



MUNICIPALITY OF EAST FERRIS

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN



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1.0 Introduction

A community improvement plan is a revitalization tool, used to achieve community planning, urban design and economic development objectives for a defined area. Numerous Ontario communities have successfully implemented Community Improvement Plans, which allows the ability to offer financial incentives to landowners and tenants, and to study and plan for capital projects and other municipal initiatives.

1.2 Background

The Municipality of East Ferris has embarked upon the preparation and implementation of a Community Improvement Plan for East Ferris. East Ferris is a rural, residential community located 20 kilometers east of the City of North Bay. The Municipality has experienced steady growth over the past five decades and currently has a population of over 5,000. This growth has contributed to the evolution of the municipality from a township with a rural setting to a semi-urban community with the Villages of Astorville and Corbeil as centres. The Municipality of East Ferris is working to further develop the community's economic foundation through the initiation of several new projects to support the growth and development of the community, including the creation of a Community Improvement Plan.

East Ferris has a diverse mix of businesses that fall into a variety of sectors. They include manufacturing, construction, healthcare, professional services, retail, transportation, agriculture, recreation and tourism. Businesses operating in East Ferris are typically classified as a small business. With reduced overhead costs compared to that of urban centres, many of East Ferris' businesses are able to offer competitive prices, diverse products, and attract customers on a global level.

East Ferris has seen growth within the business sector, however, it is required to make adjustments for businesses to continue to operate in and locate to the area. Local businesses currently do not have access to a business park for additional operating space. In addition, the costs associated with running businesses on electricity have become a deterrent within the community. The business expansion issues have been recognized throughout various consultations with the business community including through the development of the Community Profile and Asset Inventory, the Economic Development Strategy and Facilities Master Plan, and the Business Retention and Expansion Program.

East Ferris has had a steady residential growth rate and anticipates development of approximately 20-25 residential units per year. Residential units are required to meet the growing demand of the Municipality. The Official Plan encourages affordable housing within the Municipality. The Community Improvement Plan can provide grants and other incentives for

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Community Improvement Plan



developers and private land owners to achieve the target of 25% of affordable housing starts over the life of the Plan.

The Municipality of East Ferris has never developed a Community Improvement Plan.

1.3 Consultation

In order to guide the development of the Community Improvement Plan and ensure it is effective at achieving its goals, the Municipality has consulted with a number of interested parties and attempted to incorporate their feedback.

The Municipality of East Ferris' Economic Development Committee held a number of meetings throughout the development of this plan. These meetings included additional representatives from other relevant municipal departments. Staff provided feedback and was able to evaluate the proposed Community Improvement Plan. In particular, staff were able to address implementation and operational concerns and recommend changes that will streamline the application process and ensure that projects meet the intent of the Plan.

The Planning Act requires a minimum of one public meeting take place in order to allow the public to comment on the proposed plan. The Municipality of East Ferris considers the inclusion of public feedback a vital component of the development of successful incentive programs. Public feedback is a unique resource that provides the Municipality with insight into the needs of the private sector and the impact of the Plan on the Municipality as a whole. The public consultation also allows potential applicants to become familiar with the proposed plan and encourage public use of the Community Improvement Plan in the future. The Municipality of East Ferris will follow the guidelines identified in the Ontario Planning Act Section 17 (15), 17(17), 17(19), 17(19 to 19.3) (23). As such, the Community Improvement Plan document must be available for 20 days before the public meeting. Following a decision, there is a 20 day appeal period. A public meeting was held on October 24th, 2017.

2.0 Legislative Authority

2.1 Municipal Act

Section 106(3) and Section 365.1 of the Municipal Act provides municipal government the ability to offer incentives and benefits to property owners. Section 106(3) provides the right for municipal governments to exercise their rights under subsection 28 of the Planning Act. Section 365.1 provides the municipal government the ability to offer incentives in the Community Improvement Area with tax assistance.



2.2 Ontario Planning Act

Section 28 of the Planning Act allows a municipal government to establish a Community Improvement Plan in order to provide incentives to property owners to invest in lands and infrastructure through the development or redevelopment of targeted areas. A Community Improvement Plan may be applied as broadly as to the whole of a municipality or as narrowly as to an individual property.

The Planning Act in Subsection 28(1), provides the following definitions for “community improvement plan” and “community improvement project area (C.I.P.A.)”:

- i) “community improvement plan” means a plan for the community improvement of a community improvement project area;
- ii) “community improvement project area” means a municipality or an area within a municipality, the community improvement of which in the opinion of the council is desirable because of the age, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement, unsuitability of buildings or for any other environmental, social or community economic development reason.

The Planning Act allows municipalities, when carrying out a community improvement plan within a community improvement project area to:

- i) acquire and hold land;
- ii) clear, grade or otherwise prepare the land for community improvement;
- iii) construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on land acquired or held by the municipality and sell, lease or otherwise dispose of such buildings and the land appurtenant thereto;
- iv) sell, lease or otherwise dispose of any land acquired or held by the municipality to any person or governmental authority for use in conformity with the community improvement plan.
- v) make grants or loans to the registered owners, assessed owners and tenants of land and buildings within the community improvement project area, and to any person to whom such an owner or tenant has assigned the right to receive a grant or loan, to pay for the whole or any part of the eligible costs of the community improvement plan; and
- vi) eligible costs of a community improvement plan may include costs related to environmental site assessment, environmental remediation, development, redevelopment, construction and reconstruction of lands and buildings for rehabilitation purposes or for the provision of energy efficient uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements or facilities.



With the appropriate policy in place in the Official Plan and a by-law to adopt a community improvement plan, a Municipality may establish a program of financial incentives that will guide the development of the community. This development may include a business park, commercial and industrial land and the expansion of natural gas. The Municipality of East Ferris adopted a new Official Plan in 2015. The Official Plan provides direction and criteria in establishing Community Improvement Plans. The criteria will be addressed in Section 2.5 of this Plan.

2.3 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS 2014)

The Province of Ontario's Provincial Policy Statement (PPS 2014) "provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development". A municipality must ensure that all planning decisions shall be consistent with the PPS 2014.

The PPS 2014 encourages intensification and redevelopment within settlement areas, where appropriate, and promotes the inclusion of a range and mix of land uses. The PPS 2014 provides for a range of housing types and encourages affordable housing.

2.3.1 Housing

2.3.1.1. Planning authorities shall provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing types and densities to meet projected requirements of current and future residents in the *regional market area* by:

a) establishing and implementing minimum targets for the provision of housing which is *affordable to low and moderate income households*. However, where planning is conducted by an upper-tier municipality, the upper-tier municipality in consultation with the lower-tier municipalities may identify a higher target(s) which shall represent the minimum target(s) for these lower-tier municipalities.

2.3.2 Infrastructure and Public Service Facilities

2.3.2.1 Infrastructure, electricity generation facilities and transmission and distribution systems, and public service facilities shall be provided in a coordinated, efficient and cost-effective manner that considers impacts from climate change while accommodating projected needs. Planning for Infrastructure, electricity generation facilities and transmission and distribution systems, and public service facilities shall be coordinated and integrated with land use planning so that they are:

- a. financially viable over their life cycle, which may be demonstrated through asset management planning; and



- b. available to meet current and projected needs.

2.3.2.2 Planning authorities should promote green infrastructure to complement infrastructure.

2.3.2.3 Before consideration is given to developing new infrastructure and public service facilities.

- a. the use of existing infrastructure and public service facilities should be optimized; and
- b. opportunities for adaptive re-use should be considered, wherever feasible.

2.3.2.4 Infrastructure and public service facilities should be strategically located to support the effective and efficient delivery of emergency management services.

2.3.2.5 Public service facilities should be co-located in community hubs, where appropriate, to promote cost-effectiveness and facilities service integration, access to transit and active transportation.

2.4 Growth Plan for Northern Ontario

The Growth Plan for Northern Ontario (GPNO 2011) is a Provincial document that came into effect on March 3rd, 2011. It provides guidance for regional land use planning matters that are specific to Northern Ontario.

Similar to the Provincial Policy Statement, the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario encourages intensification of urban areas and promotes the identification and development of core areas that are economically vital to a community.

Section 4.2.2 of the GPNO 2011 states:

“Municipalities and planning boards are encourage to align their official plan policies with their long-term community strategies developed in accordance with Policy 4.2.1 ([...] identify local opportunities to implement the policies of this plan, and be designed to achieve the following: economic, social and environmental sustainability, accommodation of the diverse need of all residents, now and in the future [...]) and employ the use of availably tools to support and facilitate land-use planning that implements their long-term community strategies.”

Section 4.3.3 d) of the GPNO 2011 states:

“Economic and service hubs shall maintain updated official plans and develop other support documents which include strategies for [...] encouraging a significant portion of future



development to locate in existing downtown areas, intensification corridors, brownfield sites and strategic core areas”

It is the Municipal staff’s professional opinion that the Community Improvement Plan is consistent with the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario (GPNO 2011).

2.5 Municipality of East Ferris – Official Plan

An Official Plan is a long-range planning policy document which guides and shapes growth and manages development over a 20 to 30 year time frame. It reflects a community vision for future development and change. An Official Plan contains goals, objectives and policies to guide the future physical development of a community while taking into consideration important social, economic and environmental impacts. The Municipality’s Official Plan provides for goals and objectives for creating and implementing Community Improvement Plans and selection criteria for Community Improvement Areas.

2.5.1 Goals and Objectives

It is a goal of the Council to improve the physical aspects of the municipality. Council, therefore, encourages participation in programs designed to assist both public and private interests in the following matters:

1. Reconstruct/repair components of the Municipal road system;
2. Improve traffic circulation and parking;
3. Install/repair components of water supply, sanitary sewage disposal and storm drainage systems;
4. Add or improve municipal facilities and properties such as parks, libraries and other recreational or cultural amenities;
5. Construct/rehabilitate buildings and structures to improve their function and/or appearance;
6. Remove or relocate buildings and structures which are not compatible with adjacent uses, except for built heritage resources as part of a protected heritage property;
7. To encourage and promote Affordable Housing;
8. Encourage the expansion of existing and new economic activity in the municipality; and
9. Promote heritage conservation.

2.5.2 Selection Criteria

Community Improvement Areas will be selected on the basis of the following criteria. To be selected, an area must have one or more of the following problems:



1. The area has been identified as being deficient in terms of streets, street lighting and pathways which do not conform to municipal standards of which substantial improvements relative to the level of service is required to adequately service the area.
2. The area has been identified as being deficient in terms of neighbourhood and/or community park land, recreational or community facilities inclusive of such facilities as swimming pools, athletic fields, community centres, day care centres, libraries, senior citizen facilities or other similar social and/or recreational facilities.
3. The area has been identified as being deficient in terms of the level of municipal services that is water mains, sanitary and/or storm sewers, in that such services do not conform with municipal standards relative to the level of service required to properly meet the needs of the area.
4. The area contains human-made hazards, such as level railway crossings, poor intersection design or vacant and abandoned buildings or structures, which should be eliminated in order to ensure a greater degree of public health and safety and to further enhance the community function.
5. The area has been identified as one where the housing stock or commercial or industrial buildings are approaching the end of their functional life, which buildings should either be rehabilitated and restored for sequential uses in keeping with the nature of the area or demolished so as to allow for redevelopment of the area for a use more compatible with adjacent land uses.
6. The area contains vacant and underutilized lands and buildings or structures which could be developed or redeveloped in a manner, which reinforces the functional role of the area, provides opportunities for energy conservation, and, at the same time, provides for the enhancement of the municipal tax base.
7. The area contains areas of incompatible land use in the form of commercial/residential or industrial/residential conflicts which may prejudice the functional or economic role of the area for residential, commercial or industrial purposes.
8. The area or a portion thereof lies within a flood susceptible area or has natural drainage characteristics which require that such measures as flood proofing or storm water management be undertaken to alleviate storm related flooding situations.
9. The area includes commercial areas which are in need of upgrading and/or streetscape improvements to improve the area's economic viability as a central place in the community.
10. The area has been identified as having deficiencies in terms of off-street parking and loading facilities in relation to commercial and industrial land uses for off-street parking in relation to residential uses.

2.5.3 Delineated Areas

The whole of the Municipality of East Ferris shall be designated as a Community Improvement Area.



2.5.4 Phasing of Improvements

When determining priorities for improvements, Council will consider the following:

The need for the improvements based on its own studies and investigations, on advice from residents and on advice from other agencies.

1. The need to establish the sequence of certain activities such as the need to resurface a street after carrying out drainage improvements or improving the grade or cross-section of a street.
2. The effect of undertaking the improvement on adjacent areas such as the disruption of traffic.
3. The availability of funds from sources exclusive of or in addition to those provided by the municipality to undertake the improvement.

2.5.5 Methods of Implementation

Council will encourage the use of various means of implementing community improvement policies including the following:

1. The designation of Community Improvement Project Areas under Section 28 of The Planning Act and the preparation of Community Improvement Plans.
2. The participation of Federal and Provincial community improvement programs designed to assist in achieving the municipality's goals and objectives for community improvement.
3. The offering of assistance to private interests in obtaining funding from senior levels of government for private improvement projects. Private sector investment in community improvement will also be encouraged through public-private sector partnerships and private investment in the rehabilitation of the building stock.
4. The participation of mutually beneficial programs with individuals, groups and organizations involved with community improvement.
5. The use/enforcement and updating of the Property Standards By-Law.

The Official Plan provides a vision of creating and expanding Industrial Lands within the Municipality. The Municipality currently has limited Industrial operations throughout the Municipality. As stated in Section 9.6.2 of the Selection Criteria "The area contains vacant and underutilized lands and buildings or structures which could be developed or redeveloped in a manner, which reinforces the functional role of the area, provides opportunities for energy conservation, and, at the same time, provides for the enhancement of the municipal tax base". The Municipality would like to enhance the ability to attract businesses to the Municipality. The Official Plan supports and encourages new opportunities for Employment lands. This is stated



through Section 9.6.1 (9) “Encourage the expansion of existing and new economic activity in the municipality”.

The Municipality is also supportive of creating and sustaining affordable housing units within the Municipality. This is evident through Section 4.10.2 Housing Affordability and Secondary Units which provides guidelines that approximately 25% of the housing starts should be affordable, which over the lifetime of the plan would create sixty (60) units or more. The CIP can create grants and incentives which may encourage property owners and developers to create or convert existing units into affordable housing.

2.5.6 Housing Affordability and Secondary Units

Annual housing starts in East Ferris over the last ten-year period (2005-2015) averaged twenty-five units per year. If twenty-five percent (25%) of all housing starts is a reasonable housing target for the provision of housing which is affordable to low and moderate income households, a total of six (6) units per year would be required or sixty (60) units over a ten-year period.

For purposes of this policy, the term ‘low and moderate income households’ shall have the same meaning as defined in Section 6.0 of the 2014 Provincial Policy Statement:

In the case of ownership housing, households with incomes in the lowest 60 percent of the income distribution for the regional market area; or, in the case of rental housing, households with incomes in the lowest 60 percent of the income distribution for renter households for the regional market area.

The Municipality will continue to encourage affordable housing through the different housing types as identified in Policy 4.10.3 of this Plan.

Council will encourage housing forms and densities that incorporate opportunities for moderate and lower income households. The Municipality will work with the Nipissing District Social Services Administration Board, Local Authorities, Not-for Profit Groups and Developers to establish affordable housing forms in East Ferris.

2.5.7 Housing Types

Rental and Affordable Housing

It shall be a policy of Council to encourage the establishment of rental and affordable housing units in the municipality by means of appropriate amendments to this Plan, if necessary, and to the implementing Zoning By-law, where required, provided servicing and lake capacity is adequate to support the development.



2.5.8 TransCanada Pipelines

TransCanada Pipelines Limited operates high pressure natural gas lines within its rights-of-way which cross through the Municipality and are identified on Schedules “A - F” to this Plan. Any development within 200 m (656 ft.) of TransCanada facilities may affect the safety and integrity of the pipeline.

TransCanada is regulated by the National Energy Board which, in addition to TransCanada, has a number of requirements regulating development in proximity to the pipelines. This includes approval requirements for all activities on or within 30 m (98.4 ft.) of the right-of-way such as excavations, blasting and any movement of heavy equipment. New development can result in increasing the population density in the area which may result in TransCanada being required to comply with CSA Z662. Therefore, the Council shall require early consultation with TransCanada for major development proposals (e.g., plans of subdivision, commercial or industrial buildings) within 200 m (656 ft.) of its facilities. A setback of 10 m (32.8 ft.) shall be maintained from the limits of the right-of-way for all permanent structures and excavations. A reduction in the 10 m (32.8 ft.) setback will only be considered if it can be demonstrated to TransCanada’s satisfaction, that it will not compromise the safety and integrity of the pipeline and all necessary municipal approvals are obtained.

2.5.9 Village – Industrial Uses

1. Development Concept

The intent of this Plan is to provide opportunity for business development of an industrial nature in locations in the Villages where they can be compatibly integrated into the land use pattern. Industrial development will be limited to Class I and II industries and will generally be directed to larger parcels of land suitable to accommodate parking, shipping and receiving, storage, buffering and expansion. Industrial uses may be located adjacent to commercial uses in a mixed-use pattern.

Council may elect to establish a specific land use designation for industrial uses as a means of development control and to ensure compliance with the development criteria set out below.

2.5.10 Industrial Park or Industrial Uses

An industrial park or industrial uses on an individual basis may be developed in the Rural Area on lands shown as Lands for Economic Development. Other uses shown on Schedule “B”, subject to an amendment to the Official Plan and to meeting the following criteria:

- a. The land area is sufficient for the intended use;
- b. The area is accessed from a public road;



- c. The location is to the type or mix of industrial uses, e.g., consideration should be given to transportation costs, visibility, marketing, technological support and labour supply. Such factors should be presented as part of a business plan by a prospective developer;
- d. The lands can be adequately serviced in accordance with the policies of Section 4.19 of this Plan. Servicing options may include individual on-site or communal services;
- e. The lands can meet the applicable Recommended Separation Distances for industrial classifications to ensure compatibility with surrounding land uses; and
- f. The size and use would not detract from the existing industrial base of the Village areas.

2.5.11 Development Criteria

The following design principles shall apply in considering applications for industrial development:

1. Industrial uses should be clustered in locations with respect to the recommended separation distances. As indicated above, such distances may be reduced where Council is satisfied that adverse effects can be mitigated;
2. Industrial uses may be integrated with commercial uses in a mixed-use pattern of development. Development will typically require rezoning as a means to control the location and zoning standards that will apply to the specific type of industrial use proposed;
3. Council may establish appropriate zones in the Zoning By-law for this purpose. Council may also use holding zones as a means to ensure the adequacy of water and sewage disposal services and compliance with environmental standards;
4. All industrial uses are subject to Site Plan Control (see also Section 9.14). Applicants seeking approval will be expected to file a site plan application that clearly illustrates the details of development, e.g., layout, setbacks and massing of buildings, parking, shipping and receiving, on-site traffic movements, outdoor storage, waste disposal systems, lighting, landscaping and buffering, points of ingress and egress, lighting, signage, etc.;
5. Applicants must meet all environment standards under The Environmental Protection Act and where requested, provide evidence, e.g. Environmental Compliance Approval, to Council demonstrating compliance; and
6. Applicants shall meet the servicing requirements of Section 4.19 in general, only 'dry' industries will be permitted.

3.0 The Project Area

The project area consists of the whole of the Municipality.



3.1 Existing Land Use

The project area comprises a broad range of land uses including residential, commercial, industrial and open space.

3.1.2 Buildings and Structures

The project area includes a broad range of physical buildings and structures including residential, commercial and industrial.

3.1.3 Existing Services and Community Facilities

The project area accommodates a wide variety of services and functions.

3.2 Issues and Opportunities

As Economic Development has been a priority for many years, the Municipality of East Ferris has coordinated consultations with business and industry. This feedback has resulted in the development of a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats) Analysis which is highlighted below.

Strengths

- Competitive residential and business tax rates;
- Municipal support from staff and council;
- Natural vistas and lakes;
- Success stories;
- Friendly and supportive community;
- Proximity to larger urban centres and key sectors;
- Growth in residential development;
- Quality of life;
- Growing number of building permits;
- Ability to live and work from same parcel of land;
- Local business support – business to business; and
- Business operating in region demonstrate strong support for community.

Weaknesses

- Lack of regional business draw (destination development);
- Under-utilized natural tourism assets and land;
- Lack of awareness about businesses in community;
- Limited signage - increase/update signage (directional and wayfinding);
- Lack of awareness about resources;
- Limited communications/awareness about services;



- Lack of participation at events/Council, budget meetings, etc.;
- Lack of transportation to North Bay;
- Lack of regional partnerships for economic, business, tourism initiatives;
- Limited succession planning support existing businesses;
- Lack of economic development strategy;
- Size of community can be a disadvantage at times;
- High expectations for businesses due to size of community;
- Lack of services and reliable technology (utilities, natural gas, internet, cellular service);
- Lack of central core or hub;
- Cost of traveling to North Bay often exceeds savings from competitive tax rate;
- Hydro challenges and capacity load prevents new development;
- Growth is prevented due to high costs associated with environmental studies; and
- Rental costs for meeting space is cost prohibitive for small business.

Opportunities

- Recreational areas;
- Industry attraction and expansion from home base to commercial;
- Increased employment through business growth;
- Long term planning needs (central hub concept);
- Planning for balanced residential, commercial, industrial growth;
- Capitalize on amenities for increased population/attraction strategies;
- Integrate social media into communication strategy;
- Residential development;
- Purchase land as part of long-term growth;
- Development of communication strategy with integration of social media and traditional tactics;
- Improve signage and wayfinding;
- Development of municipal website with online business directory;
Provide cost-effective municipal space to host meetings and events with online booking capabilities;
- Access to business support services without having to leave community (succession planning, seminars, resources about building code requirements, contractor expectations, funding application support);
- Networking events for businesses;
- Tourism development regarding Lake Nosbonsing;
- Co-operative marketing partnerships and program development;
- Joint training hosted in community;
- Municipality to offer services in French;
- Hosting more business development seminars; and
- Promotion and acknowledgement of local businesses.



Threats

- Business closures;
- Government processes/barriers for sub---dividing lots, environmental, etc.;
- Youth-out migration;
- Size of local market;
- Customer base is declining with age of population;
- Access to market/customers;
- Current economic climate;
- Lack of succession planning; and
- Cost and availability of services to do business.

4.0 Rationale for the Community Improvement Plan

The Municipality of East Ferris has identified the need for the expansion of natural gas to the Astorville area as a required amenity to attract and retain residents, promote affordable housing and increase business development within the area. According to natural gas providers, the use of natural gas will lower living expenses for local residents and business owners within 5-7 years of implementation.

The Municipality continues to support and recognizes the need for affordable housing opportunities within the community. Affordable housing can support new residents to the area, allows residents to age within the Municipality and temporary residents coming to the region for employment opportunities.

The Municipality of East Ferris has also recognized the importance of a business park within the community to increase business development, job creation and become a key economic driver. The implementation of a business park will foster private sector investment to complement municipal investment and result in the generation of economic development and increased assessment. The vision is to create an active, healthy and vibrant dry business park that conveys a positive image for the community.

The Municipality of East Ferris has also recognized the importance of supporting new business development and business expansions that may not reside in the business park. Assisting all businesses located within East Ferris increases private investment, employment opportunities and overall well-being of the community.

The Municipality has also undertaken a number of recent studies to help guide and support the development of industrial lands and infrastructure. These studies include:

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Community Improvement Plan



- The Municipality of East Ferris Community Profile & Asset Inventory. This study was completed in 2013 and identified business challenges related to lack of business lands and Natural Gas.
- The Economic Development Strategy and Facilities Master Plan. This study was completed in 2013 and also identified the need for business lands and Natural Gas.
- The Municipality of East Ferris Business Retention + Expansion Report. This report was completed in 2016 and solidified the need for business lands and Natural Gas.

The Municipality recognizes that the successful development of a business park requires significant private sector investment. To encourage and facilitate this type of investment, the Municipality hopes to establish the community improvement plan with financial incentives to offset initial development costs.

The Municipality recognizes the importance of creating opportunities for affordable housing which is consistent with the goals and objectives of section 9.6.1 (8) 'to encourage and promote affordable housing', expanding employment lands is also a priority, which is consistent with the Official Plan Section 9.6.2 Selection Criteria, specifically Section 9.6.2 Selection Criteria (5) and (6).

4.1 The Community Improvement Plan Goals

The purpose of the community improvement plan is to create a mechanism to promote investment, generate economic development, encourage affordable housing and increase tax assessments. The goals of the community improvement plan have been prepared by the working group and are consistent with the Municipality's Official Plan. The goals of the plan are:

- i) To enhance East Ferris as a unique entrepreneurial community;
- ii) To strengthen East Ferris in terms of vibrancy, diversity and economic viability by stimulating investment interest, specifically within a business park;
- iii) To encourage and assist private property owners to rehabilitate and expand current business offerings and locations to ensure their long-term viability;
- iv) To maintain a vibrant, economically viable retail and service base within East Ferris;
- v) To encourage and promote affordable housing;
- vi) To promote development of existing brownfield sites;
- vii) To encourage new businesses to locate within and existing businesses to remain within East Ferris;
- viii) To construct and/or rehabilitate buildings and structures to improve their function and/or appearance;
- ix) To create opportunity to promote development where existing industrial or commercial buildings can be developed or redeveloped in a manner, which reinforces the functional role of the area, provides opportunities for energy conservation, and, at the same time, provides for the enhancement of the municipal tax base; and



- x) Promote unique and sustainable development which is compatible with surrounding uses which will not conflict with the function or economic role of the area for residential, commercial or industrial purposes.

5.0 General Overview of the Financial Incentive Programs

The following suite of programs are designed to encourage long-term private sector investment within the Municipality of East Ferris. These programs are in effect for the initial five-year period of the CIP (2018-2022), however, Council has the ability to ‘activate’ or ‘deactivate’ financial incentive programs by way of Council approval during annual budgetary reviews. This provides Council the flexibility to adjust programs based on the CIP annual budget, as well as the success of each program. Section 6.2, will assist in monitoring and measuring results of the programs. The availability of funding for the CIP programs will be determined during the Municipality’s annual budget process and approved by Council. The Council approved annual CIP budget will set program priorities and financial limits for each year of implementation.

| Financial Incentive Programs | Eligible Properties/Projects | Eligible Costs | Grant Amount |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Entrance & Façade Improvement Grant | Commercial and commercial mixed-use properties within the Municipality of East Ferris. This includes commercial farms. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replacement & rehabilitation of facade and commercial/retail doors. • Enhancement of façade, windows and other façade aesthetic enhancements. | Matching grant of up to 50% of eligible costs up to a maximum grant of \$7,500 per property, whichever is less. For a maximum of 3 properties per owner per year. |
| Signage Improvement Grant | Commercial and commercial mixed-use properties within the Municipality of East Ferris. This includes commercial farms. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signage improvements made on the exterior of the building. | Matching grant of up to 50% of eligible costs up to a maximum grant of \$1,500 per property, whichever is less. For a maximum of 3 properties per owner per year. |



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| Municipal Fee Grant Program | Commercial, industrial or affordable housing developments within the Municipality of East Ferris. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building permit fees. • Planning Fees • Land Tipping Fees | Grant of up to 100% of Municipal fees. |
| Tax Increment Based Financing Program | Commercial, industrial or affordable housing developments within the Municipality of East Ferris. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site development and infrastructure work including demolition and major building rehabilitation. | For a maximum of 5 years. |

5.1 Entrance & Façade Improvement Grant

The Entrance & Façade Improvement Grant is intended to encourage commercial property owners and tenants to revitalize, rehabilitate and restore building facades in order to encourage high-quality, attractive improvements to eligible buildings located within the Municipality of East Ferris. The grant is focused on exterior improvements to buildings that will support local businesses and economic development within the Municipality.

The following projects are eligible for the Entrance & Façade Improvement Grant, in accordance to the program eligibility criteria:

- Repair, replacement or restoration of façade materials using high quality materials;
- Repair, replacement or installation of awning and canopies;
- Repair, replacement or installation of commercial driveways and parking lots;
- Repair, replacement or installation of energy efficient exterior lighting;
- Replacement or restoration of windows; and/or
- Any combination of the above.

Program eligibility is limited to existing commercial, industrial and commercial mixed-use properties located the Municipality of East Ferris. This would include commercial farming operations. This program excludes single detached dwellings.

Depending on the development, a matching grant is available for up to 50% of eligible costs up to a maximum grant of \$7,500 per property, whichever is less. All grants shall be subject to receiving the required approvals or permits, as required by the Municipal by-laws and any applicable Provincial or Federal laws.



Entrance & Façade Improvement Grant disbursement should be as followed:

- 100% upon final completion of the project to the satisfaction of the Municipality and Evaluation Committee as well as proof of payment to be provided.

5.2 Signage Improvement Grant

The Signage Improvement Grant is intended to promote commercial property owners and tenants to create, improve and/or replace exterior signage in order to showcase character of the area and attract customers to eligible buildings located within the Municipality of East Ferris. The program can assist with design and installation of on-site signage associated with local businesses.

The following projects are eligible for the Signage Improvement Grant, in accordance to the program eligibility criteria:

- Replacement, repair, improvement or installation of signage associated with commercial, office, retail and other local businesses that are open to the public including:
 - Primary signs attached to buildings; and
 - Hanging signs, which may be used as primary or secondary signs that complement the main building signage.

Program eligibility is limited to existing commercial, industrial and commercial mixed-use properties located within the Municipality of East Ferris. This would include commercial farming operations

Matching grant of up to 50% of eligible costs up to a maximum grant of \$1,500 per property, whichever is less. All grants shall be subject to receiving the required approvals or permits, as required by the Municipal by-laws and any applicable Provincial or Federal laws.

Signage Improvement Grant disbursement should be as followed:

- 100% upon final completion of the project to the satisfaction of the Municipality and Evaluation Committee as well as proof of payment to be provided.

5.3 Municipal Fee Grant Program

Section 69(2) of the Planning Act states, “despite a tariff of fees established under subsection (1), the council of a municipality, a planning board, a committee of adjustment or a land

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division committee in processing an application may reduce the amount of or waive the requirement for the payment of a fee in respect of the application where the council, planning board or committee is satisfied that it would be unreasonable to require payment in accordance with the tariff”.

Section 7(1) (c) of the Building Code states “requiring the payment of fees on applications for and on the issuance of permits, requiring the payment of fees for maintenance inspections, and prescribing the amounts of fees”.

Application and permit fees imposed by the Municipality may represent a barrier to investment in the Municipality of East Ferris. Granting these types of fees (e.g. building, planning and land tipping fees) is desirable because it will reduce or eliminate these barriers to private investment, including major investments such as the development of new commercial units.

Highlighting the Municipality’s lower taxes and no development charges will also increase investment attraction and remove barriers to entry for new commercial and industrial projects.

This program is a grant program that offers grants on building permit fees, planning application fees and landfill tipping fees. In addition, it should be highlighted that the Municipality of East Ferris does not have development charges, further reducing the financial barriers to property owners. Fee reductions may apply to the following applications:

- Building Permits
- Planning Fees
- Land Tipping Fees

The following projects are eligible for the Municipal Fee Grant Program, in accordance to the program eligibility criteria:

- Redevelopment of vacant or underutilized commercial, industrial, commercial mixed-use or affordable housing buildings;
- Development or redevelopment of commercial, industrial, commercial mixed-use or affordable housing within the Municipality of East Ferris;
- Major additions to an eligible property, involving an increase of at least 25% of the existing gross floor area; or
- Any combination of the above.

The Municipality of East Ferris would provide a *grant* up to 100% of the municipal fees including Planning Fees and Building Permit Fees related to development approval that achieves at least one of the goals of the Community Improvement Plan. Applicants are required to pay the fee(s) at the time they are requested. Approved applicants will receive a grant equal to



municipal fee(s) upon the successful completion of the redevelopment/renovation of an affordable housing, commercial or industrial project.

All grants shall be subject to receiving the required approvals or permits, as required by the Municipal by-laws and any applicable Provincial or Federal laws.

The property owner pays 100% of the fees upfront. The grant is provided after the site works (including construction) are completed to the satisfaction of the Municipality and Evaluation Committee. This includes full payment of any applicable fees by the owner at time of submission. Upon project completion, a grant for eligible fees will be provided to the owner.

5.4 Tax Increment Equivalent Grant Program

The legislative authority is provided under Section 28(1) of the Planning Act, which states that the Municipality may provide grants to registered owners, assessed owners and tenants of land and buildings within the community improvement project area, to pay for the whole or any part of the cost of rehabilitating such lands and buildings. The rehabilitation should result in a well-designed built form, and removing or relocating buildings and structures which are not compatible with adjacent uses.

The Tax Increment Based Financing Program is intended to reduce the perception of a tax increase as a barrier to investment, in order to stimulate significant property investments. The program assists property owners by reducing the impact of a potential property tax increase resulting from major improvements by phasing in the tax increase over a number of years.

The grant is based on the incremental change in property tax owed on an annual basis and in decreasing amounts until the property owner is paying the taxes without any assistance. Only major property improvements which actually result in property tax increases are eligible. The program is available to all commercial, industrial, mixed-use and affordable housing developments located within the Municipality of East Ferris.

The following projects are eligible for the Tax Increment Based Financing Program, in accordance to the program eligibility criteria:

- Redevelopment of vacant or underutilized commercial, industrial, commercial mixed-use or affordable housing buildings;
- Development or redevelopment of commercial, industrial, commercial mixed-use or affordable housing within the Municipality of East Ferris;
- Major additions to an eligible property, involving an increase of at least 25% of the existing gross floor area; or
- Any combination of the above.

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The Tax Increment Based Financing Program is provided to eligible property owners where municipal property tax has increased as a direct result of development, redevelopment or any major improvements to a property. The difference between current tax assessment (prior to improvements) and the new tax assessment (after completion of improvements) is the 'tax increment'. The property owner is required to provide documentation regarding prior and post-tax assessments to the Municipality.

- The tax increment is granted to the property owner on an annual basis and in decreasing amounts, for a maximum of 5 years.
- In year one, the amount of the grant may equal up to 100% of the tax increment. In the following years, the amount of the grant will decrease to 80%, 60%, 40%, 20% until it reaches zero in year 6.

All grants shall be subject to receiving the required approvals or permits, as required by the Municipal by-laws and any applicable Provincial or Federal laws. An approved Tax Increment Based Financing grant is non-transferable to new property owners and cannot be transferred by the property owner to another property.

The property owner pays for the full cost of renovation, rehabilitation, redevelopment, or development as well as the resulting annual increase in property tax. The Municipality reimburses the owner by way of an annual grant equivalent to the agreed Municipal portion of the incremental property tax increase over an established 'base' assessment.

It is required to ensure that the property owners apply and received approval from the Tax Increment Based Financing Program prior to commencing with the project. Eligible costs would be determined at discretion of Council, however, in general, eligible costs include (but not limited to) the following:

- Site development and infrastructure work including demolition and disposal off-site;
- Major rehabilitation, significant renovation and rehabilitation;
- Costs associated with assessment of environmental conditions;
- New construction; and
- Design, engineering, legal, insurance, and other professional fees directly related to the design and development of commercial, industrial and affordable housing.

5.5 Recommended Incentives Program

It is recommended that the following financial incentive programs are available through the community improvement plan. This includes the Entrance & Façade Improvement Grant, Signage Improvement Grant, Municipal Fee Grant Program, and the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant Program. The purpose of the financial incentives is to facilitate new Industrial,



Commercial and Affordable Housing construction activity and expansion in the Project Area. The financial incentives offered are directed at developments, redevelopments or expansion of operations which would result in significant new employment or demonstrated community benefit.

Natural Gas Program

The Municipality would provide a tax-based grant for new natural gas facilities. Proponents will be eligible for 100% tax grants (based on assessment) for up to 20 years.

Brownfields

The Municipality would provide tax based grants for brownfield redevelopment, following Section 365.1 of the *Municipal Act*. Proponents will have a mechanism to support the rehabilitation and redevelopment of brownfield sites. The tax based rebates will be contingent on a Record of Site Condition pursuant to Section 168.3 of the Environmental Protection Act and Ontario Regulation 153/04.

It is anticipated that through the brownfield redevelopment incentives, industrial lands or buildings will be redeveloped for commercial or residential uses that complement the project area.

Additional grant and loan programs may be considered in the future and presented to Council for recommendation.

6.0 Implementation of CIP

The CIP will be administered by the Municipality of East Ferris, including Municipal Council and the CIP Administrator.

The Municipal appointed administrator (Manager of Planning & Economic Development) will be responsible for managing the day-to-day responsibilities of the CIP, including: undertaking pre-consultation meetings with potential applicants for financial incentives, coordinating application submission process, reviewing applications with the Evaluation Committee, managing activities related to marketing the CIP (see Section 6.1), and monitoring and reviewing the CIP process and success (see Section 6.2). Municipal Council and key stakeholders will also play an important role in the administration of this plan. An annual report of the CIP performance metrics should be delivered to Council and made available to the public.



An Evaluation Committee should be formed to review the applications and approval process. The Evaluation Committee is intended to review and evaluate CIP Applications and make a funding decision. The CIP Evaluation Committee should be comprised of the following:

- CIP Administrator (Manager of Planning & Economic Development);
- Chief Administrative Officer; and
- 1 Council Member.

Other staff with relevant expertise may be called upon on an as needed basis.

Members of the Evaluation Committee will not directly or indirectly benefit from any programs administered under the CIP.

The Municipality of East Ferris Council will be responsible for establishing a CIP budget that will fund the Financial Incentive Programs. Council may rely on the CIP Administrator and CIP results for recommendations with respect to program uptake and grants issued in order to determine the appropriate CIP budget and program funding.

Council may choose to fund any one or more of the Financial Incentive Programs, or not to fund any in a given year. Council also may choose to assign any portion of the total financial incentives budget to any one or more Financial Incentive Programs.

6.1 Application Process

Application intake will occur on a rolling-basis in order to facilitate a timely response to the development and rehabilitation requests of property owners/tenants. All applications will be accepted, evaluated and determined on a 'first-come, first-served' basis in accordance with individual program details/requirements.

Applications are encouraged for projects which are eligible for funding under more than one program. However, the Evaluation Committee has the right to limit access to funding from multiple programs if, in its determination, there is a degree of overlap of funding that is not an appropriate use of scarce resources or the value of individual project funding is deemed to unduly limit the availability of CIP funding for other projects. At all times, Council will not fund more than 50% of eligible costs or above stated funding caps, whichever is less.

The Financial Incentive Program application process and requirements are summarized below:

1. Pre-consultation Meeting: All CIP applicants are encouraged to meet with the CIP Administrator prior to submitting an application to discuss the project and submission requirements.



2. Application Submission: The CIP applicant will submit the following information to the CIP Administrator, as confirmed through the pre-consultation meeting:
 - a) Completed Application Form
 - b) Two or more quotes for the proposed work to be completed;
 - c) Drawings for the proposed work (site concept, elevations, floor plans, designs, etc.);
 - d) Photographs of the existing property;
 - e) Lease Agreement if the business leasee is applying for CIP incentives;
 - f) Any historical documentation or information available for the property, if applicable; and/or
 - g) Any other additional information based on the nature of the application and/or pre-consultation meeting (ex. Tax assessments).
3. Confirmation of Complete Application: The CIP Administrator will review the application to confirm that all necessary information and documentation has been provided. The CIP Administrator will contact the CIP applicant if any additional information is required.
4. Application Review & Decision: The CIP Administrator will circulate the application to the Evaluation Committee for review. The Evaluation Committee will provide a recommendation for approval or refusal of the application.
 - a) Approval: The CIP applicant will be notified and the application will proceed through the remaining steps.
 - b) Refusal: The CIP applicant will be notified and provided with the reasons for the refusal. The CIP applicant will have the option to re-submit their application, or the option to appeal the decision.
5. Execution of the Financial Incentive Program Agreement: The CIP Administration will prepare a Financial Incentive Program Agreement that outlines the terms of payment of the grant along with other relevant conditions. The agreement will be signed by the Municipality and CIP applicant.
6. Commence Construction: The CIP applicant may commence construction, in accordance to the terms and conditions of the Agreement and information submitted to the Municipality.
7. Construction Completion: The CIP applicant informs the Municipality and/or CIP Administrator when the project is completed. The Municipality may undergo a site inspection to ensure that the CIP applicant has met all the terms and conditions outlined within the Agreement. The Municipality and/or CIP Administrator may take pictures of project completion for documentation.

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8. Municipality Issues Payment: The grant is paid to the CIP applicant upon completion of specific milestones indicated within the Financial Incentive Program Agreement and in accordance to the plans submitted as part of the application process.

6.2 Annual CIP Budget

The Municipality of East Ferris Council will establish an annual CIP budget with allocations to specific financial incentive programs. The following outlines a recommended range of funding to be allocated for each year within a five-year timeframe.

| Program | Year 1 (2018) | Year 2 (2019) | Year 3 (2020) | Year 4 (2021) | Year 5 (2022) |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Entrance & Façade Improvement Grant | \$30,000 | \$37,500 | \$37,500 | \$37,500 | \$37,500 |
| Signage Improvement Grant | \$10,000 | \$12,500 | \$12,500 | \$12,500 | \$12,500 |
| Municipal Fee Grant Program | Dependent on property specifics | | | | |
| Tax Increment Based Financing Program | Dependent on property specifics | | | | |
| Total Annual Allocation | \$40,000* | \$50,000 | \$50,000 | \$50,000 | \$50,000 |

*Annual allocation is being funded by the Main Street Revitalization Fund.

NOTE: The above budget is subject to Council's discretion.

Annual funding allocations contained in the CIP are subject to review and approval by Council each year and draws on the overall funding allocations will be monitored annually. The Municipality may adjust the overall level of CIP funding, as well as the distribution of funding between programs. An increase in funding is contingent on demonstrated demand for program support.



6.3 Eligibility and Criteria

Affordable Housing, commercial and industrial businesses located in the Project Area are the focus of the community improvement plan. Upon adoption of the plan by Council, specific eligibility criteria, application forms and an overall process will be established. The program eligibility criteria will be derived from the overall goals of the community improvement plan listed in Section 4.1 by a committee dedicated to overseeing the process.

It is recommended that a Community Improvement Plan Committee be established to assist with the program administration development, eligibility criteria and application process. The Committee should represent municipal staff members from various departments involved in development.

The following provides an example of potential criteria.

1. Each application will be reviewed by the Community Improvement Plan Committee made up of various municipal staff. Applications are reviewed on a project by project basis and applications may be prioritized and funding approvals will be based on economic impact and / or job creation of the development, redevelopment or expansion proposal.
2. All grants will be approved at the sole discretion of the Municipality. All applications for assistance under this program will be considered subject to the availability of funding.
3. All grants provided for Brownfield redevelopment will be contingent upon a Record of Site Condition pursuant to Section 168.3 of the *Environmental Protection Act* and Ontario Regulation 153/04.
4. Costs incurred prior to the written approval of the Municipality will be deemed ineligible and will not be reimbursed.
5. The Municipality is not responsible for any costs incurred by an applicant in relation to any of the programs, including without limitation, costs incurred in anticipation of a grant and/or tax assistance.
6. If the applicant is in default of any of the general or program specific requirements, or any other requirements of the Municipality, the approved grant and/or tax assistance may be delayed, reduced or cancelled.
7. The Municipality may discontinue any of the programs at any time, but applicants with approved grants and/or tax assistance will still receive said grant and/or tax assistance, subject to meeting the general and program specific requirements.
8. All proposed works approved under the incentive programs and associated improvements to buildings and/or land shall conform to all municipal by-laws, policies, procedures, standards and guidelines, including applicable Official Plan and zoning requirements and approvals.



9. The improvements made to buildings and/or land shall be made pursuant to a Building Permit, and/or other required permits, and constructed in accordance with the Ontario Building Code.
10. Outstanding work orders, and/or orders or requests to comply, and/or other charges from the Municipality (including tax arrears) must be satisfactorily addressed prior to grant and/or tax assistance payment.
11. Municipal staff, officials, and/or agents of the Municipality may inspect any property that is the subject of an application for any of the financial incentive programs offered by this program.
12. The applicant may only have one active application in process per property.
13. Any significant changes in design or scope of the project must be approved by the Municipality.
14. The project must commence construction within two (2) years of formal notification of approval under the program. An extension to an approval will only be granted, where in the opinion of the Municipality, there are reasonable unforeseen circumstances.

6.4 Marketing the CIP

The success of the CIP will be linked to the community and stakeholder's knowledge of the Plan, available programs and benefits to the community and local businesses. The Municipality should seek to implement the marketing strategies found below, following the approval of the CIP by Municipal Council.

Marketing strategies to consider include the following:

Website: A CIP webpage under Economic Development within the Municipality's website which includes a summary of the CIP and programs available, approved CIP, application forms, program requirements, contact information and recent CIP successes.

Publications: A CIP printed pamphlet which includes a summary of the CIP, available programs and benefits of participating in the CIP. This should be readily available at the Municipal office and can be shared with local businesses throughout the Municipality.

Social Media: CIP success should be highlighted on both the website and via social media platforms, showcasing before and after pictures. This will encourage other local businesses to apply for program funding and could assist with investment attraction efforts.

6.5 Monitoring the CIP

The Municipality of East Ferris should establish a clear monitoring strategy in order to gauge and determine success of the CIP and its programs. The following steps could assist in the creation of this strategy:

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1. Establish baseline conditions – This could include number of building and sign permit applications, type of improvements, vacancy rate of commercial units, number of businesses, number of new developments and number of visitors to the area.
2. Develop a Database – The Municipality should create a database that tracks inquiries, submitted applications, approvals and denials. The database should collect the amount of funding issues per program along with total project costs.
3. Prepare an annual report – The CIP Administrator should prepare an annual report to Council outlining key performance metrics collected in the database which could include (but not limited to) the following:
 - a) Number of inquiries or pre-consultation meetings;
 - b) Number and type of applications submitted;
 - c) Construction and grant values;
 - d) Status of CIP implementation;
 - e) Status of CIP budget; and
 - f) Recommendations brought forward by either the CIP Administrator, Evaluation Committee or CIP applicants.

6.6 Next Steps

If approved by Council, consideration about what programs will be available through the Community Improvement Plan should be given. A committee may be formed to review budget constraints, available programs and the application process. Final approvals on specific programs to implement and budget allocations must be provided by Council.