

# **City of Cambridge**

## **Core Areas Community Improvement Plan**

City of Cambridge

**Date: Approved June 29, 2021  
Amended May 28, 2024**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Core Areas Community Improvement Plan (i.e. the 'Plan') provides the basis for community improvement programs and initiatives within designated Community Improvement Project Areas in the City of Cambridge. It focuses on Cambridge's three core areas as designated in the Core Areas Community Improvement Project Area By-law.

Community improvement plans, programs and initiatives facilitate the planning and financing of development activities that effectively use, reuse and revitalize lands, buildings and infrastructure. They prioritize municipal investment and are intended to stimulate private sector investment, property maintenance and revitalization within the project areas.

The Core Areas Community Improvement Plan will help to implement the City's vision and goals expressed in approved policies and strategies, such as the City of Cambridge Official Plan, and the Corporate Strategic Plan.

This Plan is organized in the following sections:

1. Basis and Purpose of the Plan
2. Specific Legislation
3. Previous Plans, Programs and Initiatives
4. Supporting Policies
5. Community Improvement Project Areas (Core Areas)
6. Goals and Objectives
7. The Programs
8. Other Strategies
9. Monitoring
10. Approval and Amendment Process
11. Appendix and Maps

### **1. BASIS AND PURPOSE OF THE PLAN**

In the winter of 2019, City of Cambridge Economic Development Staff began to undertake a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) process for the City of Cambridge's three historic Core Areas. Staff received considerable feedback from various agencies, industry leaders, private land owners and developers, and the Region of Waterloo Homebuilders Association during the Development Charges Study review. All of these

commenting agencies relayed that Core Area incentives were not only necessary but mandatory to ensure Cambridge's success in the economic development continuum.

This report provides detailed information that forms the basis of this proposed Community Improvement Plan. Section 1.1.7 of the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS 2020) states: "Long term economic prosperity should be supported by maintaining, and where possible enhancing the vitality and viability of downtowns and main streets". This Plan has been created to ensure this occurs in Cambridge's Community Core Areas.

In addition, community improvement programs and initiatives are intended to facilitate development and redevelopment in targeted locations in need of revitalization, improved public benefits and stimulation of private sector investment thereby supporting provincial policy.

While community improvement primarily deals with land and buildings, it may also address social, economic, and environmental matters by supporting physical changes that can result in more complete communities.

Specifically, the purpose of the Plan is to provide opportunities and criteria for grants/loans/incentives to private property owners and to:

- provide the structured framework for City programs and initiatives within the Community Improvement Project Areas, in a manner that meets the legislative requirements of the *Planning Act's* Community Improvement provisions, including those that permit a municipality to provide financial assistance to developers (see Section 2);
- introduce and describe financial incentive programs designed to encourage and stimulate private sector investment and redevelopment; and,
- focus municipal investment that promotes and enhances the physical, social and economic environments in Cambridge's three (3) Community Core Areas, as designated in the Official Plan and the Community Improvement Project Area By-law.

This Plan functions as an implementation tool. It builds upon the City's past community improvement efforts in Cambridge's Community Core Areas, as noted in Section 3. The programs and initiatives provided in Section 7 and Section 8 are meant to encourage development activities that complement and implement the vision and policies established in related plans and strategies, such as the Cambridge Official Plan and

Cambridge's Corporate Strategic Plan. These and other supporting documents are reviewed in Section 4 to provide rationale for the Community Improvement Project Areas described in Section 5, as well as the context for this Plan's goals and objectives stated in Section 6.

Monitoring the Plan's implementation is undertaken through the City's performance measurement reporting as noted in Section 9. This Plan may be amended from time to time in accordance with Section 10.

## **2. SPECIFIC LEGISLATION**

The Ontario Municipal Act and Planning Act are the governing legislation for community improvement planning. This legislation sets the rules on how municipalities may prepare community improvement plans and programs, including financial incentives.

### **2.1 The Acts**

Section 106(1) of the *Municipal Act* states: "a municipality shall not assist directly or indirectly any manufacturing business or other industrial or commercial enterprise through the granting of bonuses for that purpose." Providing financial or other assistance, often referred to as 'bonusing', is normally prohibited, including the following actions:

- Giving or lending money or municipal property;
- Guaranteeing borrowing;
- Leasing or selling municipal property below fair market value; or,
- Giving a total or partial exemption from any levy, charge or fee.

Exceptions are only made in Section 106(3) of the *Municipal Act* for municipalities exercising powers under Section 28(6), (7) or (7.2) of the *Planning Act* or under Section 365.1 of the *Municipal Act*. These exceptions provide the legislative basis for the financial incentive programs described in Section 8.1 of this Plan.

Section 28 of the *Planning Act* permits municipalities that have provisions in their Official Plan relating to community improvement to designate by by-law a community improvement project area. Section 28 defines the following:

- A community improvement project area is defined as "a municipality or an area within a municipality, the community improvement of which in the opinion of the council is desirable because of age, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement,

unsuitability of buildings or for any other environmental, social or community economic development reason;”

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

Further, a municipality may take the following actions within a designated community improvement project area:

- Acquire, hold, clear, grade or otherwise prepare land for community improvement (Section 28(3));
- Prepare a community improvement plan for the project area (Section 28(4));
- Construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on land acquired or held by it in conformity with the approved community improvement plan (Section 28(6));
- Sell, lease or otherwise dispose of any land and buildings acquired or held by it in conformity with the approved community improvement plan (Section 28(6)); and,
- Make grants or loans, in conformity with the approved community improvement plan, to the registered owners, assessed owners and tenants of lands and buildings, 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 part of the eligible costs of the community improvement plan (Section 28(7)).

Section 28(7.1) defines *eligible costs* as “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.”

In addition, Section 365.1 of the *Municipal Act* allows a municipality to provide property tax assistance to properties within a designated community improvement project area for environmental remediation purposes, where a community improvement plan is in effect containing provisions respecting such tax assistance. The City of Cambridge,

along with the Region of Waterloo, provides such a program through the Tax Increment Grant (TIG) process.

The maximum amount of financial assistance that a municipality may offer is limited by Section 28(7.3) of the *Planning Act*. The total of the grants, loans and tax assistance provided to particular lands and buildings under the *Planning Act* (Section 28) and the *Municipal Act* (Section 365.1) shall not exceed the eligible cost of the community improvement plan with respect to those lands and buildings. The financial incentive programs provided in Section 7 of this Plan therefore contain eligibility criteria and financial assistance maximum limits to ensure that the total assistance offered to a property does not exceed eligible costs.

## **2.2 Region of Waterloo Official Plan**

The Regional Official Plan provides the framework for growth in Waterloo Region up to the year 2031.

Chapter 10 of the Regional Official Plan contains the Region's Community Improvement Plan policies. Section 10.B.6 specifies that for the purposes of promoting a sustainable and livable community, the Region may support community improvement through the designation of Community Improvement Project Areas and the adoption of Regional Community Improvement Plans in relation to the following:

- (a) affordable housing;
- (b) infrastructure that is within the Region's jurisdiction;
- (c) land and buildings within and adjacent to Existing or Planned Transit Corridors that have the potential to provide for higher density reurbanization;
- (d) other matters as the Province may prescribe in accordance with the Planning Act.

Section 10.B.7 of the Regional Official Plan also notes that the Region may provide grants, loans or other assistance under its own CIPs and that the corporate boundaries of the Region of Waterloo constitute the boundaries of the Community Improvement Project Area under the Planning Act.

Finally, Section 10.B.8 of the Regional Official Plan notes that the Region may provide grants, loans or other assistance as Regional Council deems appropriate for the purposes of carrying out programs as described in Area Municipal Community Improvement Plans.

## **2.3 City of Cambridge Official Plan**

Community improvement policy is contained in Section 10.5 of the City of Cambridge Official Plan. As noted in Section 3.1 of this Community Improvement Plan, municipalities must have provisions in their Official Plan relating to community improvement in order to designate a community improvement project area and prepare a community improvement plan. This is discussed further in Section 5.1 of this Plan.

### **3. PREVIOUS PLANS, PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES**

This Plan replaces the former core areas specific Community Improvement Plans, as subsequently amended. This Plan updates and ensures that the CIP remains relevant to current policy direction, including the City's Corporate Strategic Plan and the City of Cambridge Official Plan.

As noted above, various community improvement plans have been in place within Cambridge core areas since the 1980's, namely the City Centre Community Improvement Plan (Galt), Community Improvement Plan for Phase 1 of West Hespeler Community Improvement Project Area (Hespeler), and Central Preston Community Improvement Plan (Preston). Various amendments over the years have taken place.

Programs and initiatives introduced over the years have laid the foundation for continued revitalization that this Community Improvement Plan builds upon. They include the following programs:

**Core Specific** financial incentive programs:

- Design Guide Program (existing CIP)
- Building Revitalization Program (BRP) Loan/Grant (existing CIP)
- Contaminated Sites Grant Program (existing CIP)
- Application Fee Exemptions (existing CIP)
- Development Charge Exemptions (Development Charges Act and By-law)

**City Wide** incentives include:

- Heritage Grant Program (pursuant to the Heritage Act and By-law)
- Brownfield Tax Increment Grant (TIG) Program (pursuant to separate City Wide CIP)
- Employment Land Development Charge Reduction (pursuant to the Development Charges Act and By-law)
- Development Charge Exemptions (pursuant to the Development Charges Act and By-law)

Over the past several years there have been other notable strategic initiatives and investments in the Community Improvement Project Areas where this Plan applies. They have facilitated the creation of an investment-friendly environment and demonstrated the City's commitment to the revitalization of our community core areas. These include:

- The waiving of development charges in the Core Areas of Cambridge;
- The waiving of planning and building fees in the Core Areas;
- The comprehensive review of the City of Cambridge's Zoning By-law;
- The current review of the Regional Official Plan, that provides the foundation for the creation of robust urban design policies, which in turn assists in completing the new City of Cambridge Official Plan (2022-2023) and Zoning By-law for the rest of the urban areas of the City;
- The approval of the Community Core Urban Design Guidelines, to provide further direction for implementing design, land use policies, and zoning;
- The 10-year Capital Budget Plan, which establishes priorities in relation to infrastructure and public space improvements within the Core Areas; and,
- The Downtown Cambridge capital projects, including the renovation of Historic City Hall, the Historic Fire Hall, the Downtown Cambridge Farmers Market, the Idea Exchange (Public Library), and the Pedestrian Bridge (Craig's Crossing).
- The Core Area Transformation Fund which provides the funding source for the programs as outlined within this plan.

#### **4. SUPPORTING POLICIES**

The documents reviewed in this Section provide the direction and policy basis for this Community Improvement Plan's goals, objectives (see Section 6) and programs (see Section 7). It also provides rationale for the Community Improvement Projects Areas in which the programs may apply (see Section 5).

##### **4.1 Provincial Policy Statement (2020)**

The Provincial Policy Statement (2020) sets the policy foundation for regulating the development and use of land in Ontario, for the purpose of establishing and maintaining strong communities, a clean and healthy environment, and economic growth. It recognizes that the wise management of development may involve directing, promoting or sustaining growth, and encourages efficient development patterns that optimize the use of land, resources and public investment in infrastructure and public service facilities. It promotes intensification and redevelopment that takes into account existing building stock or areas, including brownfields that promote cost-effective development



patterns and minimizes land consumption and servicing costs. This new Provincial Policy Statement was issued under section 3 of the Planning Act and came into effect May 1, 2020. It replaces the Provincial Policy Statement issued April 30, 2014.

This Community Improvement Plan addresses the following policies within the PPS (2020):

- Establish and implement minimum targets for intensification and redevelopment within built-up areas, based on local conditions. However, where provincial targets are established through provincial plans, the provincial target shall represent the minimum target for affected areas. (PPS1.1.3.5);
- Accommodate residential growth through residential intensification and redevelopment (PPS 1.4.1 a) and b) );
- Establish and implement minimum targets for the provision of housing which is affordable to low and moderate income households (PPS 1.4.3 a) to f) );
- Optimizing the use of existing infrastructure and public service facilities and long-term economic prosperity (PPS Policy 1.6.3 and 1.7.1 a) and c));
- Maintaining and, where possible, enhancing the vitality and viability of downtowns and main streets (PPS 1.7.1 d) );
- Promoting the redevelopment of brownfield sites (PPS 1.7.1 f) ); and,
- Conserving features of significant building heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes (PPS 1.7.1 e) and 2.6.1).

This Community Improvement Plan has been developed to address these policies and is consistent with the PPS (2020).

#### **4.2 The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Places to Grow) and Cambridge's Density Targets**

Places to Grow (2006) provides growth management policy direction from the Province to municipalities within the Greater Golden Horseshoe, including Cambridge. It envisions increasing intensification of existing built-up areas, with a focus on urban growth centres, intensification corridors, major transit station areas, brownfield sites and greyfields. To this end, the Community Improvement Project Area is included within the built-up area designation, and Downtown Cambridge has been identified as an Urban Growth Centre (UGC) in both the Growth Plan and the City of Cambridge Official Plan.

The Growth Plan encourages intensification and transit-supportive, mixed use development to make better use of existing, underutilized infrastructure. It directs growth to specific intensification areas by establishing minimum density targets that

municipalities must identify in their Official Plans. Cambridge's density targets are as follows:

- A minimum of 40 percent of all residential development occurring annually within Cambridge is required to be within the built-up area;
- The Urban Growth Centre (UGC), as located in Downtown Cambridge, will be planned to achieve, by 2031, a minimum density target of 150 residents and jobs per hectare.

This Community Improvement Plan will focus on the Core Areas of Cambridge, and specifically in Downtown Cambridge, where residential intensification is currently promoted and occurring as of 2020.

The City of Cambridge Official Plan also provides housing targets which looks at both ownership and rental housing needs. The intent is to meet the housing targets for affordable, low and moderate income households with sustainable and predictable funding from senior levels of government.

This Community Improvement Plan will continue to assist Cambridge in meeting these intensification and housing targets through its financial incentives designed to stimulate development and redevelopment for residential uses including the opportunities for affordable housing, as well as, the rehabilitation of residential and commercial lands and buildings in the Core Areas.

This Community Improvement Plan has been developed to address these policies and is consistent with the Places to Grow Plan.

#### **4.3 City of Cambridge Official Plan**

The Official Plan implements Provincial land use policy at the municipal level. With reference to the Core Areas and this Plan, all proposed developments participating in programs and initiatives contained within said Plan shall conform to the policies in the Official Plan and the Zoning By-law, and more specifically, shall be compatible with surrounding land uses. Specifically, existing, non-complying and non-conforming uses are not eligible for said programs.

In addition, Section 10.15 of the Official Plan provides the following policies on community improvement:

##### **10.15 Community Improvement, Renewal and Revitalization**

1. The City will promote the following community improvement goals for the municipality:
  - a) to act as a catalyst for private investment;
  - b) to improve the quality of the housing stock;
  - c) to improve municipal infrastructure and community services wherever it is physically and economically feasible;
  - d) to make commercial and industrial areas more efficient, attractive, competitive, sustainable and pedestrian and transit oriented;
  - e) to protect and enhance the heritage of Cambridge and to ensure that development activities consider and incorporate cultural heritage resources wherever feasible;
  - f) to protect, enhance and re-establish natural features;
  - g) to provide a framework to guide the expenditure of public funds for community improvement activities;
  - h) to promote intensification opportunities;
  - i) to encourage the redevelopment and rehabilitation of brownfield and greyfield sites; and,
  - j) to undertake any other initiatives which contribute to community improvement, renewal and revitalization.
  
2. Where there are impediments to development and redevelopment including brownfield and greyfield sites, the City may prepare Community Improvement Plans in accordance with the policies in Section 10.15. Community improvement initiatives maybe undertaken to address:
  - a) a deficiency or deterioration in municipal facilities, services, infrastructure, buildings and streetscaping;
  - b) land use conflicts between non-compatible uses or underutilized sites which detract from the viability of an area;
  - c) an area exhibiting symptoms of physical, functional and/or economic decline (e.g. buildings in need of rehabilitation, high vacancy rate, decrease in retail sales);
  - d) a demonstrated interest in community improvement by the private sector;
  - e) vacant or underutilized land parcels or properties having future development potential;
  - f) an area prone to flooding;
  - g) an area in which the natural environment can be further protected, enhanced or re-established;

- h) an area in which cultural heritage resources warrant special community improvement initiatives;
  - i) an area with known or potentially contaminated sites;
  - j) an area with redevelopment and intensification potential; or
  - k) affordable housing or an appropriate range of housing types.
3. The entire municipality is designated as a community improvement area, based on the considerations outlined in Policies 10.15.1 and 10.15.2. Council may, by by-law, designate part or all of the community improvement area as a Community Improvement Project Area and prepare a Community Improvement Plan.
  4. Community improvements will be phased in order to minimize financial hardship on the residents, business community and the municipality and to establish a logical sequence for implementation of improvements based upon planning and engineering studies reflecting the priorities and funding capabilities of the City and other agencies.
  5. The designation of community improvement project areas will be influenced by the availability of government assistance programs as well as the need for improvements in specific areas.
  6. The following measures may be implemented by the City to help achieve its goals and objectives pertaining to community improvement:
    - a) designate community improvement project areas by by-law under the Planning Act;
    - b) provide for the preparation of a Community Improvement Plan for a Community Improvement Project Area under the Planning Act;
    - c) use City grant and loan programs available to assist with community improvement and property rehabilitation;
    - d) construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings or land acquired or held by the municipality in community improvement project areas in conformity with Community Improvement Plans;
    - e) evaluate development applications within community improvement project areas, having regard for the objectives of community improvement in that area;
    - f) enforce the City By-laws prescribing standards for property, maintenance and occupancy and the City's Zoning By-law to address substandard properties;
    - g) use Federal and Provincial government programs and Regional grants or loans that are made available to assist with community improvement and property

rehabilitation where appropriate in support of community improvement initiatives in the City;

- h) consider the need for community improvement and the need for funding support for Regional Community Improvement Plans within the city in the preparation of capital and operating budgets;
- i) support and co-ordinate with the initiatives of business improvement areas, public utilities, local service clubs, business associations, community organizations, private enterprises and residents who from time-to-time may carry out improvement projects designed to enhance the quality of their community;
- j) dispose of municipally-owned property to private or public sector investors who will undertake projects that the City deems will be important assets to the city;
- k) acquire property as a means of achieving specific elements of a Community Improvement Plan;
- l) facilitate the coordinated replacement or upgrading of services by major utilities;
- m) support the preservation and restoration of properties identified by the Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee as being culturally significant by passing by-laws pursuant to the Ontario Heritage Act;
- n) realize a greater degree of protection and enhancement of the natural environment; and,
- o) preparation of urban design guidelines.

#### **4.4 City of Cambridge Corporate Strategic Plan**

The City of Cambridge has updated its strategic plan, Cambridge Connected. As part of this update the vision, mission and values of the plan adopted in 2016 remain unchanged.

Based on community and stakeholder feedback from January to November 2020, this plan identifies three goals related to the themes of PEOPLE, PLACE and PROSPERITY and 11 related objectives. These goals and objectives are grounded in our commitment to delivering public value. The intent of the public value statement is to identify common principles that apply across the corporation, so that they will be considered and assessed throughout the implementation of this plan.

**Goal 1: PEOPLE** - Foster a community with heart, where everyone belongs and is cared for.

**Goal 2: PLACE** - Embrace and celebrate our city's unique character while enhancing the spaces where people connect.

**Goal 3: PROSPERITY** - Build a vibrant and resilient city where current and future generations will live well.

The 11 Objectives outlined here are designed to be related to each of the goals.

**Goal 1: People**

Objective 1: WELLBEING – Connect people to services that support individual and community wellbeing.

Objective 2: BELONGING – Be known as a safe and welcoming community where everyone feels like they matter.

Objective 3: INCLUSION – Deliver accessible, diverse and inclusive services, programs and infrastructure for all ages and abilities

Objective 4: VIBRANT NEIGHBOURHOODS – Promote, facilitate and participate in the development of safe and healthy neighbourhoods with a range of housing options.

**Goal 2: PLACE**

Objective 5: PLACEMAKING – Promote and create a wide range of destinations and activities that capitalize on the beauty of the rivers and heritage buildings.

Objective 6: GREEN SPACES – Protect, enhance and steward our parks, green spaces and environmental areas.

Objective 7: PLANNING FOR GROWTH – Provide for a mix of development, uses and amenities in order to meet the needs of a changing and diverse population.

**Goal 3: PROSPERITY**

Objective 8: STRONG CORES - Create an inviting downtown that connects and complements core areas and neighbourhoods where people want to live and visit.

Objective 9: GETTING AROUND - Emphasize connectivity and active transportation choices to help people travel in and beyond the city without a car

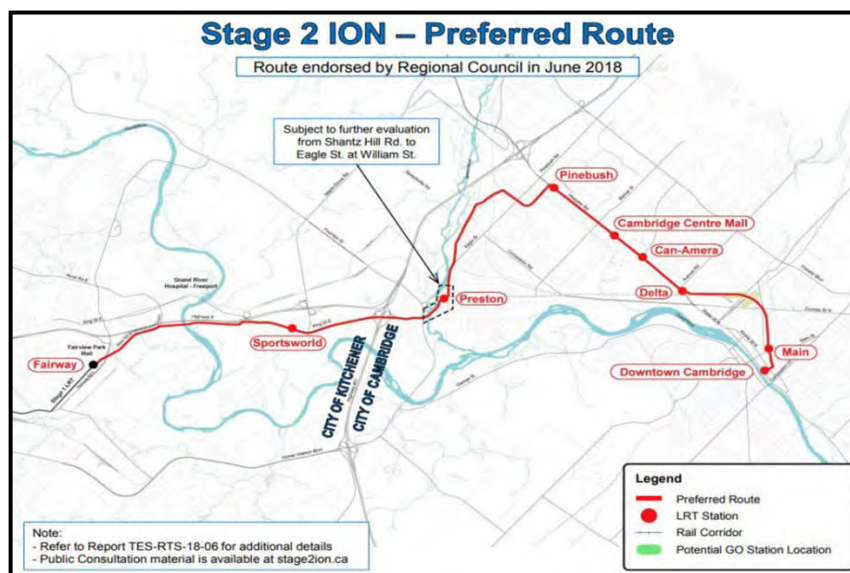
Objective 10: ECONOMIC INCLUSION & SUPPORT – Establish and extend inclusive programs to support business readiness and workforce development and help local businesses to thrive.

Objective 11: RESILIENCY – Use a future-oriented, proactive approach to climate action and emergency preparedness.

Each of these goals and objectives will be supported by the proposed Community Improvement Plan by enhancing and supporting the further development of Cambridge’s three Community Core Areas, supporting the economy of the City, and maintaining a transparent and culturally sensitive network. The new Community Improvement Plan will emulate the new goals for the future.

#### 4.5 Regional Phase 2 Light Rail Transit

In collaboration with the Region’s design studies for Phase 2 of the Light Rail Transit (LRT), the City recognizes that investment in intensification along the LRT corridor is an important economic driver and meets the City’s Official Plan goals and objectives. The current Council approved route of Phase 2 of the LRT takes it to two of the three Core Areas, namely Preston Towne Centre and Galt City Centre (Downtown Cambridge). This Major Transit Station Areas will be planned and developed with higher densities to facilitate ridership on the LRT. This Community Improvement Plan, and its associated programs, will facilitate such development and thereby the long term success of LRT.



#### 5. COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT AREAS (CORE AREAS)

This Community Improvement Plan applies to Cambridge’s three Community Core Areas as designated in the Official Plan. The Project Areas may include abutting properties provided that they are part of the comprehensive redevelopment of an

eligible property. The Community Improvement Project Areas are approved by by-law 20-088 as amended.

### **5.1 Community Core Areas - Galt City Centre, Preston Towne Centre, and Hespeler Village**

The Community Improvement Project Areas are the Community Core Areas as designated in the Official Plan, namely Hespeler Village, Preston Towne Centre, and Galt City Centre (Downtown Cambridge).

The Community Core Areas are further described in Section 2.6.3 of the Official Plan as the historic business centres and cultural hubs in Cambridge with specialized and diverse planned functions. The Community Core Areas are designated on Maps 2, 3, 4, and 5 of the Official Plan.

The Community Core Areas are planned to provide a wide variety of mixed uses including housing, specialized commercial uses, office, institutional, and community facilities. Enhanced transportation, transit and pedestrian access is encouraged as well as integration with the Grand and Speed Rivers, and opportunities for unique experiences, cultural events, recreation, and specialty shopping and dining, in support of tourism and other functions.

Section 2.6.3.3 of the Official Plan further identifies that the City will recognize and encourage the use of the Community Core Areas for a variety of activities including (among others):

- a) areas which offer residential, employment, institutional, commercial, open space and cultural uses and activities;
- b) specialized shopping areas, providing goods and services to customers within and outside of Cambridge;
- c) tourist-oriented areas, including shopping, integrated trail systems, cultural events, scenic features, and water access along the Grand and Speed rivers.

Galt City Centre is recognized as Downtown Cambridge as well as a designated Urban Growth Centre by Provincial policy. The Civic Centre (City Hall, etc.) is located in Downtown Cambridge as well it is a hub for Regional transit in Cambridge.

As per the Official Plan, Community Core Areas are also intended to provide for a concentration of mixed uses including government and public services, commercial and



retail uses, major office and office uses, institutional, recreational, social and cultural facilities, and bed and breakfast establishments.

## **6. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

With consideration to the broader policy and geographic context outlined in Sections 5 and 6 of this Plan, the goals of this Core Areas Community Improvement Plan are:

- To create safe, clean, socially, economically and environmentally healthy areas where people want to live, work, shop, play and learn;
- To ensure a viable population of residents, jobs and visitors to the project areas that provide local business support, employment and economic prosperity;
- To make more efficient use of existing infrastructure;
- To encourage the preservation and enhancement of cultural heritage resources;
- To encourage the development of affordable and attainable housing choices throughout the Community Improvement Project Areas;
- To increase the value of land and buildings within the Community Improvement Project Areas.

To help realize the above-noted goals, the following objectives will guide the development of its programs and related initiatives:

- To increase and improve the supply of residential units and commercial businesses in the project areas;
- To address and facilitate opportunity for affordable and attainable housing choices;
- To facilitate the redevelopment of underutilized buildings, vacant sites, brownfield and surface parking lots;
- To promote the intensification and infill of appropriate and compatible development and redevelopment within the project areas;
- To improve the accessibility, functionality and marketability of the built environment, including the rehabilitation, maintenance and adaptive re-use of built heritage resources;
- To improve the aesthetics and design of streetscapes and public and private building façades;
- To support streetscape improvements and pedestrian amenities that encourage walking, cycling and transit use;
- To support the upgrading of social, physical services, including recreational and cultural facilities;

- To encourage the provision of unique or specialized attractions and community events;
- To identify and address regulatory, social, environmental and economic barriers and/or restrictions to development and investment opportunities;
- To provide loans, grants and other economic incentives to stimulate private property reinvestment activity;
- To encourage the co-ordination of municipal expenditures and planning and development activity;
- To promote the continued development of Preston Towne Centre and Hespeler Village as nodes of business and residential development;
- To promote the continued development of Downtown Cambridge as the primary business, administrative, cultural and creative centre of the City.

## **7. THE PROGRAMS**

This section outlines the General Provision for Grants and Loans and the specific programs within the Community Improvement Project Areas.

### **7.1 General Provision for Grants and Loans**

Through its financial incentive programs, the City of Cambridge will provide grants and/or loans to registered/assessed owners and tenants of land and buildings, 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 part of the eligible costs of a project as described in this Community Improvement Plan.

Approval of all loan or grant program applications is at the absolute discretion of the City and subject to the availability of funds.

Depending on the specific program, project costs that may be eligible for financial assistance relate to:

- The creation of new dwelling units and/or commercial space upon vacant land and parking lots or within building additions;
- The renovation of existing dwelling units and/or commercial space;
- The conversion of existing but underutilized space to accommodate another permitted use;
- Interior and/or exterior building improvements, including commercial façades and signage; and,

- The conservation and restoration of heritage features of designated heritage properties.

Projects will contribute to the achievement of this Plan's goals and objectives by:

- Providing new residential and/or employment opportunities that support intensification and the efficient use of existing infrastructure;
- Assisting the rehabilitation, maintenance and adaptive re-use of built heritage resources; and,
- Increasing the value, utility and aesthetic appeal of land and buildings.

In addition to the following program summaries, Council shall adopt by resolution detailed implementation measures to allow for the efficient administration of each financial incentive program. These administration procedures are contained in the appendices to this Community Improvement Plan (Appendices A to G), providing detailed program descriptions, terms and administration process. Amendments to the Appendices will be approved by City Council but do not require amendment to this plan.

#### **7.1.1 Commercial Property Improvement Grant Program (CPIG)**

The Commercial Property Improvement Grant Program is intended to provide financial assistance for commercial property owners/authorized tenants within the Core Areas as identified within the Official Plan. The Program aims to improve upon the appearance of commercial properties, support commercial property/business owners with limited rehabilitation of interior space and assist in creating a barrier free and accessible environment. It is understood that smaller scale commercial activities contribute greatly to the economic vitality and health of the commercial sector within the City of Cambridge. This Program seeks to build upon these successes, resulting in long lasting physical improvements to the assets of commercial property owners/authorized tenants, to assist business development within the commercial areas as defined by the Core Areas, and to broadly improve commerce within the entire City.

Buildings that have a linear foot street frontage of 25 feet (25') or less, grants will be paid on a matching basis to a maximum of \$15,000 for eligible work under the Program.

Buildings that have a linear foot street frontage greater than twenty-five feet (25'), grants will be paid on a matching basis of \$600 per linear foot of street frontage up to a maximum of \$25,000 for eligible work under the Program.

As a further incentive for corner properties the City will increase the maximum grant amount to \$30,000, on a similar matching basis for eligible work under the Program to recognize the importance of flankage facades. The grant amount will be determined by the measurement of the street frontage and the measurement of the corner/exposed wall multiplied by \$600 per linear foot.

An additional \$5,000 may be added to the maximum funding for each item listed below:

Heritage listed – additional \$5,000

River frontage – additional \$5,000

Accessibility features – additional \$5,000

This brings a maximum funding amount of any property to \$45,000.

The detailed program description, terms and administrative procedure for this program are provided in Appendix “A” to this Community Improvement Plan.

### **7.1.2 Tax Increase-based Equivalent Grant Program (TIEG)**

The Tax Increase-based Equivalent Grant Program offers grants to eligible applicants whose City property tax has increased as a result of the planning or replanning, design or redesign, resubdivision, clearance, development or redevelopment, reconstruction and rehabilitation of a property within one of the designated Core Areas Community Improvement Project Areas, resulting in the incremental improvement of the built character of these areas.

Annual grants may be equal to 75% of the City’s portion of the property tax increase. The Region of Waterloo may also provide similar annual grants if approved by Regional Council without amendment to this plan. The development must meet and incorporate exemplary design standards and contribute to maintaining the heritage character of the Community Improvement Project Area.

The City of Cambridge and the Region of Waterloo will benefit from the property tax increase at the time of completion of the work, in addition to the potential creation of jobs and local economic activity associated with the community improvement works undertaken.

The detailed program description, terms and administrative procedure for this program are provided in Appendix “B” to this Community Improvement Plan.

### **7.1.3 Commercial Building Restoration, Renovation and Improvement Grant (CBBRIG)**

This grant has the potential to leverage significant private sector investment in interior building renovations and improvements, and help address the costs involved with a range of matters, such as:

- Re-purposing buildings for commercial occupancy;
- Building, fire and other code compliance including public occupancy load-related building enhancement;
- General Retrofitting;
- Accessibility enhancements

This program is restricted to the conversion of vacant, residential, or underutilized space to use as: a restaurant, market or Place of Assembly related to arts, culture, and/or recreation or rehabilitation of existing, or conversion of space for commercial use.

The program will be matching grants of up to 50% of eligible costs up to a maximum grant amount. If the building is a single commercial floor, the maximum grant amount will be \$50,000 per property. If the building is two or more floors of commercial use, the maximum grant amount will be up to \$100,000 per property. The maximum grant may increase by \$5,000 for the inclusion of enhanced accessibility elements.

The detailed program description, terms and administrative procedure for this program are provided in Appendix “C” to this Community Improvement Plan.

### **7.1.4 Mixed Use Conversion and Restoration Grant Program (MUCRG)**

The Mixed Use Conversion and Restoration Grant Program is aimed at attracting new investment and interest in converting current non-residential vacant or underutilized upper storey space to residential units and renovating the existing ground floor commercial space by providing a financial incentive that will be targeted at the costs of converting the space. It is intended to stimulate the creation of new residential units on the upper floors of existing mixed-use buildings and renovating or restoring ground floor commercial occupancies.

The limited size of the buildings and the outdated building infrastructure systems, which may require additional building code upgrades, can make the cost-effective upgrading and reuse of the buildings for market rate residential units challenging.

The Commercial Restoration portion of the matching grant will be up to 50% of eligible costs up to a maximum grant of \$50,000 per property. The maximum grant may increase by \$2,500 for the inclusion of enhanced accessibility elements.

The Residential Conversion portion of the Grant Program will consist of a grant, whereby property owners will be eligible to receive a grant of up to \$10,000 for every new residential unit created or every unit that has been vacant for more than 5 years on the upper floors of an existing mixed use building, up to a maximum of \$100,000 per property. The amount of the grant will be determined based upon the new number of residential units created as a result of the conversion of the upper floors from a non-residential use. The maximum grant may increase by \$2,500 per unit for the creation of accessible residential units up to a maximum of \$125,000 per property.

The total amount combined of the grant of the eligible costs is up to a maximum grant of \$150,000 per property. The total amount for projects that include accessible residential units as well as enhanced accessibility elements on the ground floor is a maximum grant of \$177,500 per property.

The detailed program description, terms and administrative procedure for this program are provided in Appendix "D" to this Community Improvement Plan.

### **7.1.5 Core Areas Waiver of Application Fees**

Development, Signage and Building Permit application fees may be waived if applications are for properties that are located within the Core Areas Community Improvement Project Areas. This waiver will only be applicable to mixed used, commercial and mid to high density housing, and will not be for single family/duplex homes.

The detailed program description, terms and administrative procedure for this program are provided in Appendix "E" to this Community Improvement Plan.

## **8. OTHER STRATEGIES**

The following programs and initiatives are not provided under the authority of the community improvement provisions of the *Planning Act* but are intended to augment and support the goals, objectives and financial incentive programs contained in this Community Improvement Plan.

### **8.1 Relief From Fees and Charges**

The City of Cambridge may offer relief from fees, levies and charges associated with redevelopment. For example, all or part of a development charge may be waived within a community improvement project area via the City's Development Charge By-law under the authority of the *Development Charges Act*.

## **8.2 Co-operation/Participation with Private Sector Entities**

The City of Cambridge may participate financially with the private sector to further the policies of this Plan. The City may enter into public/private partnerships with developers where appropriate to achieve desired outcomes of this Plan. Such relationships must be for the public good and represent good planning.

## **8.3 Capital Improvements**

The City of Cambridge will undertake capital improvements in order to enhance the attractiveness of the pedestrian environment along streets and public spaces within the Core Areas Community Improvement Project Areas. These improvements may include but are not limited to streetscapes, public art, and gateway features.

## **8.4 Arts and Culture**

The Core Areas are seen as the arts and cultural hubs of the City, and numerous cultural events are also held within these locations. The City will continue to encourage cultural and recreational activities as well as festivals and other events in these areas. The City may partner with arts and culture groups to promote and support such events through initiatives such as services in kind.

## **8.5 Marketing and Promotion**

The City of Cambridge may promote and advertise or contribute to the promotion or advertisement of programs, initiatives and events of the Core Areas, including Cambridge's BIAs, for the purposes of achieving the goals and objectives of this Plan.

## **8.6 Municipal Property Acquisition and Deposition**

The City of Cambridge may acquire and prepare property, including land and buildings, for the purposes of redevelopment within any Core Areas Community Improvement

Project Area. The City may also dispose, including sale, lease, or otherwise, of municipal land and buildings within any Core Areas Community Improvement Project Area for the purpose of achieving the goals and objectives of this Plan.

## **9. MONITORING**

Monitoring the Plan's implementation is undertaken through the City's performance measurement reporting, and the annual report prepared by the City of Cambridge's Economic Development Division.

Performance measures are based on the desired end results and key activities set out in the Division's business plan, in alignment with the City's Corporate Strategic Plan and the Official Plan. They address the following desired end results:

- Improve non-residential assessment ratio;
- Increase the number of brownfield sites redeveloped;
- Increase the number of housing units for affordable, and low to moderate income households;
- Increase the number of new businesses;
- Increase taxable assessment growth;
- Increase the value of non-residential building permits (to improve the non-residential assessment ratio);
- Increase the number of visitors and celebratory events;
- Meet legislated growth targets (population and employment);
- Decrease commercial and office vacancy rates in the Core Areas;
- Newly created or revitalized employment sites (to increase the employment rate);
- Increase the number of residential units within the core areas; and,
- Increase alternative transportation usage in areas such as transit, walking and cycling.

## **10. APPROVAL AND AMENDMENT PROCESS**

This Plan will be reviewed from time to time to ensure that it is current and adequately reflects existing City policies and priorities, as well as Provincial policies. Monitoring and applicant feedback regarding the Plan and its programs may also lead to amendments to the financial incentive program descriptions and terms.

### **10.1 Formal Amendments**



A formal amendment to this Community Improvement Plan is required in the following instances:

- To introduce any new financial incentive programs, to be added to Section 7;
- To increase the amount of financial assistance that may be provided to registered owners, assessed owners, and tenants, and to any person to whom such an owner or tenant has assigned the right to receive a grant or loan, as described in Section 7.1; or,

Formal amendments will require approval by City Council, and shall be undertaken in accordance with Section 28 of the *Planning Act*. Public notice shall be given in accordance with the applicable requirements of the *Planning Act* regulations. Any proposed amendments will be circulated to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing prior to approval for consultation purposes.

In addition, the City may undertake other communication methods to provide information and seek input, such as public information open houses, workshops, public meetings, the City's website and direct or electronic mail-outs and surveys. Minor revisions and corrections do not represent formal amendments and may be completed without the formal amendment process, as noted in Section 10.2 below.

## **10.2 Other Changes**

Administration procedures are contained in the various program descriptions and terms provided in the appendices to this Plan. Changes to the appendices not requiring a formal amendment will be adopted by City Council by resolution. In addition, Council may discontinue any of the programs described in this Plan, without amendment to the Plan. Formal amendments, including public meetings under the *Planning Act*, shall not be required for minor administrative amendments to this Plan such as format changes, typographical errors, grammatical errors and policy number changes.

## **10.3 Transition**

Program applications will be processed under the terms of the program in effect at the time the application was submitted. When program terms are revised, applications submitted and approved under the former terms of the program will be processed under the former terms unless the City receives a formal cancellation of the application.

## **11.0 Appendix and Maps**

## **APPENDIX A - COMMERCIAL PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM (CPIG)**

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The Commercial Property Improvement Grant Program is intended to provide financial assistance for commercial property owners/authorized tenants within the Core Areas as identified within the Official Plan. The Program aims to improve upon the appearance of commercial properties, support commercial property/business owners with limited rehabilitation of interior space and assist in creating a barrier free and accessible environment. It is understood that smaller scale commercial activities contribute greatly to the economic vitality and health of the commercial sector within the City of Cambridge. This Program seeks to build upon these successes, resulting in long lasting physical improvements to the assets of commercial property owners/authorized tenants, to assist business development within the commercial areas as defined by the Core Areas, and to broadly improve commerce within the entire City.

### **PROGRAM TERMS**

Applicants are eligible to apply for funding under this program, subject to meeting the general program requirements, the following program specific requirements, subject to the availability of funding and discretion of the City of Cambridge:

1. Commercial property owners/authorized tenants are eligible for a maximum grant per property during a five-year period (i.e. multiple applications or one application could be submitted, however the sum of the grant amounts approved will be no more than the maximum amount allowed for each property). Exceptions may be made if a new tenant/owner is occupying the property and applies for new signage.
2. Buildings that have a linear foot street frontage of 25 feet or less (25'), grants will be paid on a matching basis to a maximum of \$15,000 for eligible work under the Program.
3. Buildings that have a linear foot street frontage greater than twenty-five feet (25'), grants will be paid on a matching basis of \$600 per linear foot of street frontage up to a maximum of \$25,000 for eligible work under the Program.
4. As a further incentive for corner properties the City will increase the maximum grant amount on a similar matching basis for eligible work under the Program to recognize the importance of flankage facades. The grant amount will be determined

by the measurement of the street frontage and the measurement of the corner/exposed wall multiplied by \$600 per linear foot to a maximum of \$30,000.

5. An additional \$5,000 may be added to the maximum funding for each item listed below:
  - Heritage listed – additional \$5,000
  - River frontage – additional \$5,000
  - Accessibility feature – additional \$5,000

This brings a maximum funding amount of any property to \$45,000.

6. Commercial properties are to be identified by municipal address to identify multiple and separate commercial units with separate ground floor street entrances.
7. Commercial uses must be in conformity with applicable policy documents of the City including but not limited to Official Plans, the provisions of the applicable Zoning By-law and any other applicable City by-laws.
8. Performance measures are to be applied to the payment of grants.
9. Eligibility requirements for the Program relating to the work to be funded will be specifically identified. Two separate cost estimates for the work are to be provided.
  - Grants will be calculated based upon lowest cost estimate.
  - An owner who is proposing to undertake the work and not hire a contractor may present an estimate based on material only.
  - In the case where the applicant is the owner of a contracting company and wishes to utilize their company to undertake the improvements on their property, one (1) cost estimate from an arms-length contractor will also be required.

A City of Cambridge Staff member will review all estimates provided for the purpose of ensuring competitiveness.

10. Restoration/conservation of identified cultural heritage attributes on commercial properties designated under the Ontario Heritage Act are eligible under this grant program. However, improvements other than those on cultural heritage attributes not identified in the property's designation by-law, or Heritage Conservation District Plan, may be eligible subject to the approval of the City of Cambridge Senior Planner - Heritage. Restoration/conservation of some identified cultural heritage attributes may require Council permission.

Economic Development staff will work closely with Heritage Planning staff on all applications received that are designated or properties of interest under the Ontario Heritage Act

11. Relative to the proposed improvements, a building inspector and/or heritage planner will perform an initial and final inspection/investigation to confirm compliance with various Acts, Regulations and City By-laws including the Ontario Building Code, Ontario Heritage Act, Property Standards By-Law, Sign By-law, etc.
12. Approval of the grant is at the sole discretion of City Council and subject to the availability of funds.
13. Proposed improvements to be completed within one year to be eligible for payment. A one year extension may be authorized by the Director of Economic Development if an applicant has extenuating circumstances which would warrant an extension.
14. Work completed must be consistent with estimates, and work proposed and identified within the application unless previously discussed and approved by the Economic Development Division. Copies of invoices and proof of payment must be submitted upon completion of the works prior to the City releasing any funds.
15. At the sole discretion of the Director of Economic Development, partial payments for works completed can be processed consistent with the payment process described above.
16. At the sole discretion of the Director of Economic Development, the grant cheque can be made jointly payable to the applicant and the contractor if such a request has been received from the applicant.
17. Without limiting the discretion as set out in paragraph 11 herein, the City or Council, may reject any application received from an applicant, whether or not an Applicant satisfies the requirements of the Program, where, in the opinion of the City or Council, the commercial relationship between the City and the Applicant has been impaired by, but not limited to, the applicant being involved in litigation with the City. Applicants shall include but not be limited to the following:
  - The Applicant identified on the application form; if a corporation, any person or entity with an interest in the corporation as determined by the City in its sole, absolute and unfettered discretion.

18. Without limiting the discretion as set out in paragraph 11 herein, the City or Council, whether or not an Applicant satisfies the requirements of the Program, may reject any application received from an applicant where there are property tax arrears owed on the subject property or on other properties owned by the Applicant within the City of Cambridge.
19. Additional funding may be provided to an applicant, at the discretion of Council or delegated authority. Coverage will be considered based on damage caused from flooding and efforts to prevent future damages related to flooding. This additional funding will be considered on a case-by-case basis subject to the availability of funds and the severity of restoration required. This additional funding may be used retroactively for properties that have been damaged or are at risk of damage from flooding, at the discretion of council or delegated authority.
20. Works commenced prior to submitting an application are ineligible for funding under the Program. Works commenced after submitting an application but prior to approval of an application may be eligible for funding under the Program and eligibility will be determined by the Director in their sole, absolute and unfettered discretion. An applicant shall assume the risk of paying for work commenced after an application has been submitted but prior to approval.
21. A successful applicant will enter into an agreement with the City containing the terms and conditions (but not limited to) set out in the program description.
22. The grant shall exclude any damage that is caused by the property owner or occupant (i.e. a tenant) of that property. For example, costs incurred because of self-inflicted damage such as vandalism or arson would not be covered by this Program.

A refund of any grant under this Program to the City of Cambridge would be required if it is determined after the grant has been paid that the damage was caused by the property owner and/or the tenant(s) of the property.

23. The grant cannot be used to pay the costs resulting from any damage or vandalism where those costs are also reimbursed to the tenant or owner because such costs are covered under any insurance policy. A refund of any grant under this Program to the City of Cambridge would be required if it is determined after the grant has been paid that such a reimbursement has been received.

#### ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- Property owners and authorized tenants are eligible;
- Property taxes must be paid current;

- The proposed work to be pre-inspected by City of Cambridge Staff;
- The improvements shall be in accordance with Property Standards and the Ontario Building Code and in compliance with all applicable City by-laws, official plans, zoning regulations, design guidelines and site plan approvals;
- Commercial properties must be located within one of the corresponding Community Improvement Project Areas; and,
- Existing use must be in conformity with the applicable Zoning By-law regulations, and other relevant planning controls.

### ELIGIBLE IMPROVEMENTS

- Replacement or repairing of storefronts;
- Improvements/replacement to doors, cornices, parapets, soffit, fascia;
- Addition of new lighting and upgrading of existing fixtures, on exterior of the façade and within the storefront area normally associated with the display area;
- Awning replacements and/or additions;
- Brick repairs and/or pointing;
- Painting and façade treatments;
- Installation or improvement of signage (Signage must comply with Sign By-law 191-03 or its successor);
- Barrier free entrance to property (ramps, doors and automatic door openers);
- Permanent landscape features only such as flagstone and natural stones/rocks, statuary, irrigation, containers;
- Permanent fencing; and,
- Front-yard decks/patios or side yard decks/patios that abut a street; and,

In-Eligible: (this list is not intended to be exclusive)

- Any works completed prior to the submission of the application;
- Labour costs where the applicant has completed the works independently of a contractor;
- Trees, shrubbery, perennials, annuals, soil, mulch, grass;
- Roofing (apart from mansard roofs above the eligible frontage);
- Sandblasting;
- Paving of parking lots;
- Interior furniture, display cases, equipment;
- Outdoor patio furniture; and,
- Tools.

## **APPENDIX B - TAX INCREASE-BASED EQUIVALENT GRANT PROGRAM (TIEG)**

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The Tax Increase-based Equivalent Grant Program offers grants to eligible applicants whose City property tax has increased as a result of the planning or replanning, design or redesign, resubdivision, clearance, development or redevelopment, reconstruction and rehabilitation of a property within one of the designated Core Areas Community Improvement Project Areas, resulting in the incremental improvement of the built character of these areas.

The program will stimulate investment by effectively deferring part of the increase in taxation associated with the reassessment through grants that are equivalent to a portion of the resulting property tax increase.

The City of Cambridge and Region of Waterloo will benefit from the property tax increase at the time of completion of the work, in addition to the potential creation of jobs and local economic activity associated with the community improvement works undertaken.

### **PROGRAM TERMS**

Applicants are eligible to apply for funding under this program, subject to meeting the general program requirements, the following program specific requirements, and subject to the availability of funding:

1. When an approved project is complete, a grant that is equal to part of the City's portion of the increase in taxation may be provided annually following the payment of all property taxes by the owner.
2. Grants will not exceed the total cost of approved community improvement works invested by the applicant, or will not be paid to the applicant for a period more than five years (5), whichever is the lesser amount.
3. Annual grants may be equal to 75% of the City's portion of the property tax increase.
4. If the Region of Waterloo elects to join in this program to include the Region's portion of the property tax bill, they may do so without amendment to this plan and program. This will increase the overall grant amount.
5. The City, at its sole discretion, will also have the option of providing a one-time lump sum grant payout in the second year of the program. In this case, in the first year of

the program, the eligible applicant may receive a grant that is equal to part of the City's portion of the increase in taxation.

6. In the second year of the program, the City may provide a final grant that is equal to the value of all remaining annual grants. Should the City opt to provide the applicant with the one-time lump sum grant payout in the second year of the program, the City will enter into an agreement with the applicant to do so.
7. Approval of the grant is at the sole discretion of the City of Cambridge council.
8. Without limiting the discretion as set out in paragraph 7 herein, the City or Council, may reject any application received from an applicant, whether or not an applicant satisfies the requirements of the Program, where, in the opinion of Council, the commercial relationship between the City and the Applicant has been impaired by, but not limited to, the applicant being involved in litigation with the City. Applicants shall include but not be limited to the following:
  - The Applicant identified on the application form and if a corporation, any person or entity with an interest in the corporation as determined by the City in its sole, absolute and unfettered discretion.
9. Without limiting the discretion as set out in paragraph 7 herein, the City or Council, whether or not an applicant satisfies the requirements of the Program, may reject any application received from an applicant where there are property tax arrears owed on the subject property or on other properties owned by the applicant within the City of Cambridge.
10. In order to be eligible for any incentive program contained within the Core Areas Community Improvement Plan (CIP), a Financial Incentive Program application must be submitted to the City prior to commencing any community improvement works. Complete applications should be submitted and approved prior to application for planning approval and/or building permit and prior to commencing community improvement works.
11. Eligible applicants must be either the owner of the property or an agent representing the owners of the property.
12. In order to be eligible for any incentive program, all proposed projects must be within one of the designated Core Areas Community Improvement Project Areas, as designated by by-law. As well, all proposed projects must be compatible with the goals and objectives for the City's Core Areas, as presented in this plan.



13. The property owner must not have outstanding tax arrears and must be in good standing with regard to taxation at the time of application and throughout the duration of the incentive benefit period.
14. In order to be eligible, all incentive program applications must include completed application forms, supporting materials, and any additional information as required by the City.
15. The total of all incentive benefits and grant provided to each applicant for each community improvement proposal for a building or lands within the Core Areas Community Improvement Project Areas must not exceed the project's costs related to the planning or replanning, design or redesign, resubdivision, clearance, development or redevelopment, and/or reconstruction and rehabilitation associated with an application.
16. If a property is sold, in whole or in part, before the original grant period lapses, the original owner is not entitled to receive the remaining grant payments under the original agreement, subject to entering into an agreement with the City. The original owner may also be required to repay the City for any grant payments made to the original owner prior to sale of the property.
17. The property owner is responsible for the entire cost of the rehabilitation project. Applicants receiving the Tax Increase-based Equivalent Grant will not be eligible for any additional incentive programs offered through this plan other than the Core Areas Waiver of Application Fees program.
18. In order to determine the suitability of the Tax Increase-based Equivalent Grant Program, prior to submitting an application for the program, eligible applicants should attempt to estimate the total potential value of the grant, based on current assessment values and anticipated investment. Upon completing the approved community improvement works, to the satisfaction of the City, and upon reassessment of the property, should the total value of the grant be significantly less than the applicants estimated value, the applicant may then have the opportunity to withdraw application for the Tax Increase-based Equivalent Grant Program, and submit an application for one or more of the additional incentive programs offered through this plan provided eligibility criteria are met.

## **APPENDIX C – COMMERCIAL BUILDING RESTORATION, RENOVATION AND IMPROVEMENT GRANT (CBRRIG)**

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

This grant has the potential to leverage significant private sector investment in interior building renovations and improvements for commercial space, and help address the costs involved with a range of matters, such as:

- Re-purposing buildings for commercial occupancy;
- Building, fire and other code compliance including public occupancy load-related building enhancement;
- General Retrofitting; and,
- Accessibility enhancements

City of Cambridge will benefit from the tax increase on the property as a result of the property improvement, in addition to the potential creation of jobs and local economic activity associated with the community improvement works undertaken.

Restricted to the conversion of commercial, residential, or underutilized space to use as:

- Retail;
- Service; or,
- Office Space.

### **PROGRAM TERMS**

Applicants are eligible to apply for funding under this program, subject to meeting the general program requirements, the following program specific requirements, and subject to the availability of funding:

1. Grants will be provided upon successful completion of the approved work, to the satisfaction of the City.
2. Commercial property owners/authorized tenants are eligible for a maximum grant per property during a five-year period (i.e. multiple applications or one application could be submitted, however the sum of the grant amounts approved will be no more than the maximum amount allowed for each property).
3. Commercial properties are to be identified by municipal address to identify multiple and separate commercial units.
4. Commercial uses must be in conformity with applicable policy documents of the City including but not limited to Official Plans, the provisions of the applicable Zoning By-law and any other applicable City by-laws.

5. Performance measures are to be applied to the payment of grants.
6. Matching grant of up to 50% of eligible costs up to a maximum grant amount. If the building is a single floor commercial, the maximum grant amount will be \$50,000 per property. If the building is two or more floors of commercial use, the maximum grant amount will be up to \$100,000 per property. The maximum grant may increase by \$5,000 for the inclusion of enhanced accessibility elements.
7. Eligibility requirements for the program relating to the work to be funded will be specifically identified. Two separate cost estimates for the work are to be provided.
  - Grants will be calculated based upon lowest cost estimate.
  - An owner who is proposing to undertake the work and not hire a contractor may present an estimate based on material only. Grants will be calculated based upon lowest cost estimate.
  - In the case where the applicant is the owner of a contracting company and wishes to utilize their company to undertake the improvements on their property, one (1) cost estimate from an arms-length contractor will also be required.

A City of Cambridge staff member will review all estimates provided for the purpose of ensuring competitiveness.

8. Relative to the proposed improvements, a building inspector will perform an initial and final inspection/investigation to confirm compliance with various Acts, Regulations and City By-laws including the Ontario Building Code, Property Standards By-law, Sign By-law, etc.
9. Approval of the grant is at the sole discretion of City Council and subject to the availability of funds.
10. Proposed improvements need to be completed within one year to be eligible for payment and payment will be made upon successful completion of the work, to the satisfaction of the City's Building division. A one year extension can be authorized by the Director of Economic Development if an applicant has extenuating circumstances which would warrant an extension.
11. Work completed must be consistent with estimates, work proposed and identified within the application unless previously discussed and approved by the Economic Development Division.
12. At the sole discretion of the Director of Economic Development, partial payments for works completed can be processed consistent with the payment process describe above. Copies of invoices and proof of payment must be submitted upon completion

of the works prior to the City releasing any funds.

13. Without limiting the discretion as set out in paragraph 9 herein, the City or Council, may reject any application received from an applicant, whether or not an applicant satisfies the requirements of the Program, where, in the opinion of Council, the commercial relationship between the City and the applicant has been impaired by, but not limited to, the applicant being involved in litigation with the City. Applicants shall include but not be limited to the following:
  - The Applicant identified on the application form; if a corporation, any person or entity with an interest in the corporation as determined by the City in its sole, absolute and unfettered discretion.
14. Without limiting the discretion as set out in paragraph 9 herein, the City or Council, whether or not an applicant satisfies the requirements of the Program, may reject any application received from an applicant where there are property tax arrears owed on the subject property or on other properties owned by the applicant within the City of Cambridge.
15. Works commenced prior to submitting an application are ineligible for funding under the Program. Works commenced after submitting an application but prior to approval of an application may be eligible for funding under the Program and eligibility will be determined by the Director of Economic Development in their sole, absolute and unfettered discretion. An applicant shall assume the risk of paying for work commenced after an application has been submitted but prior to approval.
16. A successful applicant will enter into an agreement with the City containing the terms and conditions (but not limited to) set out in the program description.
17. The grant shall exclude any damage that is caused by the property owner or occupant (i.e. a tenant) of that property. For example, costs incurred because of self-inflicted damage such as vandalism or arson would not be covered by this Program.

A refund of any grant under this Program to the City of Cambridge would be required if it is determined after the grant has been paid that the damage was caused by the property owner and/or the tenant(s) of the property.
18. The grant cannot be used to pay the costs resulting from any damage or vandalism where those costs are also reimbursed to the tenant or owner because such costs

are covered under any insurance policy. A refund of any grant under this Program to the City of Cambridge would be required if it is determined after the grant has been paid that such a reimbursement has been received.

#### ELIGIBLE COSTS

- Costs associated with materials;
- Labour;
- Permanent fixed equipment;
- Internal building works, including major fit-up to meet the future needs of tenants or activities/uses.

#### INELIGIBLE COSTS

- Any works completed prior to the submission of the application;
- Labour costs where the applicant has completed the works independently of a contractor.

## **APPENDIX D - MIXED USE CONVERSION AND RESTORATION GRANT PROGRAM (MUCRG)**

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The Mixed Use Conversion and Restoration Grant Program is aimed at attracting new investment and interest in converting currently non-residential vacant or underutilized upper storey space to residential units and renovating the existing commercial space located below by providing a financial incentive that will be targeted at the costs of converting the space. It is intended to stimulate the creation of new residential units on the upper floors of existing mixed use buildings and renovating or restoring ground floor commercial occupancies.

The limited size of the buildings and the outdated building infrastructure systems, which may require additional building code upgrades, can make the cost-effective upgrading and reuse of the buildings for market rate residential units challenging.

### **PROGRAM TERMS**

Applicants are eligible to apply for funding under this program, subject to meeting the general program requirements, the following program specific requirements, and subject to the availability of funding:

1. Grants will be provided upon successful completion of the approved work, to the satisfaction of the City.
2. Commercial property owners/authorized tenants are eligible for a maximum grant per property during a five-year period (i.e. multiple applications or one application could be submitted, however the sum of the grant amounts approved will be no more than the maximum amount allowed for each property).
3. Commercial properties are to be identified by municipal address to identify multiple and separate commercial units.
4. Commercial uses must be in conformity with applicable policy documents of the City including but not limited to Official Plans, the provisions of the applicable Zoning By-law and any other applicable City by-laws.
5. Performance measures are to be applied to the payment of grants.

6. The Commercial Restoration portion of the matching grant will be up to 50% of eligible costs up to a maximum grant of \$50,000 per property. The maximum grant may increase by \$2,500 for the inclusion of enhanced accessibility elements.
7. The development, renovation or redevelopment must result in a minimum of 2 new residential units above the first (i.e. ground) floor of the building.
8. Not eligible for any unit or space that was already configured or used for residential use.
9. The applicant will be required to submit a complete application to the City describing in detail the development or redevelopment that is planned. This may include floor plans, conceptual site plans, reports, business plans, estimates, contracts and other details as may be required to satisfy the City with respect to conformity of the project with the CIP. The application must be submitted to the City prior to City Council's approval of financial incentives for the project.
10. Prior to the approval of a Mixed Use Conversion and Restoration Grant, City staff may need to inspect the building to review its condition and the proposed conversion plans.
11. The Residential Conversion portion of the Grant Program will consist of a grant, whereby property owners will be eligible to receive a grant of up to \$10,000 for every new residential unit created or every unit that has been vacant for more than 5 years on the upper floors of an existing mixed use building, up to a maximum of \$100,000 per property. The amount of the grant will be determined based upon the new number of residential units created as a result of the conversion of the upper floors from a non-residential use. The maximum grant may increase by \$2,500 per unit for the creation of accessible residential units up to a maximum of \$125,000 per property.
12. The total amount combined of the grant of the eligible costs is up to a maximum grant of \$150,000 per property. The total amount for projects that include accessible residential units as well as enhanced accessibility elements on the ground floor is a maximum grant of \$177,500 per property.
13. Eligibility requirements for the Program relating to the work to be funded will be specifically identified. Two separate cost estimates for the work are to be provided.
  - Grants will be calculated based upon lowest cost estimate.

- An owner who is proposing to undertake the work and not hire a contractor may present an estimate based on material only. Grants will be calculated based upon lowest cost estimate.
- In the case where the applicant is the owner of a contracting company and wishes to utilize their company to undertake the improvements on their property, one (1) cost estimate from an arms-length contractor will also be required.

A City of Cambridge staff member will review all estimates provided for the purpose of ensuring competitiveness.

14. Relative to the proposed improvements, a building inspector will perform an initial and final inspection/investigation to confirm compliance with various Acts, Regulations and City By-laws including the Ontario Building Code, Property Standards By-law, Sign By-law, etc.
15. Approval of the grant is at the sole discretion of City Council and subject to the availability of funds.
16. Proposed improvements to be completed within one year to be eligible for payment and payment will be made upon successful completion of the work, to the satisfaction of the City's Building division. A one year extension can be authorized by the Director of Economic Development if an applicant has extenuating circumstances which would warrant an extension.
17. Work completed must be consistent with estimates, work proposed and identified within the application unless previously discussed and approved by the Economic Development Division. Copies of invoices and proof of payment must be submitted upon completion of the works prior to the City releasing any funds.
18. At the sole discretion of the Director of Economic Development, partial payments for works completed can be processed consistent with the payment process described above.
19. Without limiting the discretion as set out in paragraph 15 herein, the City or Council, may reject any application received from an applicant, whether or not an applicant satisfies the requirements of the Program, where, in the opinion of Council, the commercial relationship between the City and the applicant has been impaired by, but not limited to, the applicant being involved in litigation with the City. Applicants shall include but not be limited to the following:



- The Applicant identified on the application form; if a corporation, any person or entity with an interest in the corporation as determined by the City in its sole, absolute and unfettered discretion.
20. Without limiting the discretion as set out in paragraph 15 herein, the City or Council, whether or not an applicant satisfies the requirements of the Program, may reject any application received from an applicant where there are property tax arrears owed on the subject property or on other properties owned by the applicant within the City of Cambridge.
  21. Works commenced prior to submitting an application are ineligible for funding under the Program. Works commenced after submitting an application but prior to approval of an application may be eligible for funding under the Program and eligibility will be determined by the Director in their sole, absolute and unfettered discretion. An applicant shall assume the risk of paying for work commenced after an application has been submitted but prior to approval.
  22. A successful applicant will enter into an agreement with the City containing the terms and conditions (but not limited to) set out in the program description.
  23. The grant shall exclude any damage that is caused by the property owner or occupant (i.e. a tenant) of that property. For example, costs incurred because of self-inflicted damage such as vandalism or arson would not be covered by this Program.

A refund of any grant under this Program to the City of Cambridge would be required if it is determined after the grant has been paid that the damage was caused by the property owner and/or the tenant(s) of the property.

#### ELIGIBLE COSTS

The Commercial Restoration Grants portion is only available for the “eligible costs” specified below:

- Costs associated with materials;
- Labour;
- Permanent fixed equipment;
- Internal building works, including major fit-up to meet the future needs of tenants or activities/uses.

#### INELIGIBLE COSTS

- Any works completed prior to the submission of the application;

- Labour costs where the applicant has completed the works independently of a contractor.

The Residential Conversion Grants portion is only available for the “eligible costs” specified below:

- Construct new residential units that are in compliance with the Ontario Building Code, Property Standards By-law and the Fire Code, including, but not limited to the following:
- Installation of safety and fire protection systems such as carbon monoxide detectors, smoke alarms, fire alarms, exit signs, etc.;
- Installation of fire escapes;
- Installation of new or reinforcement of floors, ceilings, roof and/or walls;
- Improvements to electrical, ventilation, heating and plumbing supply systems;
- Improvements for barrier-free accessibility;
- Construction or alteration of stairs, guard rails and/or hand rails; and,
- Installation or alteration of required window openings and windows for upper floor residential units.
- Adaptive reuse, building rehabilitation and retrofit works;
- Other improvements, at the discretion of the Director of Economic Development, related to converting upper floor commercial and vacant residential space to new residential uses.

## **APPENDIX E - CORE AREAS WAIVER OF APPLICATION FEES**

The following application fees are waived if applications are for properties that are located within the Core Areas Community Improvement Project Area. This fee waiver will only be applicable to mixed used, commercial, and mid to high density housing, and will not be for single detached/duplex homes.

The following application fees are hereby waived:

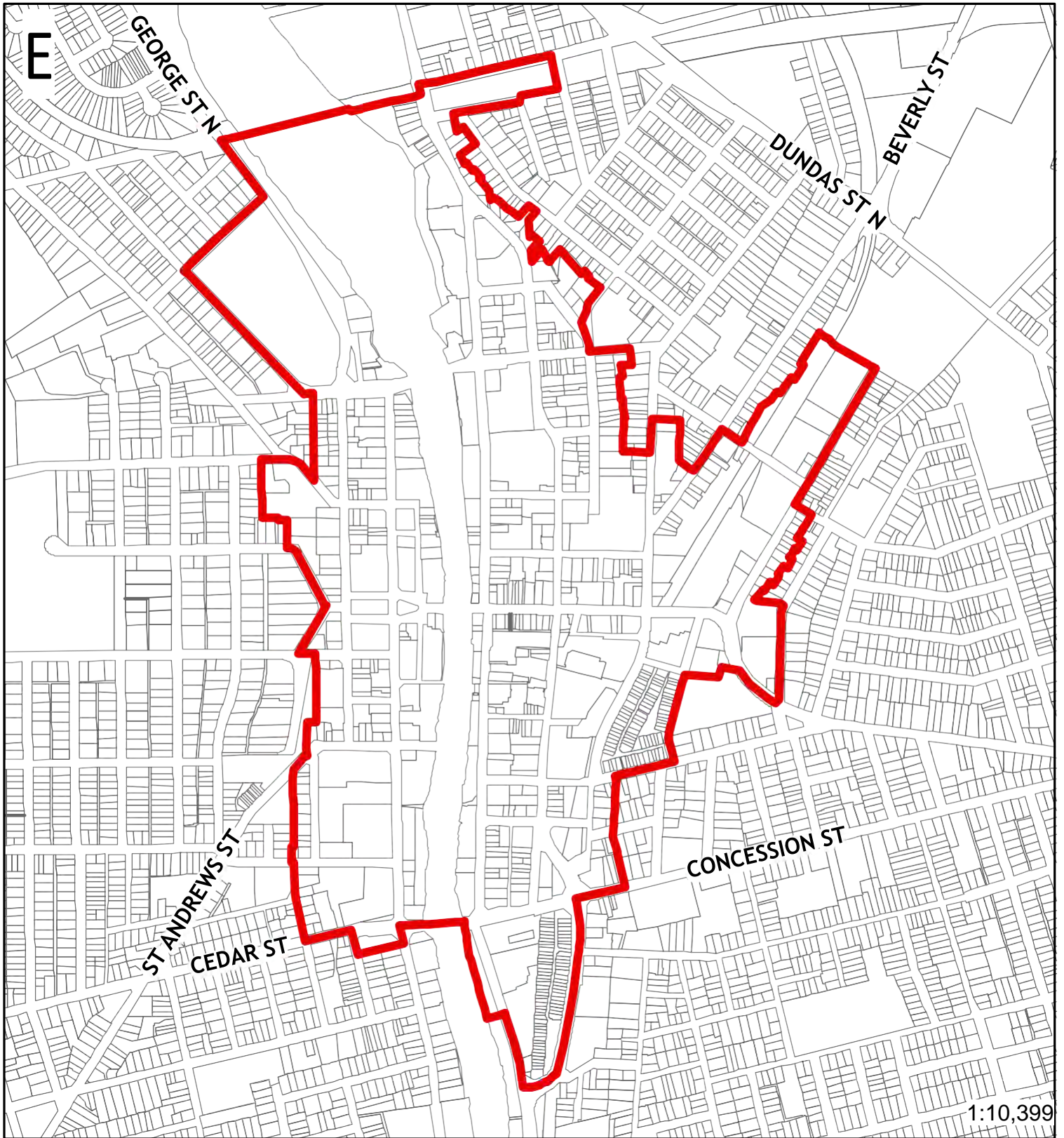
1. Development Applications, including but not limited to: Severance; Minor Variance; Official Plan Amendment; Zoning By-law Amendment; Plans of Subdivision.
2. Plans of Condominium; Condominium Conversion and Part Lot Control.

### **ADDITIONAL FEES WAIVED**

In addition to the development application fees above, Pre-consultations, Site Plan Approval Applications, Sign Permits, Sign Variance applications and Building Permit fees will also be waived.

### **INTERPRETATION OF POLICY**

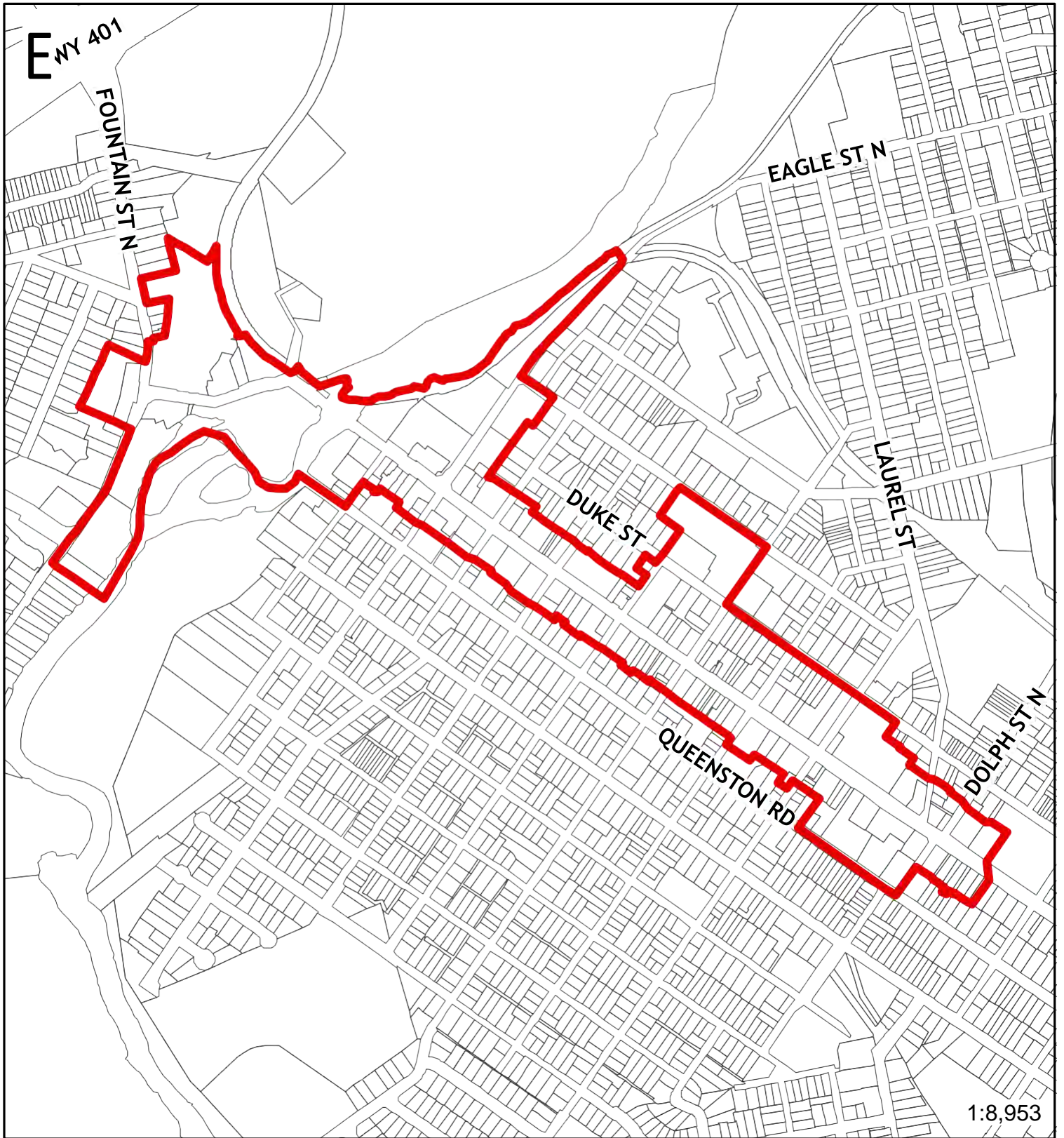
If there is a question or confusion of whether or not a fee should be waived, the Director of Economic Development (or designate) in concert with the Chief Financial Officer (or designate) may also waive any fee associated with this policy.



**This is Schedule A attached to and forming part of  
By-law**

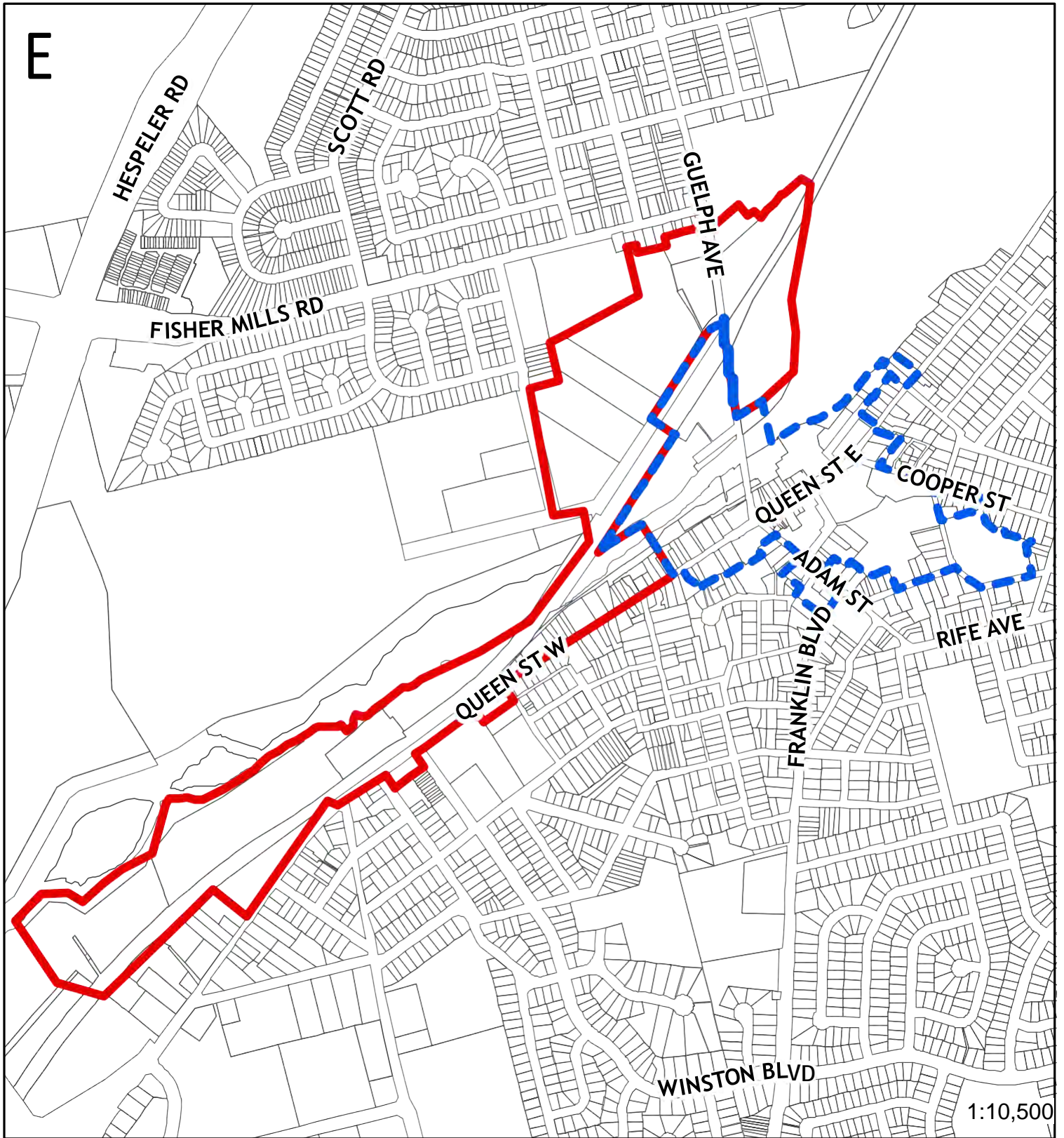
 CIP Area





**This is Schedule B attached to and forming part of  
By-law**

 CIP Area



**This is Schedule C attached to and forming part of  
By-law**

-  Core Area
-  CIP Area