



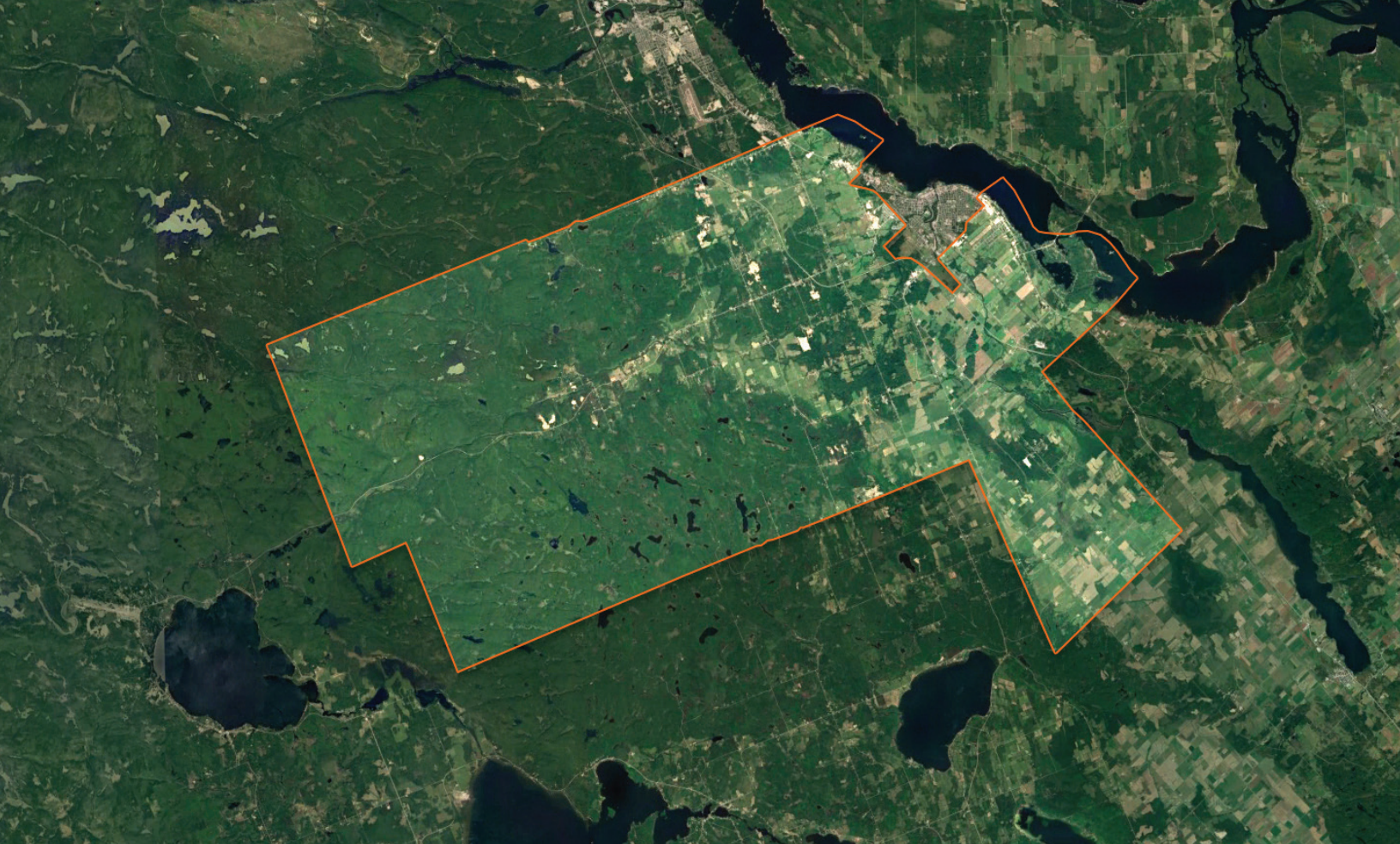
Date: March 13, 2019
JLR No.: 28323
Revision: 03

Further amended by the Township Revision : 04 July 21, 2020

Community Improvement Plan

Township of Laurentian Valley

As amended July 2020



↑ Township of Laurentian Valley



The Township would like to acknowledge the Province of Ontario for providing funding assistance through the RED program for the undertaking of the CIP process.

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Section 1

Introduction



The Township of Laurentian Valley surrounds the City of Pembroke to the south and is intersected by the TransCanada Highway 17 and Highway 41. This community is filled with natural heritage features and a balance of small urban and rural areas. As of 2016, the Township has a population of 9,387 and is comprised of the Townships of Pembroke, Stafford, Alice and Fraser which amalgamated January 1st, 2000. The Township of Laurentian Valley is one of seventeen lower-tier municipalities in the County of Renfrew. Throughout the Township, some of the largest land designations include: rural, agricultural, and environmental protection.

Community Improvement Plans (CIPs) are used to benefit communities in the Province of Ontario by enabling municipalities to provide grants and loans to encourage investment in target communities. The revitalization of communities through the implementation of CIPs can be used to promote and attract tourism, business investment, and economic development. Community Improvement Plans may also be used to encourage environmental remediation and redevelopment as well as effectively utilize existing community infrastructure.

Presently, municipalities in Ontario are using community improvement planning to address a range of challenges including the management of growth, the intensification of communities, employment opportunities, and accessibility enhancements. The CIP can implement a package of programs to promote improvements to environmental protection, building aesthetics, business diversification, as well as add value to existing agricultural uses.

The Township Council approved an Official Plan Amendment permitting a Community Improvement Plan that applies to the entire Township of Laurentian Valley on January 8th, 2019. The CIP must be adopted in accordance with the public consultation requirements of the *Planning Act*.

Section 2

Legislative Authority



The Community Improvement Plan has been developed in accordance with Section 28 of the *Planning Act* as well as other relevant policies and documents including the Provincial Policy Statement, County of Renfrew Official Plan and the *Municipal Act*.

Section 3

Legislative Authority



In order to understand the potential strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to assist with projects such as façade improvements, tax increment grant, and value-added agriculture in the Township, and the policies and programs that could be used to ensure a successful revitalization, a workshop meeting was held with Township staff and members of the public on January 17th, 2019.

Public participation in the CIP process was also available through email correspondence with the Project Team.

Section 4

Goals and Objectives

The Township of Laurentian Valley has identified the development of a CIP as an opportunity for economic growth and sustainable development throughout the Township. The CIP will serve as a long-term framework that will direct and guide community improvements through financial incentives and municipally driven projects.

The Community Improvement Plan for the Township of Laurentian Valley will set out to:

1. Stimulate development and community revitalization;
2. Prioritize areas for future development;
3. Align with the Township's Strategic Plan; and
4. Align with the Township's Official Plan.

Section 5

Community Improvement Plan Incentives and Tools

The following incentives and tools could be used to promote improvements in the Community Improvement Project Area. The purpose, type, duration, eligibility criteria, and application requirements for each of the financial incentive programs are described in detail below.

General Program Requirements

The general and program specific requirements contained in this CIP are not necessarily exhaustive and the Township reserves the right to include other requirements and conditions as necessary on a property specific basis. All of the financial incentive programs contained in this CIP are subject to the following general requirements, as well as the individual requirements specified under each program:

- a. The Township reserves the right to audit the cost of project feasibility studies, environmental studies, environmental remediation works, and/or rehabilitation works that have been approved under any of the financial incentive programs, at the expense of the applicant;
- b. The Township 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;
- c. If the applicant is in default of any of the general or program specific requirements, or any other requirements of the Township, the Township may delay, reduce or cancel the approved grant and/or tax assistance;
- d. The Township 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;
- e. 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, guidelines, including applicable Official Plan and Zoning requirements and approvals;
- f. 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 and/or other municipal requirements. Outstanding work orders, and/or orders or requests to comply and/or charges from the Township (including tax arrears) must be satisfactorily addressed prior to grant and/or tax assistance payment;
- g. Outstanding charges from the Township (including tax arrears), work orders, and/or orders or requests to comply must be satisfactorily addressed prior to application processing and grant and/or tax assistance payment;
- h. Township staff, officials, and/or agents of the Township may inspect any property that is subject of an application for any of the financial incentive programs offered by the Township;
- i. The total of all grants (excluding tax assistance) provided in respect of the particular lands and buildings of an applicant under the programs contained in this CIP shall not exceed 50% of the cost of

- rehabilitating said lands and buildings;
- j. In all cases, if the applicant is not the owner of the property, the applicant must provide written consent from the owner of the property to make the application and undertake the works;
- k. Proposed building and/or site improvements must comply with CIP design guidelines;
- l. In all cases, applicants shall enter into a maintenance agreement with the Township and shall undertake to keep the property and specifically those parts of the property subject to the CIP improvement project in good condition; and
- m. Projects must be completed within one year of approval, but recipients may apply for a grant extension.

Council retains the right, in its sole and absolute discretion, to extend, revise, or alter this CIP beyond the five-year horizon, at any time during the five-year operational period of the Plan, subject to the objectives of Council and the satisfactory performance of the Plan in the opinion of Council.

The following programs are available to the Township during the initial five-year period of the CIP (2019-2023). However, Council will review its municipal budget on a yearly basis and decide on which programs are in effect on a yearly basis.

The following table presents a summary of the recommended CIP programs:

Program	Grant Amount
Improvements to Meet COVID-19 Public Health & Safety Requirements	Up to a maximum of 50% eligible costs up to a maximum grant of \$5000
Agriculture Value-Added Grant	Up to a maximum of 50% of eligible costs up to a maximum grant of \$7,000
Signage Improvement Grant	Up to a maximum of 50% of eligible costs up to a maximum grant of \$4,000
Façade Improvement Grant	Up to a maximum go 50% of eligible costs up to a maximum grant of \$7,000
Accessibility Improvement Grant	Up to a maximum of 50% of eligible costs up to a maximum grant of \$7,000
Landscaping and Parking Improvement Grant	Up to a maximum of 50% of eligible costs up to a maximum grant of \$5,000
Commercial Roofed Accommodation Grant	Up to a maximum go 50% of eligible costs up to a maximum grant of \$10,000
Brownfield Rehabilitation Grant	Up to a maximum of 50% of eligible costs up to a maximum grant of \$10,000
Municipal Application/Permit Fees Rebate	Building Permit Fees: up to 50% reduction in building permit fees; up to a maximum of \$2,500 Signage Permit Fees, Demolition Permit Fees: up to 100% reduction in permit fees; up to a maximum of \$500 for each type of permit
Tax Increment Grant	For a single grant applicant the following rebates will apply: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% rebate in year 1 • 80% rebate in year 2 • 60% rebate in year 3 • 40% rebate in year 2 • 20% rebate in year 5
Total amount per property	\$10,000 per property (excluding building permit and planning fee rebates)

5.1 Agriculture Value-Added Grant Program

Purpose	To promote development or improvement of agricultural, agricultural-related and on-farm diversified uses within the Township.
Grant Amount & Disbursement	Matching grant of up to a maximum of 50% of eligible costs up to a maximum grant of \$7,000, whichever is less, per property. The Grant will be disbursed as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 100% on Final Completion
Eligible Costs	The construction or improvements to uses permitted by the Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario's Prime Agricultural Areas, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Produce stands;• Cheese factory;• Bakery;• Signage;• Agri-tourism and recreation uses (e.g., hay rides, corn maze, petting zoo, equine events, seasonal events); or• Any other use as approved by the Township.
Additional Requirements	Minimum improvement cost: \$1,500.00 Applicants will submit design drawings, architectural or engineering plans, and a work plan indicating proposed improvements, and a cost estimate for the works. The grant will be paid based on the actual cost of the work, up to the amount approved in the application. All completed drawings/plans must comply with the description of the work plan as provided in the grant application form.



5.2 Signage Improvement Grant Program

Purpose	To promote the undertaking of signage improvements.
Grant Amount & Disbursement	Matching grant of up to 50% of eligible costs up to a maximum grant of \$4,000, whichever is less, per property;
Eligible Costs	The grant will be disbursed as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 100% on Final Completion• Improvements to or placement of new building or free-shipping signage including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Graphic design of signage;• Sign materials and construction;• Sign lighting; and• Any other signage-related work as approved by the Township.
Additional Requirements	Minimum improvement cost: \$1,500.00 May apply to multiple signs, up to the maximum allotted per property. Applicants will submit design drawings indicating proposed signage improvements, and a cost estimate for the works. The grant will be paid based on the actual cost of the work, up to the amount approved in the application.



5.3 Façade Improvement Grant Program

Purpose	To stimulate private investment in the existing commercial areas of the Community Improvement Project Area and to promote the undertaking of building façade improvements.
Grant Amount & Disbursement	Matching grant of up to a maximum of 50% of eligible costs up to a maximum grant of \$7,000, whichever is less, per property; This grant will be disbursed as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 100% on Final Completion
Eligible Costs	Improvements to the Front or Corner Side Façades designed specifically to enhance the look and appearance of these elevations of the property including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Restoration of the brickwork or cladding, including exterior painting;• Replacement or repair of cornices, eaves, parapets, windows, doors, and other significant architectural details;• Repair, replacement, or addition of awnings, marquees, and canopies;• Repair, replacement, or addition of exterior lighting;• Street furniture related to façade;• Modifications to the entranceway; and• Any other work as approved by the Township.
Additional Requirements	Minimum improvement cost: \$2,000.00 Applicants will submit design drawings, architectural/engineering plans, and a work plan indicating proposed improvements, and a cost estimate for the works. The grant will be paid based on the actual cost of the work, up to the amount approved in the application. All completed drawings/plans must comply with the description of the work plan as provided in the grant application form.



5.4 Accessibility Improvement Grant Program

Purpose	To promote the undertaking of building accessibility improvements in the Community Improvement Project Area
Grant Amount & Disbursement	Matching grant of up to a maximum of 50% of eligible costs up to a maximum grant of \$7,000, whichever is less, per property; The Grant will be disbursed as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 100% on Final Completion
Eligible Costs	Provision of accessibility improvements, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Installation of wheelchair ramps;• Installation of automatic doors;• Installation of other accessibility improvements external to the building; and• Any other work as approved by the Township.
Additional Requirements	Minimum improvement costs: \$2,000 Applicants will submit design drawings, architectural/engineering plans, a work plan indicating proposed improvements, and a cost estimate for the works. The grant will be paid based on the actual cost of the work, up to the amount approved in the application. All completed drawings/plans must comply with the description of the work plan as provided in the grant application form.



5.5 Landscaping and Parking Improvement Grant Program

Purpose	To promote a greener and more aesthetically pleasing streetscape by providing for landscaping and parking area improvements.
Grant Amount & Disbursement	Matching grant of up to 50% of eligible costs up to a maximum grant of \$5,000, whichever is less, per property.
Eligible Costs	Site improvement works/materials, including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Resurfacing and line painting;• Street furniture for the parking area or landscaped areas;• Labour;• Professional fees;• Purchase and/or installation of landscaping materials (excluding annual planting materials); and• Any other work as approved by the Township.
Additional Requirements	<p>Minimum improvement cost: \$1,000.00</p> <p>Applicants will submit design drawings, landscaping/site plans, a work plan indicating proposed improvements, such a cost estimate for the works.</p> <p>The grant will be paid based on the actual cost of the work, up to the amount approved in the application.</p> <p>All completed drawings/plans must comply with the description of the work plan as provided in the grant application form.</p> <p>The Township reserves the right to request additional plans or studies, such as lot grading plans, drainage plans, and stormwater management plans.</p>



5.6 Commercial Roofed Accommodation Grant Program

Purpose	To promote and encourage the conversion of existing homes to Bed & Breakfasts, Motels, Hotels, and Inns.
Grant Amount & Disbursement	<p>Matching grant of up to a maximum of 50% of eligible costs up to a maximum grant of \$10,000, whichever is less, per property.</p> <p>The Grant will be disbursed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 100% on Final Completion
Eligible Costs	<p>The construction or construction costs associated to the conversion of existing buildings, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Building materials• Labour;• Professional fees; and• Any other work as approved by the Township.
Additional Requirements	<p>Applicants will submit design drawings, architectural or engineering plans, and a work plan indicating proposed improvements, and a cost estimate for the works.</p> <p>The grant will be paid based on the actual cost of the work, up to the amount approved in the application.</p> <p>All completed drawings/plans must comply with the description of the work plan as provided in the grant application form.</p>

5.7 Brownfield Rehabilitation Grant Program

Purpose	To encourage the remediation, rehabilitation and adaptive re-use of brownfield sites by providing grants to help pay for additional rehabilitation costs normally associated with brownfield sites.
Grant Amount & Disbursement	<p>Matching grant up to a maximum of 50% of eligible costs up to a maximum grant of \$10,000, whichever is less, per property.</p> <p>The Grant will be disbursed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 100% on Final Completion
Eligible Costs	<p>Eligible costs relate to reducing the concentration of contaminants on, in, or under the subject property to permit a record of site condition to be filed in the Environmental Site Registry under Section 168.4 of the <i>Environmental Protection Act</i>. Eligible costs include costs for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Phase III Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs) and Risk Assessment Plans (except where such a cost has been included as part of an issued Environmental Study Grant);• Environmental remediation costs, including any action taken to reduce the concentration of contaminants on, in or under the property to permit a Record of Site Condition to be filed in the Environmental Site Registry under Section 168.4 of the Environmental Protection Act;• Costs related to complying with any certificate of property use issued under Section 168.6 of the Environmental Protection Act;• The costs of preparing a Record of Site Condition;• Placing clean fill and related grading;• Installing environmental and/or engineering controls or works, as specified in the Phase III ESA and/or Risk Assessment Plan;• Monitoring, maintaining and operating environmental and engineering controls/works, as specified in the Phase III ESSA and/or Risk Assessment Plan; and• Environmental insurance premiums.
Additional Requirements	<p>For a property to be considered for the Brownfield Rehabilitation Grant Program, a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment must have been conducted for the site.</p> <p>Applicants will submit design drawings, landscaping/site plans, a work plan indicating proposed improvements, and a cost estimate for the works.</p> <p>The grant will be paid based on the actual cost of the work, up to the amount approved in the application.</p> <p>All completed drawings/plans must comply with the description of the work plan as provided in the grant application form.</p> <p>The Township reserves the right to request additional plans or studies, such as lot grading plans, drainage plans, and stormwater management plans.</p>

5.8 Municipal Application/Permit Fees Rebate Grant Program

Purpose	To stimulate private investment in properties in the Community Improvement Project Area by reducing applicable municipal fees related to a CIP improvement project which improves the façade, signage, accessibility, parking areas, or landscaping, or provides residential units.
Grant Amount & Disbursement	<p>Building Permit Fees: up to 50% reduction in building permit fees; up to a maximum of \$2,500.</p> <p>Signage Permit Fees: up to 100% reduction in sign permit fees; up to a maximum of \$500.</p> <p>Demolition Permit Fees: up to 100% reduction in demolition permit fees; up to a maximum of \$500.</p> <p>The Grant will be disbursed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 100% upon completion of the work
Eligible Costs	<p>Grant applied to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Building permit fees for improvements related to a CIP improvement;• Signage permit fees;• Demolition permit fees to demolitions related to CIP improvements; and• Landfill fees.
Additional Requirements	None.

5.9 Tax Increment Grant Program

Purpose To stimulate private investment in the CIP Project Area and to promote the undertaking of building improvements and development on vacant land.

Grant Amount & Disbursement The total amount of the grant provided will not exceed the value of the work that resulted in the reassessment.

This grant excludes the education and County portions of the tax bill. The Township is only able to rebate the municipal portion of the tax bill.

The grant is provided over 5 years, where the tax increase is paid back to the applicant as follows:

- 100% rebate in year 1
- 80% rebate in year 2
- 60% rebate in year 3
- 40% rebate in year 4
- 20% rebate in year 5

The owner is paying based on the full assessed amount in year 6.

The Grant will be disbursed as follows:

- 100% after payment of taxes, once the property has been reassessed by MPAC, following completion of the CIP project

The Township will collect the full amount of property taxes owed by each of the years of the program's applicability and will issue the grant to the approved applicant after final tax bills for each year have been collected. If the tax bill is not paid in full, the Township will cancel all future grants and collect past grants made as part of this program.

The grant will not be provided based on a graduated reassessment by MPAC if done prior to completion of the project.

Eligible Costs Any improvements to properties/buildings in the CIP project areas which meet the CIP goals, objective, and design guidelines.

Additional Requirements Minimum increase in assessment: \$25,000, directly related to a building permit for CIP improvements.

The Tax increment Grant may be received by a property owner and/or assignee in combination with any other incentive program offered by the CIP.

5.9 Tax Increment Grant Program *(Continued)*

Additional Requirements *(Continued)*

Property owners and/or assignees will be required to submit a complete application to the Township describing, in detail, the improvements that are planned. The application must be submitted to the Township and approved prior to the improvements being made in order to be eligible for this program. The Township will review the application to ensure that the improvements are eligible. For the purpose of this program, eligible improvements are deemed to be improvements that will lead to an increase in the property's assessed value by improving the physical condition of the building and/or property in a manner that is consistent with the CIP's intent.

Projects are required to be in compliance with the Township's other By-laws and policies, including zoning and building regulations.

The subject property shall not be in a position of tax arrears or any other financial obligation towards the Township.

This program does not exempt property owners from an increase in municipal taxes due to a general tax rate increase or a change in assessment for any other reason after property has been improved, except by reason of an assessment appeal.

The grant will be forfeited and repaid to the Township if the owner makes the decision to demolish or alter the property in a manner that does not comply with the Community Improvement Plan before the grant period elapses.

If the property is sold prior to completion of the project and receipt of the grant, subsequent owners may re-apply to the Township to be eligible to receive the grant.

If the property is sold after completion of the project, and while the tax increment grant is being received, the grant expires upon transfer of ownership. Subsequent owners are not eligible to continue receiving the grant for the tax increase associated with the project which has already been completed.

The grant amount will be established after the final inspection of the improvements in accordance with the Ontario Building Code, and the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) has established a new assessment value based on the building permit for the CIP project.

5.10 Improvements to meet COVID-19 Public Health and Safety Requirements Grant Program

Purpose	To stimulate local economic recovery by promoting the undertaking of building improvements to meet COVID-19 public health and safety requirements in the Community Improvement Project Area
Grant Amount & Disbursement	<p>Matching grant of up to a maximum of 50% of eligible: costs up to a maximum grant of \$5,000, whichever is less, per existing business.</p> <p>The Grant will be disbursed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% on Final Completion or at the discretion of Council, upon entering into a supplementary agreement, funds will be advanced upon presentation of invoice
Eligible Costs	<p>The construction costs and material costs associated with the improvements/renovations of existing buildings, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building materials; • Installation of plexiglass, glass or other dividers at workstations in entry locations or public service areas; • Labour; • Professional fees; • Implement proper permanent sanitization stations for employees and/or customers • Implement and erect proper shields and barriers for customer interaction • Installation of new signage or improvements to existing signage including floors markers or directional flow, curbside pickup/delivery • Implementation of optional payment methods (financial programs or cashless transactions) • any other renovations/construction required to meet public health and safety requirements/recommendations of the Province, the Renfrew County & District Health Unit, insurance, or other regulatory body; • Any other work as approved by the Township.
Additional Requirements	<p>Depending on the nature of the improvements, Applicants will submit design drawings, architectural or engineering plans, and a work plan indicating proposed improvements, and a cost estimate for the works. All completed drawings/plans must comply with the description of the work plan as provided in the grant application form.</p> <p>The grant will be paid based on the actual cost of the work, up to the amount approved in the application. Where works were completed on or after March 17, 2020 but prior to the amendment authorizing this section to come into effect, proof of payment, including invoices, cancelled cheques or proof of deposit or such other documentation satisfactory to the Township must be provided, along with any quotations for works, and the guidelines/directive being adhered to.</p> <p>Applicants must demonstrate that they have attempted to secure funds from other funding sources and been unsuccessful or ineligible.</p>

Section 6

Administration and Financial Implications

The Community Improvement Plan will be administered by the Township of Laurentian Valley as part of the implementation of the Community Improvement Policies of the Township's Official Plan.

For a CIP to be successful, it requires support from the business community and support from the Township in the form of funding and implementation. It is recommended that the Township allocate \$45,950 toward grant incentive programs during the initial year of the CIP. The funds allocated towards the CIP are subject to Council discretion and are subject to be revised and altered on a year-to-year basis or as required. In addition, the Township will be expected to provide assistance via foregone revenues (municipal tax increases). As the private and public sectors increase their investment in the community, with the assistance of the CIP, the overall benefits will be significant. The Township would like to acknowledge the Province of Ontario for providing funding assistance through the RED program for the undertaking of the CIP process.

It is not possible to accurately predict the number and scale of applications in advance of implementing the Plan. The recommended funds are minimums that should be approved in order to meet the goals of the Plan over the five-year term. These funding levels can be evaluated and adjusted in future years of the Plan.

Funding allocations contained in this Plan are subject to review and approval by Council. Financial incentives proposed in this CIP are based on a five year cycle, but are also subject to the Township's fiscal situation and will be determined on a yearly basis during Council's annual budget allocation.

Section 7

Monitoring and Amendments

Township staff will conduct periodic reviews of the CIP programs and activities relating to Community Improvement to determine their effectiveness and provide an update to Council. Council may amend this Plan as is necessary to ensure that the goals and objectives outlined in this Plan are achieved. Any increase in program financing permitted under Section 28 of the *Planning Act* will require an amendment to this Plan. An extension to any program for up to an additional five years and any decrease in program financing due to Municipal budgetary constraints in any given year will not require amendments to this Plan.

Following the first year of the program, the Township should evaluate the effectiveness of the organizational and funding structure of the CIP process, the evaluation process, and the amount of staff resources to administer, monitor, and market the Plan.

The following measures are recommended for monitoring the CIP programs:

- 1. Annual Report** - An annual Township CIP report will be produced and presented to Council.
- 2. Post-Project Evaluation Report** - Following the completion of the community improvement project(s), municipal staff should prepare a project close-out checklist with detailed descriptions of the work completed with any issues that may have arisen during the application process. This information can be used in the preparation of the annual report to Township Council on Community Improvement projects.
- 3. Application Database** - A database of past CIP applications can be used to assess the effectiveness of various financial incentive programs with amendments to the Township CIP made where necessary.



This report has been prepared for the exclusive use of Township of Laurentian Valley. Its discussions and conclusions are summary in nature and cannot be properly used, interpreted or extended to other purposes without a detailed understanding and discussions with the client as to its mandated purpose, scope and limitations. This report was prepared for the sole benefit and use of Township of Laurentian Valley and may not be used or relied on by any other party without the express written consent of J.L. Richards & Associates Limited.

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