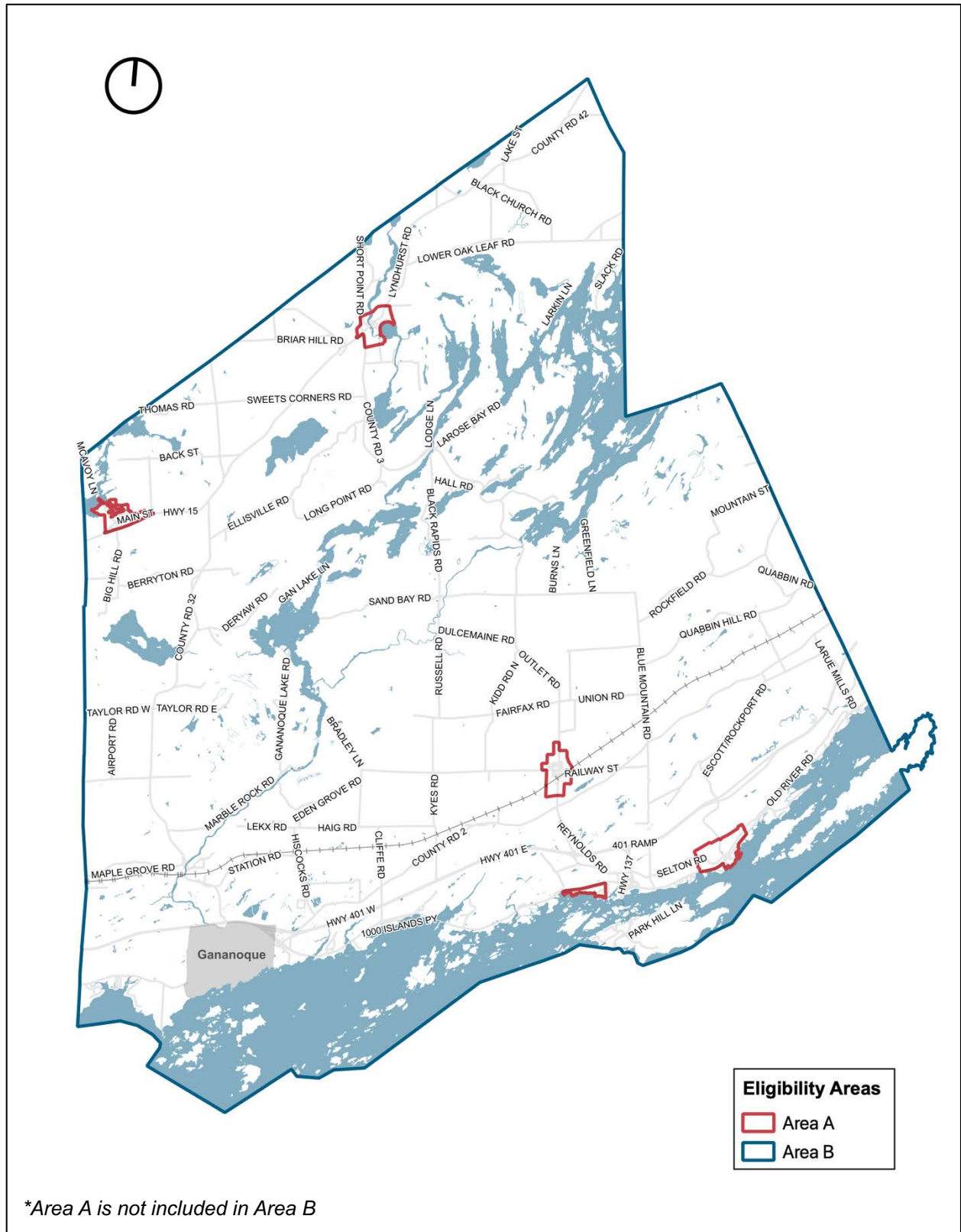
Map 5: Ivy Lea



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A1 – Incentive Eligibility Areas

Map 6: Rural Area



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A2 – Incentive Application Review Guide

Incentive Application Review Guide

This CIP is not intended to fund all property improvements, but rather those eligible projects that are most aligned with the vision and goals of the Plan, and priorities of the Township. This CIP Application Review Guide is designed to lead the Township through the review of applications, while also helping applicants to better understand the criteria on which their proposals are evaluated, beyond the minimum eligibility criteria. This Form is not intended to be a “pass / fail” exercise, but more of a consistent and transparent methodology for the review of CIP applications.

Instructions

1. This Form should only be completed after reading the Leeds and the Thousand Islands Community Improvement Plan in its entirety.
2. This Form should be completed by the CIP Coordinator and/or each member of the Implementing Committee (if applicable) prior to engaging in the discussion and/or development of any recommendations on a CIP application. Alternatively, one form may be completed as a group for an application.
3. Complete the table on this form, indicating the level of conformity with the goals of the CIP as follows:

C = Compliant / **NC** = Not Compliant / **NA** = Not Applicable

4. Space is provided for each goal to allow for comments or notes on the reviewer’s thought process and/or to provide further explanation related to their assessment.
5. This Form is intended to be made available to the applicant to help provide feedback and understanding on the review process, regardless of Council’s decision.

Form Completed by: _____		Date: _____
Owner/Applicant: _____		
Proposal Description: _____		
Project Cost: _____		Requested Amount: _____
Applicable Program(s):	<input type="radio"/> Façade Improvement	<input type="radio"/> Building Conversion and Expansion
	<input type="radio"/> Accessibility and Code Compliance	<input type="radio"/> Agri-tourism
	<input type="radio"/> Secondary Dwelling Unit Support	

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A2 – Incentive Application Review Guide

Conformity with CIP Goals

Please indicate the conformity of the proposal with each of the CIP Goals (if applicable), providing comments where necessary.

Enhance the vitality of the Township's main streets through improvements to the building stock and infrastructure along primary corridors in settlement areas.	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> NC	<input type="radio"/> NA
<i>Comments:</i>			
Increase the number of designated heritage buildings and sites in the Township and support ongoing heritage conservation efforts.	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> NC	<input type="radio"/> NA
<i>Comments:</i>			
Cultivate inviting public spaces that are accessible to everyone through improvements to public amenities, parks, and associated infrastructure.	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> NC	<input type="radio"/> NA
<i>Comments:</i>			
Promote community pride and responsibility in upholding a high standard of property maintenance and care.	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> NC	<input type="radio"/> NA
<i>Comments:</i>			
Establish cooperative partnerships among the Township, Community Groups, United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, First Nations, and the public to realize the Township's vision for community improvement.	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> NC	<input type="radio"/> NA
<i>Comments:</i>			

A2 – Incentive Application Review Guide

Facilitate the development of more affordable and attainable housing options in the Township, focusing on support for rental units and secondary dwelling units (SDUs).	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> NC	<input type="radio"/> NA
<i>Comments:</i>			
Ensure the fair allocation of improvement efforts, funding, and resources across all communities in the Township.	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> NC	<input type="radio"/> NA
<i>Comments:</i>			
Use physical improvements within the private and public realms to further build the Township's identity and branding across its distinct communities.	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> NC	<input type="radio"/> NA
<i>Comments:</i>			
Encourage the establishment and growth of businesses, including those in the agri-tourism sector, that contribute to the economic diversity and vitality of our community.	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> NC	<input type="radio"/> NA
<i>Comments:</i>			
Create opportunities to educate, involve, and support the community with initiatives focused on the preservation, restoration, and sustainable use of the Township's natural heritage resources and ecosystems.	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> NC	<input type="radio"/> NA
<i>Comments:</i>			

A3 – Glossary

Glossary

Agriculture-Related Uses means those farm-related commercial and farm-related industrial uses that are directly related to farm operations in the area, support agriculture, benefit from being in close proximity to farm operations, and provide direct products and/or services to farm operations as a primary activity. For the purpose of this Plan, agriculture-related uses should directly relate and/or contribute to promoting agri-tourism in the Township.

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

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

CIP Coordinator means a member of Leeds and the Thousand Islands staff appointed by the Township to administer the CIP, organize the review of funding applications with Council and/or their designate, as well as arrange for the issuance of decisions. The CIP Coordinator will also be responsible for marketing, monitoring, and evaluating the CIP throughout its life-cycle.

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

Greenfield means, for the purposes of this Plan, lands which have not previously been developed and generally exist in a natural state.

Implementing Committee means an existing committee of Council or CIP-specific committee created by the Township that has been delegated some or all of the approval authority responsibilities outlined in Section 6.1.5 by Council. The size, role, and composition of any Implementing Committee shall be determined by Council in its sole discretion.

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

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

- retail uses/commercial services;
- office space
- institutional uses;

A3 – Glossary

- residential uses as ancillary or secondary uses to one or more of the above uses.

On-Farm Diversified Uses means uses that are secondary to the principal agricultural use of the property and are limited in area. On-farm diversified uses include, but are not limited to, home occupations, home industries, agri-tourism uses, and uses that produce value-added agricultural products (cideries, breweries, wineries, smaller-scale ag product processing, etc.), where permitted by the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville Official Plan, Leeds and the Thousand Islands Official Plan, and/or Leeds and the Thousand Islands Zoning By-law. For the purpose of this Plan, on-farm diversified uses should directly relate and/or contribute to promoting agri-tourism in the Township.

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

Professional Fees means the costs associated with the preparation and/or registration of any agreements, plans, designs, studies, or the carrying out of any services required for the project by an architect, engineer, designer, or other qualified professional or agency.

Project Costs means those costs directly related to materials, labour, equipment, and/or installation associated with the completion of the eligible improvement project. Professional Fees as defined above may also be considered Project Costs.

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

Secondary Dwelling Unit are self-contained residential units which contain kitchen and bathroom facilities, and which are located within an existing single-detached dwelling, semi-detached dwelling, or townhouse dwelling unit, or within a structure that is accessory to the principal dwelling unit. Secondary dwelling units are also known as accessory apartments, basement apartments, or in-law suites.

A4 – Background Report

*Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands Community Improvement Plan
Background Report maintained under separate cover. Please contact the Township for
a copy of this document.*