

Request for Decision

Town Centre Community Improvement Plan

Presented To:	Policy Committee
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Recommendation

That Council direct staff proceed with a public consultation process regarding a Town Centre Community Improvement Plan and its suitability in the subject areas. It is also recommended that staff be directed to use the attached draft Town Centre Community Improvement Plan as part of the public consultation process. And further that staff be directed to report back to Council with the results of the public consultation and recommendations for moving forward.

Finance Implications

After the public consultations have been held, the financial implications and potential funding sources will be identified based on the staff recommendations.

Background

In the spring of 2010, Planning staff presented a report to the City of Greater Sudbury Policy Committee regarding options for expanding the financial incentive programs available through the Downtown Sudbury Community Improvement Plan (CIP) to the former municipal Town Centre areas identified in the Official Plan, the Development Charge By-law and also the Flour Mill Business Improvement Area.

The Committee directed that staff develop criteria for historical downtown cores and consider the following centres mentioned by the Committee members: Kathleen Street, Copper Cliff, Coniston, West End, Val Therese and former Village of Hanmer.

The purpose of this report is to present criteria for evaluating the different areas in terms of their ability to achieve the goals of a Town Centre Community Improvement Plan. The report also analyses each of the subject areas and suggests the best option for achieving the type of improvements desired. Finally the

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report introduces a draft Town Centre Community Improvement Plan to be used in upcoming public consultations in the former municipalities and in the City's historic "Main Street" commercial areas.

2011

Town Centre CIP Report



Growth and Development
Department
City of Greater Sudbury
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Background

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The Committee directed that staff develop criteria for historical downtown cores and consider the following centres mentioned by the Committee members: Kathleen Street, Copper Cliff, Coniston, West End, Val Therese and former Village of Hanmer.

The purpose of this report is to present criteria for evaluating the different areas in terms of their ability to achieve the goals of a Town Centre Community Improvement Plan. The report also analyses each of the subject areas and suggests the best option for achieving the type of improvements desired. Finally the report introduces a draft Town Centre Community Improvement Plan to be used in upcoming public consultations in the former municipalities and in the City's historic "Main Street" commercial areas.

What is a Town Centre?

A town center is typically an enduring, walkable, and sometimes integrated open-air, multiuse area that is organized around a clearly identifiable and energized public realm where citizens can gather and strengthen their community bonds. These areas are anchored by retail, dining, and leisure uses, as well as by vertical or horizontal residential uses. At least one other type of development is included in a town center, such as office, hospitality, civic, and cultural uses. Over time, a town center should evolve into the densest, most compact, and most diverse part of a community, with strong connections to its surroundings.



Purpose of the Downtown Sudbury Community Improvement Plan

When evaluating the potential sites for an expanded Town Centre CIP program staff focused on the essential elements of a Town Centre and also referred back to the rationale for implementing the original 1987 Downtown CIP program which was to “Improve the function, condition, image and appearance of streets and streetscape within Metro Centre”. While this program originally only included physical improvements on City property, the intent was to make the Downtown a more attractive and pedestrian friendly environment to attract people and business.

When the Downtown CIP was expanded to include a tax increment financing component in 2003, the rationale was to assist downtown businesses in rehabilitating their buildings to accommodate new tenants as high vacancy rates in the downtown were a concern to the City.

In 2007, the downtown CIP was amended for a second time to include a number of financial incentives including Planning fee rebates, Feasibility Study Grants, Building Improvement Loans and Façade Improvement Grants. The rationale for this third amendment was to augment the existing incentives, recognizing that the downtown area was comprised of older building stock and a mix of uses, to encourage the adaptive reuse of older building stock and the creation of additional dwelling units in mixed use buildings.

Generally it is acknowledged that downtown is important, and the City continues to develop tools to assist downtown businesses to remain competitive and viable in support of maintaining a strong downtown. What the CIP programs are not intended to do is use public money to pay for deferred maintenance on private buildings.

Based on the rationale for implementing the Downtown CIP, the purpose of a proposed Town Centre CIP would be to:

- Enhance pedestrian friendly commercial areas to attract people and new business;
- Address Commercial and Residential vacancy issues by improving the building stock; and
- Rehabilitate older, mixed used (and preferably multi storey) building stock, to promote the creation of additional residential units.

It is these criteria that were used to assess the various subject areas in terms of their ability to serve as a Town Centre and in turn to benefit from a Community Improvement Plan targeted at rehabilitating existing Town Centres in the City of Greater Sudbury.

Proposed Town Centre Community Improvement Plan

Similar to the issues facing downtown Sudbury, the Town Centre areas in Greater Sudbury are facing new challenges, as the retail sector proceeds through restructuring. Membership warehouse clubs, home-improvement centres and big box stores that locate in the outskirts of a municipality draw upon consumers from what was the traditional “Main Street” retail areas located in the Town Centres of surrounding communities. These Town Centres and traditional “Main Street” areas serve an important role as they are located in established residential areas, have existing mixed use buildings, are compact and promote pedestrian activity.

The focus of a proposed Town Centres CIP would be the historical commercial and retail areas (or “Main Streets”) in the amalgamated City of Greater Sudbury. These areas, like the downtown of the former City of Sudbury, have traditionally served as retail and commercial centres for their respective areas but are now in danger of going into decline due to the shift in the retail market place over the past number of years. This shift has seen the development of New Format retail stores in the suburban areas away from the Town Centres and “Main Street” areas of the City of Greater Sudbury.

During this transition the Town Centres and “Main Street” areas have, in many cases, experienced higher than desired vacancy rates in all sectors, including commercial, retail and residential. These vacancies represent a challenge to the revitalization of these areas. The ability of businesses and property owners to rehabilitate their buildings to respond to tenant needs or to changes in the market place requires innovative solutions.



The Planning Act allows municipalities the opportunity to use tax increment financing, grants and loans as methods to finance improvements to buildings or land which assist with revitalization initiatives. These programs are in place in the Downtown Sudbury CIP and are also proposed to be used in a Town Centre CIP.

This report evaluates each of the areas proposed in the previous staff report, along with those included by the Policy Committee, based on their ability to meet the three criteria outlined in the previous section. The purpose of this evaluation is to determine whether areas should be included in the proposed Town Centre Community Improvement Plan, or if they would be better served by other programs.

Draft Town Centre Community Improvement Plan

Using the Downtown Sudbury Community Improvement Plan as a template, staff have developed a draft Town Centre Community Improvement plan that incorporates essentially identical programs, application processes and eligibility requirements.

It is recommended that this draft Town Centre CIP be used as a starting point in public consultations surrounding Town Centre improvement programs.

Funding for a Town Centre Community Improvement Plan

As with any other Community Improvement Plan, the document is necessary to fulfill the Planning Act requirements of determining up front how and where public money will be spent in a Community Improvement Area. The amount of public funding flowing through a CIP is determined by Council, usually on an annual basis.

One of the largest components of any Community Improvement Plan is the amount of financial support and funding it receives from Council. In the case of the proposed Town Centre CIP, funding has yet to be determined. One option would be to allocate some or all of the remaining funds from the Downtown Sudbury Community Improvement Plan to the proposed Town Centre CIP. If the project is successful, Council could decide to keep funding the Town Centre CIP on an annual basis.

Other Alternatives

In reviewing the Town Centres and other “Main Street” commercial areas in the City of Greater Sudbury it became evident that some of the areas did not meet the traditional definition of a town centre. In a number of cases, the town centre or “Main Street” area is centred on a major road, the speed and size of which do not lend it to pedestrian activities. In other cases the defined Town Centre area no longer reflects the existing condition on the ground, as the area has transitioned to a residential one. Additionally, some Town Centre areas are composed of only a few commercial properties that may benefit more from a site specific CIP as opposed to one for an entire area. Finally, some of the areas reviewed already have Community Improvement Plans in place and may be better served by modifications to the existing CIP instead of implementing a new one.

As a result, the question becomes; if some areas are not suitable for a Town Centre CIP, what tools does the municipality have to assist in their rehabilitation?

Brownfields CIP

The Planning Department is currently in the process of developing a Community Improvement Plan for Brownfield sites.

Brownfields are those places where, in the past, a commercial or industrial use existed, but now sit idle. We know them as old manufacturing sites, warehouses, gas stations, dry cleaners and auto repair and

service sites, to name a few. Sometimes a vacant building is left behind on these sites, looking for a new lease on life. In other cases the building is removed, the site cordoned off and allowed to go fallow. Sometimes, the past use impairs the soil and groundwater quality, restricting future potential and deterring investment. Other times, soil and groundwater quality is not impaired, but thought to be, which can have the same result. Sometimes, owners are not paying their property taxes, leaving the City with growing liabilities.

The purpose of the Brownfields CIP will be to use financial incentives to encourage development on individual sites. This type of approach may better lend itself to some of the areas reviewed in this report as the problems are restricted to individual sites as opposed to the area as a whole.

Existing Community Improvement Plans

In some of the areas reviewed, there are existing CIPs already in place (i.e. West End CIP, Donovan CIP, Flour Mill CIP). Much in depth public consultation and planning work has already gone into these CIPs and it would not be efficient to abandon them in favour of a new CIP. In these situations it may be more prudent to amend some of these existing CIPs to include financial incentives instead of putting them under the proposed Town Centre CIP.

Other Options

In other cases, the areas reviewed do not meet the definition of a Town Centre and do not have an existing CIP in place. In these areas, improvements may best come from improvements in landscaping on Municipal property and in the road allowances, or from some other type of program in the future.

Town Centre Review Findings

The following section provides a breakdown of each area reviewed for possible inclusion in a proposed Town Centre CIP and provides recommendations on the best way to address each area.

Levack

The Town Centre Area Official Plan designation for Levack comprises an area of Levack Drive from 3rd Avenue South to approximately mid block between 2nd Avenue South and 1st Avenue South. The north side of Levack Drive is a public space containing a mix of parking areas, landscaping, sitting areas and a cenotaph serving a central place function. The area is well maintained and inviting to pedestrians. The south side of Levack Drive is occupied by a variety of commercial uses, including a bank,



post office, hardware store, convenience store and restaurants. There are some vacancies, including a former grocery store and mixed use buildings along 2nd Avenue South with ground floor commercial space and residential possibilities above. Currently, there is not a CIP in place in Levack.

In evaluating the Levack Town Centre against the above three criteria, it can be determined that a pedestrian friendly compact commercial core exists, there are a number of vacant commercial buildings and there are opportunities to rehabilitate older mixed use commercial buildings. As a result, Levack would be an excellent candidate for the proposed Town Centre CIP.

Onaping

The Town Centre Official Plan designation for Onaping consists of an area on the north side of Regional



Road #8 between Fraser Avenue and St. James Street, extending west to include a gas station and Royal Canadian Legion. The bulk of the Town Centre designation is occupied by an existing commercial strip mall that is half vacant and includes a LCBO, convenience store and a retail store. The area is auto oriented as there are no existing pedestrian amenities in this area, and few

opportunities for residential intensification exist.

Based on the above the Onaping Town Centre area does not meet the requirements of a Town Centre in the sense of the proposed CIP. Since the Onaping Town Centre is primarily focused around one semi-vacant and underutilized property, it may be a prime candidate to benefit from the upcoming Brownfields Community Improvement Plan.

Dowling

The Dowling Town Centre includes areas north and south of Highway 144. The area to the north of Highway 144 consists of a strip mall, anchored by a grocery store and a few single detached homes accessed off of a service road (Main Street). The area to the south consists of public uses including Larchwood Public School, City of Greater Sudbury Public Works and EMS buildings and an arena.



There is one private commercial business, which occupies the former municipal offices of Dowling. The area is not pedestrian friendly due to the presence of Highway 144 and the auto orientated strip mall. There were no perceived vacancy issues nor were there any visible opportunities to rehabilitate mixed use commercial buildings. Essentially the area is a highway with some auto orientated strip retail uses.

Given the fact that a large number of the buildings in the Dowling Town Centre are publicly owned and the fact that Hwy 144 is a major obstacle to pedestrian activities, the area does not fall into the category of a Town Centre as envisioned in this CIP. The area also does not have an existing CIP to work with,

meaning that the area may benefit from some other type of program in the future.



Chelmsford

The Chelmsford Town Centre consists of the east and west sides of Errington Avenue from Morin Street north to Lorne Street. The southern part of the Town Centre is dominated by a newer commercial strip plaza that includes a grocery store, bank, drug store, LCBO and discount retail store. North

of Mona Avenue, the area transforms into an older and more pedestrian orientated retail area that includes various retail stores, personal service shops and restaurants. Opportunities for residential intensification in mixed use buildings were identified along Errington Avenue and Main Street East. A number of vacant commercial units were also identified.

Chelmsford currently does not have a Community Improvement Plan in place. As a result, it is recommended that the portion of the Chelmsford Town Centre north of Mona Avenue be included in a CIP due to its compact pedestrian built form, noticeable vacancies and mixed use building rehabilitation opportunities.

Walden

The Walden Town Center Area consists of a broad area extending north and west of the intersection of Regional Road 55 and Municipal Road 24. The area consists of a number of automobile orientated uses including a grocery store, hardware/lumber stores, hotel, strip malls and a bank. The area is not pedestrian orientated or compact and is best described as suburban commercial. The area did not contain a significant amount of mixed use buildings capable of being rehabilitated with residential intensification.

As a result, it is not recommended that the current Walden Town Centre be included in the proposed CIP program. This area may benefit from some other type of improvement program in the future.

However, the commercial district off of Municipal Road 24 in Lively would benefit from the proposed Town Centre CIP program. This area is pedestrian orientated with landscaping and other amenities and contains mixed use buildings suitable for adaptive reuse, and should be included in a Town Centre CIP program as opposed to the Town Centre area designated in the Official Plan.



Azilda

The Azilda Town Centre area is centred around the intersection of Notre Dame and St. Agnes Streets. The area is characterized by low density commercial uses along the north side of St. Agnes Street. The area is somewhat compact; however the built form (mostly strip malls and one storey commercial buildings) does not lend itself to residential intensification. Additionally, there were few vacancies observed.



Based on these criteria, the Azilda Town Centre would not meet the objectives of the proposed CIP, nor is it covered by an existing CIP. As a result, Azilda may benefit from some other type of program in the future.

Val Caron

The Val Caron Core Area, as defined in the Development Charges By-law, centres on the intersection of Municipal Road 80 and Main Street. The area is predominantly an automobile orientated suburban commercial area. The buildings are mainly newer one story strip malls set back a large distance from the road, with few vacancies observed. The speed of traffic and size of Municipal Road 80 does not lend its self to enhancing pedestrian traffic in the area.



The Val Caron core area can, therefore, best be described as a low density, auto orientated, suburban area.

As a result, the Val Caron commercial area as defined in the Development Charges By-law does not meet the requirements of a Town Centre and should not be included in the proposed CIP. Since there isn't an existing CIP in place, this area may benefit from some other type of program in the future.

Hanmer

The Hanmer Core Area designation as defined in the Development Charges By-law is also located on either side of Municipal Road 80, from St. Joseph Street in the west to Cote in the east. The area is low density with one storey commercial building (mostly automotive related uses) mixed in with single detached homes. The one mixed use building (former Hanmer Tavern) was recently demolished. Again, the size of Municipal Road 80 and the speed of traffic do not lend itself to the creation or enhancement of a pedestrian friendly area. Retail uses are spread out along Municipal Road 80 and are set back a significant distance from the road. Additionally, few



vacancies were observed and the building stock did not lend itself to residential intensification.

Based on the above, Hanmer would not qualify as a Town Centre and shouldn't be included in the proposed CIP. Given that no CIP currently exists, this area may benefit from the upcoming Brownfields CIP or some other type of program.

Capreol

The Capreol Town Centre encompasses an area on both sides of Young Street, north of the railway tracks, an area east of Bloor that includes the railway museum, and an area south of the railway tracks around Crescent and Hanna Avenues. Capreol's Town Centre is compact, centrally located within the town and is comprised of a variety of mixed use buildings. The main area



along Young Street is pedestrian orientated with angle parking on both sides of the road. A number of vacancies were observed, along with opportunities for residential intensification via the upgrading of existing and creation of new dwelling units.

Capreol meets all of the requirements of a Town Centre CIP and is currently not subject to an existing CIP and should, therefore, be included in the proposed CIP.

Garson

The Garson Town Centre area is triangular shaped with Falconbridge Road comprising the east and south boundary, over to Orell Street north of the creek on the west. The northern boundary is Spruce Street. This area is a Town Centre in the sense that the school, arena and community centre are all located in this area. There is evidence of a historical commercial district; however, most of these buildings have been converted



to residential uses some time ago. As such there is no identifiable commercial area in the Town Centre area of Garson. In terms of the commercial activity in Garson, it is dominated by plazas and strip malls on the south side of Falconbridge Road.

For these reasons, it is not recommended that the Garson Town Centre be included in the proposed CIP program. This area of Garson is not covered by an existing CIP and may benefit from some other type of program to improve the area.

Wahnapitae

The Wahnapitae Town Centre area as outlined in the Official Plan essentially applies to two properties, a convenience store on Hill Street near Hwy 17 East and a lumber store further south. There is no evidence of a central commercial district in Wahnapitae. Due to the fragmented commercial nature of Wahnapitae, it is not recommended that it be included in the proposed Town Centre CIP. Wahanapitae, would most likely benefit from some other type of program to improve the area.



Flour Mill BIA

The Flour Mill BIA encompasses areas on the east and west sides of Notre Dame Avenue from Leslie Street to the rail tracks in the north. The east and west boundaries of the BIA are Clinton and Laforest Avenues respectively. The west side of Notre Dame is a compact pedestrian orientated environment with most of the buildings abutting the street line. The built form predominantly includes older two and three storey buildings with residential uses and opportunities on the upper levels. The east side of Notre Dame is less pedestrian friendly with the buildings set back a large distance from the road and an abundance of front yard parking lots. The BIA area also extends along east/west street from Notre Dame approximately 1 block. These side street areas include residential and commercial uses in mixed use buildings. A review of the area revealed a functional commercial area with some vacancies and opportunities for residential intensification.

There is an existing “Flour Mill Community Improvement Plan” in place in the Flour Mill. This plan was adopted in 1991 and does not contain any financial programs. One option would be to update the existing Flour Mill CIP with a financial incentives program, another option would be to include the Flour Mill BIA in the proposed Town Centre Community Improvement Plan. The applicability of



the existing Flour Mill Community Improvement Plan is something that could be further explored during the public consultation sessions.

Additional Areas

In addition to the areas outlined in the staff report, Council also directed staff to evaluate Kathleen Street, Copper Cliff, Coniston, West End, Val Therese and the former Village of Hanmer as possible locations to take part in a proposed Town Centre Community Improvement Plan.

Copper Cliff

The Copper Cliff Mixed Use Commercial Area identified in the Official Plan is located on both sides of Serpentine Street from Godfrey Drive to Jones Lane. The area is compact, pedestrian friendly (with angle parking provided on the streets) and occupied by mixed use buildings. There were no obvious vacancies visible and a



few of the buildings appeared to have undergone recent façade and interior improvements.

This area would meet the criteria established earlier and would be a good candidate for the proposed Town Centre CIP program.

Coniston

Like Garson, Coniston is a town that grew around a former mine site. When the mine ceased to be the focus of the town and access to commercial uses in Sudbury was improved, the former commercial area transitioned to residential. Evidence of the former commercial area of Coniston is still visible in the architecture of some of the buildings; however, they have long since been converted to residential uses. The Town Centre Area identified in the Official Plan is occupied by an arena and a park. The current



commercial area of Coniston is situated at the intersection of Hwy 17 East and Second Avenue and is occupied by a commercial plaza and some strip mall developments. Coniston is similar to Garson in the fact that there is evidence that the former commercial area has transitioned to residential uses and the current commercial uses have consolidated into a newer commercial strip mall near the major

roadway.

Based on the above observations Coniston is not considered to be an appropriate candidate for a Town Centre CIP program and may be better served by some other type of improvement program.

West End

The West End area as defined in the 2000 “West End Community Improvement Plan” encompasses an area centering on Regent and Lorne Streets from Elm Street to Kelly Lake Road. The main commercial areas are located on the north side of Lorne Street and on Regent Street in the Douglas Street area. On Lorne Street, there is a mix of uses, including low



density residential and commercial. The speed of traffic on Lorne Street does not lend itself well to the establishment of a pedestrian friendly environment, there are also few buildings that would lend themselves to residential conversions or intensification.

With respect to the Regent Street corridor it is similar to the Coniston and Garson areas in that there is evidence of a former commercial area, however, the conversion to residential uses is well underway.

Given the fact that there is currently an existing CIP in place in the West End and that work is underway implementing that plan, it is not recommended that the West End be included in the proposed Town Centre CIP. In the future, it may be desirable to amend the West End CIP to include financial incentives.

Kathleen Street

Kathleen Street extends from Frood Road in the West to Notre Dame Street in the East. The street is mainly commercial in nature from Frood Road to the railway tracks at Antwerp Avenue, after which it transforms to primarily a residential street before becoming an institutional area at Notre Dame. The west end of Kathleen Street can best be described as a former neighbourhood commercial area that is currently in decline. In terms of pedestrian accessibility the Kathleen Street commercial area is pedestrian friendly with many of the buildings located right at the streetline. The built form includes some one storey strip mall type developments; however, the majority of the buildings are two storey mixed use buildings with opportunities for residential intensification.



The Kathleen Street area is currently included in the existing “Donovan & Area Community Improvement Plan”, which has been in place since 1995. The Donovan CIP is a very comprehensive plan that includes options for improving the Kathleen Street Commercial Area. One of the options in the plan is the use of grants or loans to implement plan

objectives. Since a large amount of consultation and design has already been invested in developing the Donovan CIP, it may be more appropriate to introduce financial incentives into the existing plan as opposed to introducing a new CIP.

Val Therese

The Val Therese commercial area extends along Municipal Road 80 from, approximately, Desmarais Road to Deschene Road. Much like Val Caron, the area is predominantly an automobile orientated suburban commercial area. The buildings are mainly newer one storey strip malls set back a large distance from the road, with few vacancies observed. The speed of traffic and size of Municipal Road 80 does not lend its self to enhancing pedestrian traffic in the area.

Based on the above, the Val Therese area does not meet the definition of a Town Centre and it is not recommended that it be included in the proposed CIP. Since no CIP is currently in place for this area, it may benefit from some other type of program in the future.



Summary

The purpose of this report was to develop criteria to analyze the Town Centre Areas identified in the City of Greater Sudbury Official Plan, along with other “Main Street” commercial areas and areas identified by Council, to see if they were appropriate areas to introduce a proposed Town Centre CIP with financial programs similar to those that make up the Downtown Community Improvement Plan. The report also identified other opportunities that could be used in the subject areas if they did not meet the criteria of a Town Centre.

A review of the nature of Town Centres and the history of the Downtown Sudbury Community Improvement Plan found that there were three key elements that areas had to have in order to be candidates for the proposed Town Centre Community Improvement Plan:

- Pedestrian friendly commercial areas with the potential for enhancement to attract people and new business;
- Commercial and Residential vacancy issues that could be addressed by improving the building stock; and
- The presence of older, mixed used (and preferably multi storey) building stock, to promote the creation of additional residential units.

If the areas did not meet these criteria, it was determined that they may be better served by an existing CIP (if one is in place), the upcoming Brownfields CIP or some other type of program that may be introduced in the future. Based on the analysis conducted the following table was produced with respect to which areas should be included in the proposed Town Centre Community Improvement Plan.

Include in the proposed Town Centre CIP	Modify Existing CIP in place or use Brownfields CIP	Address with other program in the future
Levack	Onaping Falls	Dowling
Chelmsford	Hanmer	Azilda
Lively	West End	Val Caron
Capreol	Kathleen Street	Wahnapitae
Flour Mill BIA – option 1	Flour Mill BIA – option 2	Garson
Copper Cliff		Coniston
		Val Therese

Recommendation

That Council direct staff proceed with a public consultation process regarding a Town Centre Community Improvement Plan and its suitability in the subject areas. It is also recommended that staff be directed to use the attached draft Town Centre Community Improvement Plan as part of the public consultation process. And further that staff be directed to report back to Council with the results of the public consultation and recommendations for moving forward.

THE CITY OF GREATER SUDBURY TOWN CENTRE COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

1.0 PLAN BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

The following Community Improvement Plan (CIP) has been prepared to allow the City of Greater Sudbury to use powers afforded through section 28 (7) of the *Planning Act* to use grants, loans and tax increment financing made to registered or assessed owners of lands and buildings within the designated area. This power allows the City the opportunity to develop innovative approaches to providing financial incentives for redevelopment led by the private sector and community improvement initiatives.

This CIP has been prepared as a “sister” plan to the CIP currently in place for Downtown Sudbury. The purpose of this plan is to offer similar programs available in the Downtown to the other Town Centres and traditional “Main Street” areas in the City of Greater Sudbury.

1.2 Rationale

In 2007, City of Greater Sudbury Council adopted the report entitled “Constellation City: Building a Community of Communities in Greater Sudbury”. This report provided a total of 35 recommendations for City Council, which were grouped into the four broad categories of a city that is 1) connected, 2) caring, 3) empowered and 4) equitable.

One of the recommendations of the report dealt specifically with the issue of downtowns and parks. Through the transition team process, residents in communities across the City of Greater Sudbury expressed concern that the downtown areas and parks outside the city core receive less attention than those within the former City. The recommendation of the report respecting downtown was as follows:

“That the City of Greater Sudbury designate specific downtown areas in appropriate communities. Further that the City commit to improving the development of downtowns in outlying areas and ensure that the city programs that are established for improvement or enhancement of downtown and target areas be made available across the city.”

Similar to the issues facing downtown Sudbury, the Town Centre areas are facing new challenges, as the retail sector proceeds through restructuring. Membership warehouse clubs, home-improvement centres and big box stores that locate in the outskirts of a municipality draw upon consumers from what was the traditional retail areas located in the Town Centres of surrounding communities. These Town Centres and traditional “Main Street” areas serve an important role as they are located in established residential areas, have existing mixed use buildings, are compact and promote pedestrian activity.

The focus of this CIP is on the Town Centres and traditional “Main Street” areas in the amalgamated City of Greater Sudbury. These areas, like the downtown of the former City of

Sudbury, have traditionally served as retail and commercial centres for the areas but are now in danger of going into decline due to the shift in the retail market place over the past number of years. This shift has seen the development of New Format retail stores in the suburban areas away from the Town Centres and traditional “Main Street” areas of the City of Greater Sudbury.

During this transition the Town Centres and traditional “Main Street” areas have, in many cases, experienced higher than desired vacancy rates in all sectors, including commercial, retail and residential. These vacancies represent a challenge to the revitalization of these areas. The ability of businesses and property owners to rehabilitate their buildings to respond to tenant needs or to changes in the market place requires innovative solutions. The Planning Act allows municipalities the opportunity to use tax increment financing, grants and loans as methods to finance improvements to buildings or land which assist with revitalization initiatives.

Based on the rationale for implementing the Downtown CIP, the purpose of this CIP would be to:

- Enhance pedestrian friendly commercial areas to attract people and new business;
- Address Commercial and Residential vacancy issues by improving the building stock; and
- Rehabilitate older, mixed used (and preferably multi storey) building stock, to promote the creation of additional residential units.

2.0 Official Plan Conformity

Section 15 of “The City of Greater Sudbury Official Plan” provides for the use of Community Improvement Plans within the City. Additionally, section 15.2 of the Official Plan designates the entire City of Greater Sudbury as a Community Improvement Project Area. The Official Plan states that the objectives of Community Improvement Plans are to:

- a) Enhance the quality of the physical and social environment through the development, redevelopment, preservation and rehabilitation of certain areas of the City;
- b) Undertake comprehensive community improvement programs with respect to identified projects or designated community improvement areas; and,
- c) Increase employment, economic activity and investment in the City.

This CIP meets all of the objectives set out in the Official Plan.

3.0 Project Area Description

The Community Improvement Plan Project Areas are shown on the attached Schedule ‘B’. These boundaries correspond to Town Centres identified in the City of Greater Sudbury Official Plan as well as other traditional “Main Street” areas identified in the City.

These areas have been identified as having the maximum potential to achieve the CIP goals outlined in the Official Plan and benefit from the programs outlined in this plan.

4.0 Community Improvement Plan Programs

The following lists the financial programs that form the basis of this Community Improvement Plan. Detailed program guidelines and requirements are listed in Schedule A of this Plan.

Section 28 (7) of the *Planning Act* provides municipalities the following authority; *for the purpose of carrying out a community improvement plan that has come into effect, the municipality may make grants or loans to registered owners, assessed owners and tenants of lands and buildings within the community improvement project area, and to any person to whom such an owner or tenant has assigned the right to receive a grant or loan, to pay for the whole or any part of the cost of rehabilitating such lands and buildings in conformity with the community improvement plan."*

In summary, the only tools available are either a grant or a loan. However there are many applications of this grant or loan which can be used on a case-by-case basis to encourage development or redevelopment within the project area. These include, but are not limited to:

- Tax Increment Financing (in the form of a grant)
- Planning and Building Fees Rebate (in the form of a grant)
- Project Development Study/Report Grant (business plan, soils study, etc.)
- Facade Improvement Grant (retention of facades)
- Building Improvement Loan Program (assistance with building rehabilitation and adaptive reuse, i.e., residential intensification)

4.1 Tax Increment Financing Program

This program is designed to essentially provide a rebate to the land owner or designate, based on the anticipated increase in the municipal portion of property taxes that will be realized as a result of a redevelopment or improvement to a property within the improvement areas.

In order to provide Council and the community certainty regarding the Tax Increment Financing program, criteria have been developed which will guide this program. It is anticipated that each Tax grant will be commenced by an application to Council. This application will allow staff an opportunity to ensure that the proposal meets the intent of the Tax grant program.

4.2 Planning & Building Fees Rebate Program

This program provides financial relief to property owners who undertake development or redevelopment projects within the Project Areas. The rebate applies to most municipal fees related to development or redevelopment.

4.3 Feasibility Studies

The intent of this program is to stimulate private sector investigation of the potential adaptive re-use or redevelopment of buildings or vacant land within the project area. Financial assistance for feasibility studies, building renovation design, and business plans will be provided through this program.

4.4 Facade Improvement Program

The Facade Improvement Grant program would provide grants to property owners who rehabilitate and improve facades (including signs) of buildings within the Community Improvement Project Areas. The purpose is to achieve aesthetic improvements to the streetscapes and grant applications will be required to demonstrate how the proposed will achieve this goal.

4.5 Building Improvement Loan Program

This program seeks to stimulate private sector investment in, and revitalization and rehabilitation of the existing commercial and mixed used building stock by providing financial incentive to property owners. The program will focus on structural repairs and improvements that may be required to maintain the overall building integrity and provide for conversion or adaptive re-use of a building.

5.0 Urban Design Principles

The purpose of these design principles is to help support a truly unique Town Centre by encouraging, overtime, the improvement of the built form. It is anticipated that as building owners upgrade their buildings, the application of these design principles will contribute to the overall quality of the Town Centres.

It has been acknowledged that no one direct architectural style exists within the Town Centres. This diversity is what these principles are intended to encourage. This flexibility is intended to promote unique design approaches to each building, allowing for the greatest degree of flexibility and creativity for each individual property owner. At the same time the use of these principles will ensure that overall the quality of development is assured.

5.1 Design Principles

1. In order to promote a unique sense of place, the uses of distinctive and higher quality materials reflective of Sudbury's place in Northern Ontario are encouraged;
2. Design approaches should consider the fact that the City of Greater Sudbury Town Centres are northern communities and therefore unique approaches to its four seasons should be considered in terms of the building design;
3. A high level of design quality is encouraged. Architecturally unique buildings that are complementary to the existing built form are encouraged; and
4. Programs that include the creation of new surface parking lots are discouraged and not eligible for program incentives.

SCHEDULE “A”

CIP PROGRAM POLICIES AND REQUIREMENTS

General CIP Financial Program Application Processes

Access to the financial programs are initiated by an application to Council, which is received by the Department of and Economic Development Planning Services. These applications are jointly reviewed by the Finance Department and their views are expressed in the report that goes to Council.

Financial program applications must be supported by plans, estimates, contracts and other details as may be required to ensure conformity with the objectives of the CIP. It should be noted that the application must be deemed to have been received prior to the commencement of the actual work.

Before any rebate is applied to the applicable property tax account of a property for which a satisfactory rebate application has been received and approved, realty taxes are required to have been paid in full each year.

A valuation of the work must accompany the submission. This valuation must also determine the impact of the redevelopment of the property so as to set the new market value of the property. This in turn will set the value of the tax increment. This opinion will be supplied by a qualified appraiser who will provide the municipality an independent assessment of value as a result of the redevelopment of the property.

General Criteria Applying To All Programs

- 1) The financial incentives described herein may be used in combination with any other program offered by the City or other level of government.
- 2) Approved grants/loans are applicable to the registered owner or assessed owner or tenants of land and buildings within the Community Improvement Plan areas identified on Schedules ‘B’ and are assignable to any third party to whom such an owner or tenant has assigned the right to receive the grant.
- 3) An application can only be received prior to the commencement, rehabilitation or development.
- 4) If the property is sold in whole or in part, the registered owner is entitled to the program benefits. In addition, any outstanding payments owed to the City will be the responsibility of the current land owner regardless of who has made the original application.
- 5) Applications for residential buildings that result in a reduction in the overall number of dwelling units are not eligible.

Tax Increment Financing Program Requirements

Each Tax grant will be commenced by an application to Council. This application will allow staff an opportunity to ensure that the proposal meets the intent of the Tax rebate program. The program criteria are as follows:

- A) The maximum number of years that any individual application can benefit from is 10 years. In year one of the program, the grant to the property owner/tenant is equal to 100% of the tax increment. Thereafter, the grant decreases by 10% per year;
- B) The property owner/tenant, as applicable, is responsible for the full payment of taxes, as billed, after which the municipality will provide the grant payment;
- C) The maximum amount of the tax grant shall not exceed that anticipated increase in municipal realty taxes as a direct result of the redeveloped/development of land and or building;
- D) The annual grant is based upon changes in property taxes as a result of construction and improvement, and is not based on occupancy or changes in occupancy;
- E) Notwithstanding any other calculations relating to the grant amount, the City will not pay an annual grant which is greater than the municipal portion of the property tax collected for a property in any one year;
- F) Only the municipal portion of the property taxes are eligible for the grant;
- G) BIA levies are to be excluded from the grant calculation;
- H) This program may be used in combination with any other program. The amount of the grant or the total amount of funding, when combined with any other Community Improvement Plan program, will not exceed the value of the work done;
- I) Approved grants are applicable to the registered owner or assessed, owner or tenants of land and buildings in the Community Improvement Plan area and are assignable to any third party to whom such an owner or tenant has assigned the right to receive the grant;
- J) The total amount of the grant shall not exceed the costs of the property's rehabilitation;
- K) Taxes must not be in arrears at the time of application;
- L) An application to Council must have been received in order for a grant to be considered;
- M) An application can only be received prior to the commencement of the improvements, rehabilitation or development;
- N) If a property is under an assessment appeal the application will be held in abeyance until the appeal is resolved;

- O) The application shall include plans, estimates, contracts and other details as may be required to ensure conformity with the objectives of the CIP;
- P) For the purpose of calculating the tax increment, the pre-approved assessed value of the property will be established as the earlier of the following: (1) date of application for building permit; (2) date of application for demolition permit; (3) date of application for Rehabilitation and Redevelopment grant;
- Q) If the property is sold, in whole or in part, before the grant period lapses, the applicant and/or the subsequent landowner is not entitled to outstanding grant payments. The City may, entirely at its own discretion, enter into a new agreement with any subsequent owners of the property to receive outstanding grant payments under this program;
- R) The project must be in compliance with all applicable City policies including but not limited to; zoning, heritage matters, site plan matters and matters of urban design as identified in the City of Greater Sudbury Official Plan, and
- S) The grant shall be forfeited by the owner /tenant or third party, to whom the grant has been assigned, and repaid to the City if the property is demolished before the grant period elapses.

Planning & Building Fees Rebate Program Requirements

This program provides financial relief to property owners who undertake development or redevelopment projects within the Project Areas. The rebate applies to most municipal fees related to development or redevelopment, including:

- 1) Official Plan Amendments
- 2) Zoning Amendments
- 3) Minor Variances
- 4) Consents to Sever Land
- 5) Site Plan Control Agreements
- 6) Plans of Subdivision
- 7) Plans of Condominium
- 8) Building and Demolition Permits
- 9) Sign Applications
- 10) Other associated and miscellaneous legal agreements

Assistance will be made in the form of a refund of the fees for planning approval, demolition or building permit (building permit fee rebates would be up to a maximum of \$5,000.) as described in By-law 2005-8F, as amended, Part 3 Growth and Development Schedule G&D A, B and C, subject to the following:

- 1. It should be noted that although these fees are waived within the project area, this does not mean that they are not required. Applicants are expected to adhere to the requirement of the respective application processes and will receive a grant where applicable. Fees are to be paid in advance and are to be reimbursed upon successful completion and approval of an application;

2. Fees associated with any outside agencies will be required to be paid, including, but not limited to the Sudbury and District Health Unit, Greater Sudbury Hydro, etc.;
3. An application to the Director of Planning and Development must be received and deemed to be eligible prior to the waiving of any fees;
4. The subject property must not be in a position of tax arrears at the time of the application to the Director of Planning or Chief Building Official;
5. This fees rebate program does not apply to any required performance securities (i.e., letters of Credit) posted by the proponent, required professional studies, to expenses incurred by the applicant as a result of an Ontario Municipal Board Hearing, or to any required newspaper notices;
6. The project must be in conformity with all applicable City policies, including but not limited to zoning, heritage matters, site plan matters and matters of urban design as identified by the City of Greater Sudbury Official Plan;
7. An application can only be received prior to the commencement of the improvements, rehabilitation or development, and
8. Council has delegated its authority to a Committee of staff to approve these applications. A refusal by staff may be appealed directly to Council.

Feasibility Study Program Requirements

1. Applications for program shall be approved by (Council, staff, GSDC Board) on a first come first serve basis;
2. A grant up to a maximum of \$5,000 can be applied for;
3. Fifty (50%) of the grant approved under this program will be provided to property owners following submission of the final completed study with the original invoice indicating that the study consultant's have been paid in full. The remaining 50% will be paid to the property owner upon the building being available for occupancy;
4. One copy of the study will be provided to the City for its retention. The applicants agree to provide the City with permission to share the findings with any other subsequent project proponents and/or related government agencies;
5. Feasibility studies shall be for the purpose of a business plan for matters such as but not limited to, structural analysis, soil studies, evaluation of mechanical systems, concept or design plans and market analysis;
6. The subject property shall not be in a position of property tax arrears;

7. Assistance will be provided at the sole discretion of the City of Greater Sudbury and the City reserves the right to refuse any application at any time, and
8. Council has delegated its authority to a Committee of staff to approve these applications. A refusal by staff may be appealed directly to Council.

Façade Improvement Program Requirements

1. A grant of 50% of the cost to improve a building's facade, to a maximum of \$15,000 is available. Payment will be made only upon the completion of the work;
2. Signage projects will be eligible for a maximum of \$2,500;
3. Applications for the program shall be approved by (Council, staff, GSDC Board) on a first come first serve basis;
4. All applications will be considered subject to the availability of funding;
5. Property owners must apply in writing to the Council for the City of greater Sudbury and must receive written approval prior to the commencing of any work related to the requested grant/loan;
6. The subject property shall not be in a position of tax arrears at the time of the application;
7. The project must be deemed to be in conformity with all applicable City policies, including but not limited to matters of zoning, heritage matters, site plan matters and matters of urban design. Applications that are not deemed to be in conformity shall not be approved;
8. Any outstanding Work Order from the City Building Services Department must be complied with prior to the consideration of any application;
9. Grants will be approved at the sole discretion of the City of Greater Sudbury; and
10. Proposals must be consistent with the Design Principles expressed in the following pages.

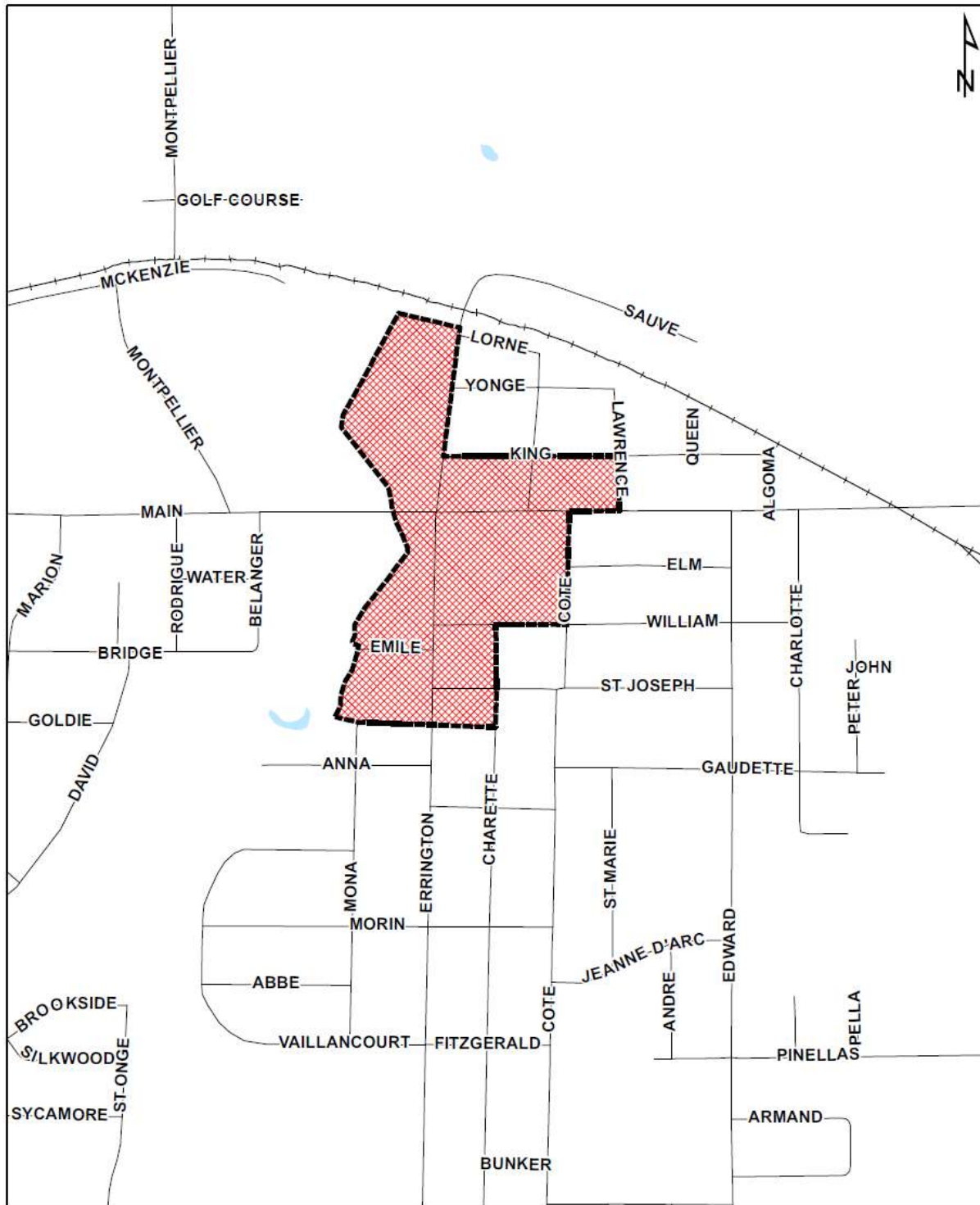
Building Improvement Loan Program Requirements

1. This program will provide loans of 50% of the project costs, to a maximum of \$50,000 to property owners who undertake the revitalization and rehabilitation of their properties that would result in the increased use, adaptive re-use or conversion of vacant space. The amount of the loan would not exceed the value of the work to be done;
2. Loan payments will commence six months after the advancement of funds. Repayment of loans will be on a monthly basis, with the monthly amount to be calculated based on five-year amortization period. Full repayment may be made at any time;

3. All applications for assistance under this program will be considered, subject to the available funding;
4. Property owners must apply in writing to the Council for the City of Greater Sudbury and must receive written approval prior to the commencing of any work related to the requested loan;
5. If, during the course of the work, the scope of the work changes or actual costs are greater or lesser than the estimated costs, the City of Greater Sudbury reserves the right to increase or decrease the total amount of the loan associated with the Building Improvement Loan Program;
6. Program commitments will expire if work does not commence within six weeks of the City of Greater Sudbury's approval. In the event of such an occurrence, a new application may be submitted and will be processed accordingly;
7. Assistance granted under this program to a particular property is not transferable to any other property;
8. Applicants must submit at least two quotations from professional contractors who are capable of completing the work;
9. The subject property shall not be in a position of tax arrears at the time of the application;
10. The project must be deemed to be in conformity with all applicable City policies, including but not limited to matters of zoning, heritage matters, site plan matters and matters of urban design. Applications that are not deemed to be in conformity shall not be approved;
11. Any outstanding Work Order from the City Building Services Department must be complied with prior to the consideration of any application; and
12. Grants will be approved at the sole discretion of the City of Greater Sudbury.

This map shows the Marshy Lake area, including the lake and surrounding streets. The streets shown are NORMAN, CLEMENT, SELLWOOD, LINCOLN, MOONEY, RAILWAY, HILLCREST, HIGHLAND, OAKWOOD, FRONT, BLOOR, YOUNG, QUEEN, KING, LAKESHORE, CRESCENT, ORMSBY, VAUGHAN, DENNIE, MITCHELL, FERGUSON, KELLY, FORD, HANNA, MORIN, MEEHAN, CHAPMAN, and COULSON. The lots highlighted in red with a cross-hatch pattern are located along the FRONT, YOUNG, BLOOR, QUEEN, and LAKESHORE streets, and along the CRESCENT, VAUGHAN, DENNIE, MITCHELL, FERGUSON, KELLY, and FORD streets.

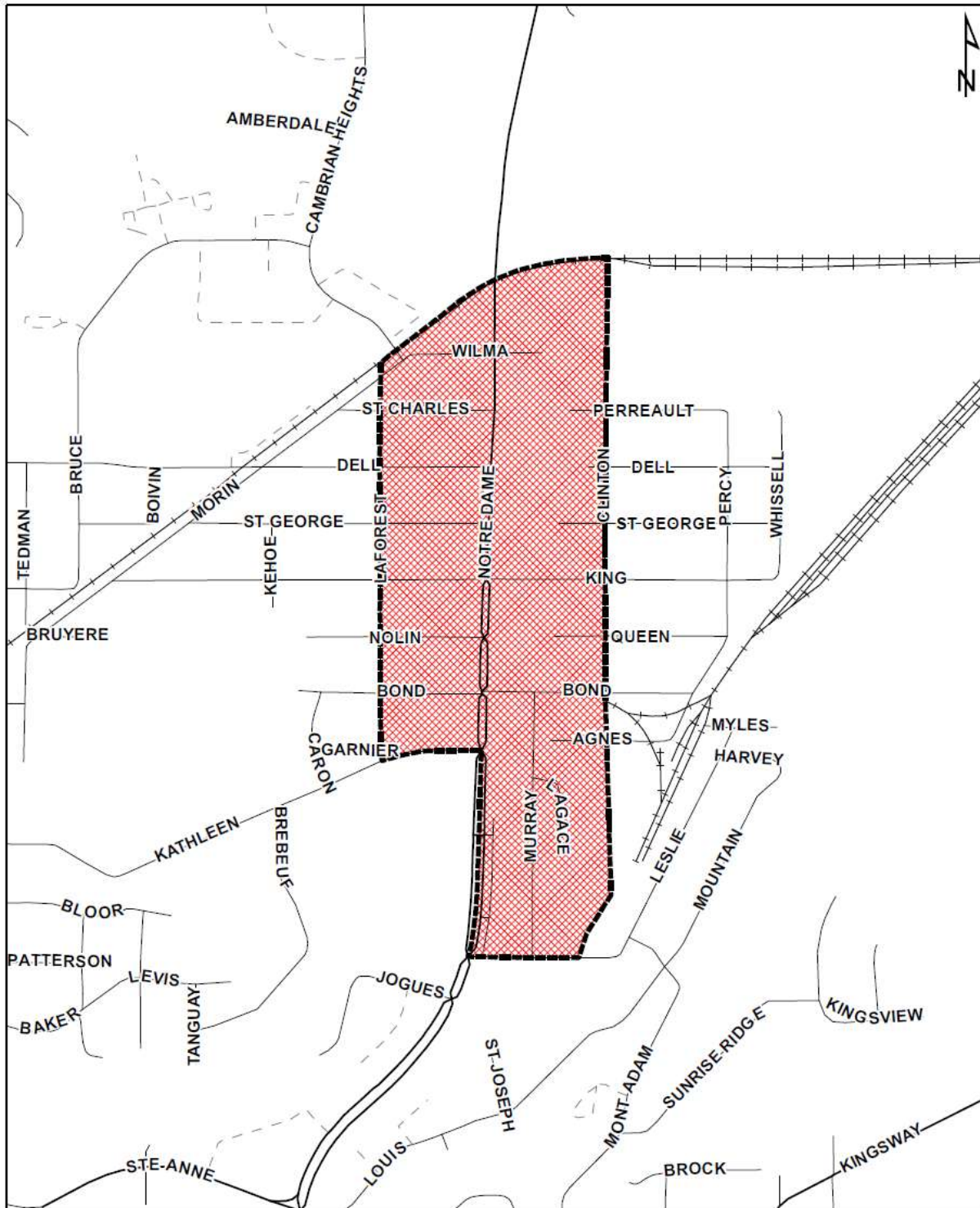
Chelmsford Schedule B-2



Levack Schedule B-3



Flour Mill BIA Schedule B-4



Lively Schedule B-5



Copper Cliff Schedule B-6

