



The Corporation of the Town of Fort Erie By-law 78-2026

Being a By-law to Adopt a Core Area Community Improvement Plan

Whereas the Town of Fort Erie Official Plan, 2025, contains provisions relating to Community Improvement Plans and empowers Council to designate Community Improvement Project Areas and adopt Community Improvement Plan pursuant to Section 28 of the *Planning Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13, as amended; and

Whereas subsection 28(4) of the *Planning Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13, as amended, provides for the adoption of Community Improvement Plans respecting areas designated as Community Improvement Project Areas; and

Whereas the Town of Fort Erie has prepared a Core Area Community Improvement Plan to establish a coordinated framework for community improvement, revitalization and reinvestment within the Town's identified Core Areas; and

Whereas By-law 76-2026 passed by the Municipal Council of the Town of Fort Erie designates lands as Community Improvement Project Areas for the purpose of implementing the Town of Fort Erie Core Area Community Improvement Plan; and

Whereas Report PBBS-42-2026 was considered by Council at the Council-in-Committee meeting held on September 14, 2026, to authorize the adoption of the Town of Fort Erie Core Area Community Improvement Plan; and

Whereas it is deemed desirable and in the interest of the municipality to adopt the Town of Fort Erie Core Area Community Improvement Plan;

Now therefore the Municipal Council of The Corporation of the Town of Fort Erie enacts as follows:

- 1. That** the Town of Fort Erie Core Area Community Improvement Plan for the Core Area Community Improvement Project Areas, attached hereto as Schedule "A" and forming part of this By-law, is hereby adopted.
- 2. That** delegation authority be given to the Director of Planning, Building and By-law Services or their respective delegate to approve all Core Area Community Improvement Plan program applications, subject to the applicable program requirements, eligibility criteria and availability of funds.
- 3. That** By-law 71-2014, being a By-law to Adopt a Downtown Bridgeburg Core Area Community Improvement Plan, By-law 73-2014, being a By-law to Adopt a Downtown Ridgeway Core Area Community Improvement Plan, By-law 7-2016, being a By-law to Adopt a Downtown Stevensville Core Area Community Improvement Plan, and By-law 93-2018, being a By-law to Adopt a Downtown Southend-Riverwalk Core Area Community Improvement Plan, are hereby repealed.
- 4. That** Notwithstanding the repeal of the By-laws identified in Section 3, any application approved, grant authorized, agreement entered into, or other financial assistance approved pursuant to a Community Improvement Plan repealed by this By-law prior to the effective date of this By-law shall continue to be administered in accordance with the applicable former Community Improvement Plan and the terms and conditions of the applicable agreement.

5. **That** the Clerk of the Town is authorized to affect any minor modifications, corrections or omissions, solely of an administrative, numerical, grammatical, semantical or descriptive nature to this by-law or its schedules after the passage of this by-law.

Read a first, second and third time and finally passed this 28th day of September 2026.

Mayor

Clerk

Town of Fort Erie

Core Area Community Improvement Plan

September 2026



Prepared by

Town of Fort Erie Planning, Building and By-law Services



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1.0 Introduction

1.1 What is a Community Improvement Plan

A Community Improvement Plan (CIP) is a planning and economic development tool that enables a municipality to support the improvement, rehabilitation, and redevelopment of land and buildings within a defined geographic area, referred to as a Community Improvement Project Area.

Section 28 of the Planning Act authorizes municipalities to prepare and adopt Community Improvement Plans. Through a CIP, municipalities may undertake a range of actions to encourage community improvement including:

- Identifying changes needed to land use planning policies, zoning, and other municipal by-laws, policies, and practices.
- Directing municipal funding toward improvements to public infrastructure and public spaces.
- Acquiring, rehabilitating, clearing, or disposing of land and buildings for community improvement purposes.
- Supporting affordable housing, environmental sustainability, and energy efficiency initiatives.
- Providing grants, or other financial incentives to property owners and tenants for eligible improvements; and
- Establishing a vision, goals, and objectives to guide coordinated and long-term community improvement.

Community Improvement Plans are implementation tools that translate municipal policy direction into on-the-ground outcomes. By reducing financial barriers and encouraging reinvestment, CIPs help municipalities achieve broader planning objectives related to intensification, revitalization, economic development, and environmental sustainability.

1.2 Purpose of the Community Improvement Plan

The purpose of the Town of Fort Erie Community Improvement Plan (CIP) is to establish a coordinated framework to support reinvestment, revitalization, and long-term sustainability within the Town's core areas.

This CIP is intended to encourage private sector investment and reinvestment in existing built-up areas by providing financial incentives and implementation tools that help address barriers to redevelopment, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse. Through these measures, the Plan supports the ongoing evolution of established areas as vibrant, functional, and economically resilient parts of the community.

The CIP also serves as a key implementation tool of the Town of Fort Erie Official Plan (2025), aligning municipal priorities with targeted programs that facilitate reinvestment, improve the built environment, and support broader economic development and land use planning objectives.

1.3 Background and Rationale

The Town of Fort Erie is characterized by a series of distinct communities, each with its own historic commercial core and local identity. These downtowns and main street areas developed as centres of commerce, employment, and social activity, and continue to function as important focal points within the Town's urban structure.

The Town's Official Plan (2025) recognizes the importance of strengthening existing built-up areas, supporting reinvestment, and making efficient use of existing infrastructure. Many of Fort Erie's downtowns and core areas contain older buildings and traditional development patterns that now face ongoing economic and market pressures. Changes in retail and business practices, reinvestment needs associated with aging building stock, and competition from newer automobile-oriented commercial areas continue to create challenges for maintaining the long-term vitality of traditional commercial districts.

At the same time, previous Community Improvement Plans and public investment initiatives have contributed to visible improvements in several core areas, supporting façade upgrades, property improvements, business activity, and broader revitalization efforts. These successes demonstrate the value of targeted incentive programs in encouraging private sector investment and supporting ongoing community improvement.

The Official Plan identifies established downtowns, main streets, and mixed-use areas as strategic locations for reinvestment and renewal. These areas benefit from a walkable urban form, established municipal services, proximity to surrounding neighbourhoods, and distinctive cultural and historic character. Targeted reinvestment in these locations supports the Town's broader objectives related to economic development, placemaking, community identity, and sustainable growth.

The Town has previously adopted Community Improvement Plans for individual downtown core areas. While these plans have supported localized improvements, they were prepared more than a decade ago and reflect an earlier policy, economic, and regulatory context. Since that time, provincial planning policy has evolved, the Town has adopted a new Official Plan in 2025 to guide growth to 2051, and additional secondary plans have been completed, including the Crystal Beach Secondary Plan, which provides more detailed guidance for that community.

This updated Community Improvement Plan responds to these changes by establishing a single, Town-wide framework that aligns with current Official Plan policy, provides a consistent approach across multiple core areas, consolidates and modernizes legacy

incentive programs, and supports the long-term revitalization and reinvestment of Fort Erie's downtowns and core areas.

1.4 Relationship to Other Town Initiatives

This Community Improvement Plan has been prepared to align with and support the Town of Fort Erie's broader planning, economic development, and infrastructure initiatives.

This CIP implements the policy direction of the Town of Fort Erie Official Plan (2025), which emphasizes reinvestment within existing built-up areas, the strengthening of downtown main streets, and the efficient use of existing infrastructure.

This CIP is intended to function alongside the Town's Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan. While the Affordable Housing CIP focuses specifically on the creation of new affordable housing units; this CIP is directed toward downtown revitalization, reinvestment, and the improvement of existing commercial and mixed-use areas. Together, these plans provide a coordinated and complementary approach to community improvement.

This CIP also supports the objectives of adopted secondary plans, including the Crystal Beach Secondary Plan and other community-specific planning studies. Incentive programs established through this CIP are intended to complement public investments in infrastructure, streetscapes, parks, and public spaces and to work in conjunction with existing planning tools, zoning regulations, and development approval processes.

1.5 Community Improvement Project Areas

This Community Improvement Plan establishes Community Improvement Project Areas in accordance with Section 28 of the *Planning Act* to support the implementation of financial incentive programs.

For the purposes of this CIP, Community Improvement Programs apply in two geographic contexts:

1.5.1 Core Area Community Improvement Project Areas

Six area-specific Community Improvement Project Areas are established to support downtown and main street revitalization initiatives. These Core Areas represent the Town's traditional and emerging commercial centres and are illustrated on Schedules A to F.

The six Core Areas are:

- Ridgeway Core Area
- Bridgeburg Core Area
- Stevensville Core Area
- South End/Riverwalk Core Area

- Gateway Core Area
- Crystal Beach Core Area

1.6 How to Use This Community Improvement Plan

This Community Improvement Plan is intended to be used by property owners, businesses, developers, and the Town of Fort Erie to understand available incentive programs and the process for participation.

Participation in any Community Improvement Program is voluntary and subject to meeting eligibility requirements, the availability of funding, and approval by the Town.

This plan operates in conjunction with the Town's planning and development approval processes, including the Zoning By-law, site plan control, and other applicable requirements, and does not replace or supersede these approvals.

Community Improvement Programs are subject to annual budget approval by Council and may be amended, suspended, or discontinued at the discretion of the Town.

2.0 Planning and Policy Context

2.1 Legislative Authority

This Community Improvement Plan (CIP) has been prepared under the authority of Section 28 of the *Planning Act*, R.S.O 1990, c. P.13 as amended. Section 28 of the Planning Act authorizes municipalities to designate Community Improvement Project Areas and adopt Community Improvement Plans to promote community improvement, redevelopment, rehabilitation, and revitalization within those areas. The Planning Act further authorizes municipalities to provide various forms of financial assistance, including grants and tax-based incentives, to implement the objectives of a Community Improvement Plan.

2.2 Provincial Policy Context

The Provincial Planning Statement (PPS), issued under Section 3 of the *Planning Act*, establishes policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. It requires that planning decisions shall be consistent with the PPS.

Key PPS policy themes relevant to this CIP include:

- Promoting efficient development and redevelopment within existing settlement areas.
- Supporting long-term economic prosperity by maintaining and revitalizing downtown and main street areas; and
- Facilitating adaptive reuse of existing building stock in locations with existing infrastructure.

This CIP has been prepared to be consistent with the PPS.

2.3 Conformity with the Town of Fort Erie Official Plan (2025)

The Town of Fort Erie Official Plan, adopted by Council in 2025, provides the primary local planning policy framework to guide growth and development to the year 2051. Section F.4.4 of the Official Plan establishes a comprehensive policy framework for Community Improvement Planning and authorizes Council to designate Community Improvement Projects Areas and adopt Community Improvement Plans pursuant to Section 28 of the *Planning Act*.

Section F.4.4 of the Official Plan identifies community improvement as a key implementation tool to support the revitalization of areas characterized by aging or obsolete buildings, underutilized or brownfield lands, conflicting land uses, infrastructure deficiencies, poor overall visual quality, and other environmental, social, or economic development challenges. The Official Plan further provides that Community Improvement Project Areas may be designated for specific areas of the Town or on a Town-wide basis and explicitly states Council's intent that the entirety of the Town may be designated as a Community Improvement Project Area by by-law.

The criteria set out in Section F.4.4.1.2 of the Official Plan for the designation of Community Improvement Project Areas include, among other matters, the presence of buildings or lands in need of rehabilitation or redevelopment, brownfields and underutilized lands, deficiencies in infrastructure or public realm, heritage and architectural significance, environmental contamination, high commercial vacancy, and poor overall streetscape or urban design quality. These criteria provide the policy basis for the identification of Core Areas within this Community Improvement Plan.

This Community Improvement Plan implements Section F.4.4 of the Official Plan by:

- Designating Community Improvement Project Areas for area-specific revitalization initiatives
- Establishing incentive programs that encourage reinvestment, rehabilitation, and redevelopment in accordance with identified community improvement needs.
- Supporting placemaking, streetscape improvement, and enhancement of the built environment in traditional commercial and mixed-use areas; and
- Encouraging private sector investment while making efficient use of existing infrastructure and municipal resources.

In this regard, the CIP represents a key implementation mechanism of the Official Plan's community improvement objectives and provides a coordinated framework for advancing the Town's goals related to downtown revitalization, environmental improvement, economic development, and long-term community sustainability.

2.4 Secondary Plans

Secondary Plans provide more detailed land use and development policy direction for specific communities within the Town of Fort Erie. These plans form an operative part of the Official Plan and must be read in conjunction with its policies.

Several of the Core Areas identified in the CIP are located within areas that are subject to Secondary Plans adopted under the Town's former Official Plan. These Secondary Plans continue to apply and provide relevant planning context for community improvement initiatives within their respective areas.

Applicable Secondary Plans include:

- Bridgeburg Secondary Plan
- Gateway Secondary Plan
- Ridgeway-Thunder Bay Secondary Plan
- Stevensville Secondary Plan
- South End Secondary Plan
- Crystal Beach Secondary Plan

These Secondary Plans establish community-specific objectives related to land use, built form, transportation, public realm improvements, and infrastructure, and are intended to guide growth, change, and reinvestment at a more localized scale. While the scope, age, and level of detail of these plans vary, they collectively emphasize the importance of strengthening existing communities, supporting compatible development, and enhancing the character and functionality of established urban areas.

This Community Improvement Plan is intended to function as an implementation tool that supports the objectives of applicable Secondary Plans by providing financial incentive programs that encourage reinvestment, rehabilitation, and redevelopment in a manner consistent with established land use policy.

2.5 Definitions and Interpretation

For the purposes of this Community Improvement Plan, the following definitions apply:

Applicant means the registered property owner(s), an Authorized Agent acting on behalf of the registered property owner(s) with written authorization, or a commercial tenant with written authorization from the registered property owner(s), where permitted under the applicable Community Improvement Program.

Authorized Agent means a person authorized in writing by the registered property owner(s) to submit an application and act on the owner's behalf for the purposes of this Community Improvement Plan.

Brownfield means an undeveloped or previously developed property where actual or perceived environmental contamination has hindered or may hinder redevelopment or reuse.

Community Improvement means the planning or replanning, design or redesign, resubdivision, clearance, development or redevelopment, construction, reconstruction and rehabilitation, improvement of energy efficiency, or any combination thereof, within a Community Improvement Project Area, together with the provision of such residential, commercial, industrial, public, recreational, institutional, religious, charitable, or other uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements, facilities, or spaces as may be appropriate or necessary.

Community Improvement Plan (CIP) means a plan for the community improvement of a Community Improvement Project Area prepared and adopted by Council in accordance with Section 28 of the *Planning Act*.

Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA) means a municipality or an area within a municipality, the community improvement of which, in the opinion of Council, is desirable because of age, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement, unsuitability of buildings, or for any other environmental, social, or community economic development reason, and which has been designated by by-law pursuant to Section 28 of the *Planning Act*.

Council means the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Fort Erie.

Development means development as defined in the *Planning Act*, as amended from time to time.

Eligible Costs means those costs identified as eligible for financial assistance under the applicable Community Improvement Program.

Intensification means intensification as defined in the *Provincial Planning Statement, 2024*, as amended from time to time.

Property means a legally defined parcel of land or specific piece of real estate with unique boundaries and a recorded property identification number.

Qualified Professional means a person who possesses the qualifications, professional accreditation, licensing, or experience required to prepare the applicable study, report, design, or assessment in accordance with applicable legislation, professional standards, or to the satisfaction of the Town.

Redevelopment means the creation of new development on previously developed land, including the reuse of brownfield sites and the replacement, expansion, or adaptive reuse of existing buildings.

Registered Property Owner means the person or persons registered on title as the legal owner of the property that is subject of an application under this Community Improvement Plan.

Rehabilitation means the improvement, repair, restoration, modernization, or adaptive reuse of existing buildings, structures, or lands to improve their condition, functionality, safety, accessibility, energy efficiency, or appearance.

3.0 Community Improvement Project Areas

3.1 Overview

Section 1.5 identifies the Community Improvement Project Areas established through this Plan. This section provides the planning rationale and basis for their designation.

Community Improvement Project Areas are intended to focus municipal investment and financial incentives in locations where targeted intervention can support reinvestment, revitalization, and redevelopment.

This Plan includes the following Community Improvement Project Areas:

- Core Area Community Improvement Project Areas, which focus on the revitalization and enhancement of traditional downtowns, main streets, and mixed-use areas; and

Together, these Community Improvement Project Areas establish a coordinated framework to direct investment to areas where it can have the greatest impact.

3.2 Basis for Designation

The designation of Community Improvement Project Areas in this CIP is based on the criteria established in Section F.4.4.1.2 of the Town of Fort Erie Official Plan (2025).

These criteria include the presence of conditions that warrant community improvement such as:

- Buildings and properties in need of maintenance, rehabilitation, or adaptive reuse
- Underutilized or vacant lands and buildings
- Deficiencies in physical infrastructure, public realm, or streetscape quality
- High levels of commercial vacancy or limited private sector reinvestment.
- Opportunities to support intensification, redevelopment, and more efficient use of existing infrastructure

The Core Areas identified in this CIP exhibit many of these characteristics and represent strategic locations for continued community improvement efforts. These areas are

generally located within the Town’s built-up areas, benefit from existing municipal services, and function as focal points for community activity, commerce, and identity.

3.3 Core Area Community Improvement Project Areas

Six Core Area Community Improvement Project Areas are designated through this CIP, as identified in Section 1.5.

These areas are the focus of community improvement programs intended to support reinvestment, enhance the built environment, and strengthen their role as local centres of economic and community activity.

The Core Area Community Improvement Project Areas are:

- Downtown Ridgeway Core Area
- Bridgeburg Core Area
- Stevensville Core Area
- South End/Riverwalk Core Area
- Gateway Core Area
- Crystal Beach Core Area

3.4 Core Area Descriptions

3.4.1 Downtown Ridgeway Core Area

The Downtown Ridgeway Core Area functions as a vibrant and well-established main street environment characterized by a strong pedestrian orientation, cohesive streetscape, and a concentration of local businesses.

The area has benefited from previous Community Improvement Plan programs and public investment, resulting in visible improvements to the public realm and building stock. Notwithstanding this progress, opportunities remain to support continued reinvestment, enhance building facades and signage, and maintain the overall quality and competitiveness of the area.

The Downtown Ridgeway Core Area continues to meet the criteria for designation as a Community Improvement Project Area and represents an important location for ongoing investment to sustain its role as a vibrant commercial and community hub.

3.4.2 Bridgeburg Core Area

The Bridgeburg Core Area is a historic commercial centre with cultural and heritage significance that contributes to the Town’s identity. While the area has experienced positive change and investment through previous Community Improvement Plan initiatives, it continues to face challenges related to underutilized properties, gaps in reinvestment, and aging building stock.

There remains a need to support façade and property improvements, encourage private sector reinvestment, and strengthen the area’s identity as a local commercial and cultural destination.

The area continues to qualify as a Community Improvement Project Area based on the presence of underutilized lands, the need for building rehabilitation, and significant opportunities for economic revitalization and placemaking.

3.4.3 Stevensville Core Area

The Stevensville Core Area functions as a small-scale commercial centre serving the surrounding community and providing local services. The area includes a mix of commercial and adjacent residential uses, with opportunities to enhance its role as a local main street through targeted reinvestment.

Improvements to building facades, signage, and streetscape conditions will support the continued evolution of the area as an attractive and functional local commercial node.

The Stevensville Core Area represents an important focus for community improvement initiatives based on opportunities to support reinvestment, improve the built environment, and reinforce its role within the community.

3.4.4 South End/Riverwalk Core Area

The South End/Riverwalk Core Area is a unique waterfront-oriented commercial area located along the Niagara River, with significant potential to support tourism, placemaking, and community activity.

The area contains a mix of commercial and converted buildings, some of which require rehabilitation and reinvestment. Opportunities exist to enhance the public realm, improve the appearance and functionality of buildings, and strengthen the area’s function as a destination.

The designation of this area as a Community Improvement Project Area reflects both the need for continued reinvestment and the opportunity to leverage its waterfront location as a key economic and community asset.

3.4.5 Gateway Core Area

The Gateway Core Area represents a strategic growth area and primary entry corridor into the Town, including for cross-border traffic. As a key connection point associated with international movement and economic activity, the area plays an important role in shaping the Town’s image and supporting long-term growth.

Located along a key commercial corridor, the area includes a mix of commercial and underutilized lands, with significant opportunity for coordinated redevelopment and

reinvestment. Its strategic location and access to infrastructure position it as a priority area for intensification and economic activity.

The Gateway Core Area represents a priority location for community improvement, based on its strategic importance, redevelopment potential, and role as a key corridor and gateway into the Town.

3.4.6 Crystal Beach Core Area

The Crystal Beach Core Area is a prominent waterfront and tourism-oriented commercial area with a strong connection to the Lake Erie shoreline and surrounding neighbourhoods. It is one of the Town's most recognizable destinations and plays an important role in supporting local economic activity. However, as the area has never previously been included within a Community Improvement Plan framework, there remains opportunities to support façade improvements, property upgrades, and reinvestment to enhance the overall function and appearance of the commercial area.

The area experiences fluctuations in activity, with increased demand during peak tourism periods and reduced activity during off-season months. This pattern can create challenges for long-term business stability and reinvestment, supporting the need for targeted incentives to enhance building conditions and strengthen the area's year-round economic resilience.

The designation of the Crystal Beach Core Area reflects its importance as a key tourism destination, the presence of ongoing reinvestment, and the opportunity to support continued revitalization and enhancement consistent with the Crystal Beach Secondary Plan.

4.0 Goals and Objectives

4.1 Purpose of Community Improvement

Community Improvement in the Town of Fort Erie is intended to guide and support coordinated efforts to enhance the condition, functionality, and viability of lands and buildings within designated Community Improvement Project Areas.

Through targeted financial incentives and municipal actions, community improvement initiatives aim to stimulate investment, support redevelopment and rehabilitation, and improve the overall quality of the built environment. These efforts are focused on areas where strategic intervention can support broader community planning objectives and maximize the use of existing infrastructure.

4.2 Goals

The goals of this Community Improvement Plan are to:

Economic Vitality

- Support the long-term viability and competitiveness of downtowns, main streets, and mixed-use areas
- Encourage private sector investment and business activity

Built Form and Public Realm

- Enhance the visual quality, accessibility, and functionality of buildings and sites
- Support attractive, cohesive, and pedestrian-friendly environments

Efficient Land Use and Redevelopment

- Promote the reuse, intensification, and redevelopment of underutilized properties
- Support development that makes efficient use of existing infrastructure

Environmental Sustainability

- Encourage improvements that enhance energy efficiency and environmental performance
- Support climate resilience and sustainable site design

4.3 Objectives

To achieve the above goals, this CIP establishes the following objectives:

- Encourage façade, structural, and site improvements that enhance the condition and usability of properties
- Support the adaptive reuse and modernization of existing buildings
- Improve the visual quality and consistency of commercial and mixed-use areas
- Reduce financial barriers associated with redevelopment and property improvement
- Support studies and technical work that advance viable development projects
- Encourage sustainable building practices and environmentally responsible design
- Ensure that community improvement programs are administered in a clear, consistent, and fiscally responsible manner

5.0 Community Improvement Programs

5.1 Overview

The Community Improvement Programs established through this Plan provide financial incentives to support reinvestment, rehabilitation, and redevelopment within designated Community Improvement Project Areas.

These programs are intended to address barriers to investment, improve the condition and functionality of buildings and sites, and support the long-term viability of the Town's Core Areas.

Financial assistance may be provided by the Town in the form of grants or tax-based incentives, subject to Council approval and the availability of municipal funding.

Detailed program requirements, including application procedures, eligible costs, ineligible costs, and administrative processes, are provided in the appendices to this Plan.

5.1.1 Community Improvement Program Summary

Program	Eligible Area	Financial Incentive	Maximum Funding
Commercial Building Improvement Grant	Core Areas	50% Matching Grant	\$20,000 per property
Professional Study Grant	Core Areas	50% Matching Grant	\$7,500 per property
Sustainability and Climate Improvement Grant	Core Areas	50% Matching Grant	\$5,000 per property
Residential Creation & Intensification Grant	Core Area	50% Matching Grant	\$10 per square foot, to a maximum of \$5,000 per new dwelling unit, for up to four units per property/building

Additional eligibility requirements, eligible and ineligible costs, application procedures, and program-specific conditions are provided in the applicable appendices to this Plan.

Where eligible, Community Improvement Programs may be combined for a single project. However, the same eligible costs shall not be funded more than once, and the total amount of financial assistance provided through this Community Improvement Plan, together with any other applicable municipal financial incentive programs, shall not exceed the total eligible costs of the project, in accordance with subsection 28(7.3) of the *Planning Act*.

5.2 General Program Requirements

The following general requirements apply to all Community Improvement Programs established under this Plan unless otherwise specified in the applicable program appendix.

- All applications for financial assistance must be submitted to the Town and approved prior to the commencement of any works. Any costs incurred prior to approval shall not be eligible for funding under this Plan.
- Application forms, program guidelines, and supporting materials shall be provided by the Town and may be updated from time to time without amendment to this Plan.
- All proposed works must conform to the policies of the Town's Official Plan, the provisions of the Zoning By-law, and all other applicable municipal requirements.
- Applicants are responsible for obtaining all necessary planning approvals, building permits, and other required permissions prior to undertaking any work.
- Properties subject to an application must be in good standing with the Town, including no outstanding taxes, fees, work orders, property standards violations, or other compliance issues.
- Financial assistance may be provided to registered property owners, authorized agents acting on behalf of the property owner(s), and commercial tenants with written authorization from the property owner(s).
- The Town may require applicants to enter into a formal agreement, outlining the terms and conditions of funding.
- The Town may require applicants to submit a minimum of three (3) contractor quotations or estimates for eligible works.
- The Town may establish limits on program participation, including maximum funding per property and frequency of applications.
- The Town reserves the right to audit project costs and verify completion of approved works.
- All eligible costs and grant amounts shall be calculated exclusive of HST. Any applicable HST shall be the responsibility of the applicant
- All programs are subject to funding availability and Council approval.

5.3 Commercial Building Improvement Grant

5.3.1 Program Description

The Commercial Building Improvement Grant Program supports exterior and site improvements to commercial and mixed-use properties within Core Area Community Improvement Project Areas.

The program is intended to enhance the visual quality, functionality, and accessibility of buildings and contribute to attractive and cohesive main street environments.

The Commercial Building Improvement Grant Program, including detailed eligibility criteria, eligible and ineligible costs, financial incentive limits, application requirements, and administrative procedures, is further detailed in **Appendix A**.

5.3.2 Eligibility

This program applies to properties located within the Core Area Community Improvement Project Areas identified in Section 3 and illustrated on the corresponding schedules.

Eligible applicants include registered owner(s), authorized agents, and commercial tenants with written authorization.

Improvements must be lasting in nature and contribute to the overall enhancement of the property and surrounding area.

5.3.3 Eligible Improvements

Eligible improvements generally include exterior building and site improvements such as façade upgrades, window or door replacements, signage, accessibility improvements, exterior lighting, and landscaping.

A detailed list of eligible and ineligible costs is provided in **Appendix A**.

5.3.4 Financial Incentive

Financial assistance is provided as a cost-sharing grant equal to 50% of eligible costs, to a maximum of \$20,000 per property, subject to Council approval and funding availability.

Detailed funding calculations and parameters are provided in **Appendix A**.

5.3.5 Program Requirements

All improvements must be of a lasting nature and affixed to the property. Improvements should contribute positively to the surrounding built environment and be consistent with applicable municipal standards and guidelines.

All improvements should be consistent with applicable urban design guidelines, where available, and should contribute positively to the character of the surrounding area.

All work must comply with the Ontario Building Code, and all applicable by-laws, and may be subject to review by the Town to ensure consistency with the objectives of the Community Improvement Plan.

The Town may require the submission of plans, drawings, cost estimates, or other supporting documentation as part of the application process.

5.4 Study Grant Program

5.4.1 Program Description

The Professional Study Grant Program supports studies and technical work required to advance redevelopment, rehabilitation, or significant property improvements.

This program is intended to reduce upfront costs associated with planning, design, and technical analysis.

Detailed program requirements including eligible studies, financial incentive limits, and application requirements, are provided in **Appendix B**.

5.4.2 Eligibility

This program applies to properties located within designated Community Improvement Project Areas.

Eligible studies must demonstrate a clear connection to a proposed development, redevelopment, or improvement project and must contribute to advancing that project.

5.4.3 Eligible Studies

Eligible studies generally include feasibility studies, architectural or design studies, heritage assessments, and technical studies required to support redevelopment.

A detailed list of eligible and ineligible studies is provided in **Appendix B**.

5.4.4 Financial Incentive

Financial assistance shall be provided as a cost-sharing grant equal to 50% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$7,500 per property.

Detailed funding limits and requirements are provided in **Appendix B**.

5.4.5 Program Requirements

The Town may require submission of final reports and supporting documentation. The Town may also use the information provided through funded studies to inform future planning and development decisions.

5.5 Sustainability and Climate Improvement Grant Program

5.5.1 Program Description

The Sustainability and Climate Improvement Grant supports building and site improvements that enhance energy efficiency, reduce environmental impacts, and contribute to climate resilience.

The program aligns with the Town's Climate Change Action Plan and encourages long-term environmental performance improvements.

More details are provided in **Appendix C**.

5.5.2 Eligibility

This program applies to properties located within designated Community Improvement Project Areas.

Eligible improvements must be permanent in nature and must demonstrate a clear environmental benefit.

5.5.3 Eligible Improvements

Eligible improvements may include energy efficient upgrades, renewable energy systems, green infrastructure, and landscaping improvements that support environmental sustainability.

A detailed list of eligible and ineligible improvements is provided in **Appendix C**.

5.5.4 Financial Incentive

Financial assistance shall be provided in the form of a cost-sharing grant equal to 50% of eligible costs, to a maximum of \$5,000 per property.

Further details are provided in **Appendix C**.

5.5.5 Program Requirements

All improvements must comply with applicable regulations and standards. The Town may require documentation demonstrating the environmental performance or benefit of the proposed improvements.

5.6 Residential Creation & Intensification Grant

5.6.1 Program Description

The Residential Creation and Intensification Grant supports the creation of new residential dwelling units within the designated Core Areas.

The program is intended to encourage residential intensification as part of broader Core Area revitalization by supporting increased residential activity, adaptive reuse of underutilized buildings and upper floors, and mixed-use development. Increasing the residential population within established commercial areas can also support local businesses and services, contribute to more active main streets, and make efficient use of existing infrastructure.

More details are provided in Appendix D.

5.6.2 Eligibility

This program applies to properties located within the designated Core Area Community Improvement Project Areas.

Eligible projects must result in the creation of new residential dwelling units and comply with all applicable planning policies, zoning requirements, building requirements and other applicable regulations.

Projects that are eligible for financial assistance under the Town's Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan may be considered under the applicable affordable housing program. The Residential Creation and Intensification Grant shall not be combined with an Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan incentive for the same residential unit or the same eligible costs.

5.6.3 Eligible Improvements

Eligible projects may include the creation of new residential dwelling units through the construction of new residential space, the conversion of existing non-residential space to residential use, the adaptive reuse of existing buildings, and the creation of residential units above or in conjunction with commercial uses.

A detailed list of eligible and ineligible improvements is provided in **Appendix D**.

5.6.4 Financial Incentive

Financial assistance shall be provided at a rate of \$10 per square foot of new habitable residential space, to a maximum of \$5,000 per new dwelling unit, for a maximum of four new dwelling units per property or building.

Further details are provided in **Appendix D**.

5.6.5 Program Requirements

All proposed development must comply with applicable Town policies, zoning requirements, building requirements and other applicable legislation.

The Residential Creation and Intensification Grant may be combined with other eligible Community Improvement Plan programs where the proposed work independently satisfies the applicable program requirements. However, the same eligible costs shall not be funded more than once, and the same residential unit shall not receive financial assistance under both this program and the Town's Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan.

6.0 Program Administration

6.1 Application Process

Applications for financial assistance under this Community Improvement Plan shall be submitted to the Town in a form prescribed by the Town and in accordance with the requirements outlined in this Plan and the associated appendices.

Applicants are encouraged to consult with Town Staff prior to applying to confirm program eligibility, application requirements, and the availability of funding.

All applications must be submitted and approved prior to the commencement of any works. Any costs incurred prior to approval shall not be eligible for financial assistance under this Plan.

Upon receipt of a complete application, the Town shall review the application to determine eligibility, completeness, and conformity with the objectives of the Community Improvement Plan. The Town may request additional information or clarification as required to complete its review.

Incomplete applications shall not be processed until all required information has been provided to the satisfaction of the Town.

6.2 Required Documentation

Applicants shall submit all information required by the Town to evaluate the proposed project. This may include, but is not limited to:

- A completed application form
- Proof of property ownership or authorization from the property owner
- Proof that municipal taxes and all other municipal accounts are in good standing
- Detailed description of the proposed works
- Plans, drawings, or renderings, where applicable
- A minimum of 3 (three) cost estimates and/or contractor quotations
- Environmental reports or studies, where applicable
- Any other information deemed necessary by the Town

Detailed submission requirements for each program are provided in the appendices attached to this Plan.

6.3 Evaluation and Approval

Applications shall be evaluated by the Town based on their conformity with the objectives of this Community Improvement Plan, program eligibility requirements, and the availability of funding.

The Town may consider factors including, but not limited to:

- The extent to which the project supports the objectives of the Community Improvement Plan
- The quality and feasibility of the proposed works
- Alignment with strategic priorities
- The anticipated impact of the project on the surrounding area

- The financial viability of the project
- The availability of funding within the Town's budget

Approval of applications shall be in accordance with the Town's applicable Delegation of Authority By-law. Where delegated authority has not been established, approval shall be by Council.

Where funding is limited or multiple applications are received, the Town may prioritize applications based on alignment with the objectives of this Plan, strategic priorities, geographic focus areas, anticipated community benefit, or other relevant planning and community improvement considerations determined by the Town.

The Town reserves the right to approve, defer, or refuse any application at its sole discretion.

6.3.1 Appeals

An applicant whose application has been denied under delegated authority may submit a written request within thirty (30) days of the decision requesting that the application be referred to Council for reconsideration. Council's decision shall be final. The reconsideration process does not guarantee approval or funding and remains subject to the availability of Council-approved funding and all applicable requirements of this Community Improvement Plan.

6.4 Agreements

As a condition of approval, the Town may require the applicant to enter into a formal agreement outlining the terms and conditions of financial assistance.

Such agreements may include, but are not limited to:

- Description of the approved works
- Approved eligible costs and funding amounts
- Payment conditions and timing
- Requirements for maintaining improvements
- Timelines for commencement and completion of works
- Reporting and documentation requirements
- Default provisions and remedies

Agreements may be registered on title at the discretion of the Town.

6.5 Timing of Works

All approved works must be undertaken and completed within the timelines established in the program agreement.

The Town may require that:

- Approved works be commenced within a specified period following approval
- Construction be conducted in accordance with approved plans
- Projects be completed within a defined timeframe

Where a project is not commenced or completed within the required timeframe, the Town may terminate the program agreement and any associated financial incentives.

The Town may consider requests for extensions where they are warranted by site-specific conditions to the satisfaction of the Town.

6.6 Payment of Grants and Incentives

Financial assistance shall be provided upon completion of the approved works, submission of all required documentation, and confirmation by the Town that the works have been completed in accordance with the approved application, program requirements, and any applicable program agreement, to the satisfaction of the Town.

Applicants must submit itemized and detailed invoices, receipts, and any other documentation required to verify eligible costs. Applicants shall provide proof of payment in a form satisfactory to the Town, including but not limited to copies of paid invoices, certified cheques, or bank transfer documentation confirming that all eligible costs have been paid in full.

The Town may require inspection of completed works and confirmation that all applicable permits, approvals, and requirements have been satisfied prior to issuing payment.

As a condition of payment, the applicant may be required to provide confirmation satisfactory to the Town that no construction liens related to the approved works remain registered against the property. Where a construction lien has been registered, the Town may withhold payment until the lien has been discharged, withdrawn or otherwise resolved to the satisfaction of the Town.

Grants shall only be paid where all program requirements and agreement conditions have been satisfied.

The Town may require that improvements funded through this Plan be maintained in accordance with the terms of the applicable program agreement.

6.7 General Conditions

The following general conditions apply to all programs under this Plan:

Financial assistance shall not exceed the total eligible costs of the project

The Town reserves the right to audit all costs and supporting documentation submitted as part of an application.

The Town may reduce or cancel financial assistance where:

- The applicant has provided false or misleading information
- The project is not completed in accordance with the approved application or agreement
- The applicant is in default of any agreement with the Town
- The property is not in good standing with the Town

Where multiple sources of funding are provided, the total funding from all sources shall not exceed the total eligible costs of the project.

Where eligible, applications may be considered in conjunction with other Community Improvement Plan programs or municipal incentive programs, provided that the same eligible costs are not reimbursed more than once and total funding does not exceed 100% of eligible costs.

Applicants shall disclose any grants, rebates, subsidies or other financial assistance received or applied for in relation to the proposed improvements. Where financial assistance from another source is provided for the same eligible cost, the amount of that assistance shall be deducted when determining the remaining eligible cost for the purpose of calculating the Town's grant. Where funding from another source relates to a separate component or cost of the project, that funding shall not reduce the eligible costs associated with the Town's grant. In all cases, total financial assistance shall not exceed the total eligible cost of the project.

The Town reserves the right to modify, suspend, or discontinue any program at any time, subject to Council approval.

7.0 Monitoring, Reporting, and Amendments

7.1 Monitoring and Reporting

The Town may monitor the implementation and performance of this Community Improvement Plan on an ongoing basis.

Monitoring may include, but is not limited to, tracking:

- The number of applications received and approved
- The amount of financial assistance committed and distributed
- Leveraged private sector investment
- The number and type of projects completed
- The geographic distribution of applications and funded projects
- Changes in property assessment, where applicable

- The overall effectiveness of the Community Improvement Plan in achieving its goals and objectives.

The Town may report on the status and performance of the Community Improvement Plan to Council from time to time, as deemed appropriate. Reporting may include information regarding program participation, funding allocation, and outcomes achieved through the implementation of the Plan.

7.2 Promotion and Outreach

The Town may undertake promotional and outreach activities to increase awareness and uptake of the Community Improvement Plan and its associated programs.

This may include maintaining up to date information on the Town's website, preparing program guides and application materials, direct engagement with property owners and businesses, and coordination with local business organizations and community groups.

The Town may also undertake targeted outreach initiatives to support participation in priority areas or programs.

7.3 Amendments

This Community Improvement Plan may be amended from time to time to ensure that it remains relevant, effective, and aligned with the Town's priorities.

Council may approve changes to the program details, including funding limits, eligible costs, and administrative procedures, without requiring a comprehensive review of the Community Improvement Plan, provided such changes remain consistent with the intent of this Plan and applicable legislation.

Minor administrative amendments, including corrections, formatting changes, or updates required to improve the administration of the Plan, may also be approved by Council provided they remain consistent with the intent of this Plan and applicable legislation.

Major amendments, including changes to Community Improvement Project Areas, the introduction of new financial incentive programs, or other significant policy changes, may require a more comprehensive review and approval process in accordance with the *Planning Act* and other applicable legislation.

7.4 Interpretation

This Community Improvement Plan shall be interpreted by the Town. In the event of any ambiguity or conflict, the Town's interpretation shall prevail, provided such interpretation is consistent with applicable legislation and the intent of this Plan.

8.0 Conclusion

This Community Improvement Plan establishes a framework of financial incentive programs intended to support reinvestment, revitalization, and redevelopment within the Town of Fort Erie's Community Project Areas.

Through the implementation of these programs, the Town aims to encourage private sector investment, improve the quality and functionality of buildings and properties, and support broader objectives related to economic development, sustainability, and community enhancement.

The Plan provides a framework for the implementation of financial incentive programs, which may be adjusted by Council over time in response to changing priorities and available funding.

Town of Fort Erie
Core Area Community Improvement Plan



Appendix A
Commercial Building Improvement Grant Program

1.0 Program Description

The Commercial Building Improvement Grant Program is intended to support improvements to existing commercial and mixed-use buildings that enhance the visual appearance, functionality, accessibility, and safety of buildings, and the overall quality of properties within designated Community Improvement Project Areas.

The program is designed to encourage reinvestment in buildings, support business vitality, and contribute to high-quality streetscapes and public realm improvements. Eligible improvements shall be permanent in nature and transferable with property ownership.

All funded projects must demonstrate a clear public, environmental, economic, or community benefit consistent with the objectives of this Plan.

2.0 Program Eligibility

2.1 Eligible Areas

This program applies to lands located within the Community Improvement Project Areas, as identified on **Schedules A to F** of this Plan.

2.2 Eligible Applicants

Applicants must be:

- The registered property owner(s)
- An Authorized Agent or tenant with written authorization from the property owner(s)

For corporate applicants, all associated parties may be required to comply with the terms of the program agreement.

2.3 Eligible Projects

Eligible projects include permanent exterior improvements to existing commercial and mixed-use buildings that:

- Improve buildings facades and streetscape presence
- Enhance accessibility and safety
- Contribute to a visually cohesive and attractive public realm

The Town may determine the eligibility of any improvement or cost not explicitly identified, provided it aligns with the intent of the program.

2.4 Property Requirements

To be eligible:

- The property must be zoned Commercial or Core-Mixed Use, or equivalent, in accordance with the Zoning By-law
- The property must comply with all applicable laws, including Zoning, Building Code, Property Standards, and Sign By-laws
- All property taxes, utilities, and municipal charges must be paid in full
- The property must not be subject to outstanding work orders or violations

In addition, eligible properties must be used, or proposed to be used, in whole or in part for permitted commercial or mixed-use purposes.

Properties that are occupied solely by residential uses, including dwelling units permitted within commercial or mixed-use zones, are not eligible for funding under this program.

Where a property contains both residential and commercial uses, only the portions of the property used for commercial purposes, or improvements that directly support commercial activity, shall be eligible.

2.5 Timing Requirements

- Projects must be commenced in accordance with the timeframes established in the agreement, unless otherwise approved by the Town
- Extensions may be granted upon written request, subject to Town approval and where justified by site-specific conditions

2.6 Additional Eligibility Requirements

- Applications must be submitted and approved prior to the commencement of any work
- The Town shall require a minimum of three (3) cost estimates
- Contractors must be qualified, insured, and comply with WSIB requirements
- The Town may impose additional eligibility requirements at its discretion where consistent with the intent of the program

3.0 Eligible Costs

Eligible costs are limited to permanent exterior improvements visible from the public realm.

Eligible costs may include:

3.1 Façade Improvements

- Repair, restoration, or replacement of exterior cladding
- Masonry repair and repointing
- Painting of exterior surfaces
- Restoration of architectural features (cornices, parapets, detailing)

3.2 Windows and Doors

- Repair or replacement of storefront windows and doors
- Installation of energy efficient glazing systems
- Improvements to storefront systems

3.3 Accessibility Improvements

- Barrier-free entrances
- Exterior ramps and accessible pathways
- Automatic door systems

3.4 Exterior Lighting & Signage Improvements

- Installation or upgrade of exterior lighting
- Architectural lighting
- Signage

3.5 Landscaping and Site Improvements

- Permanent landscaping visible from the public street
- Hardscaping elements such as walkways and entrances
- Improvements to pedestrian access

3.6 Additional Eligible Costs

- Other improvements as deemed eligible at the discretion of the Town

Eligible costs shall be limited to the front façade and, in the case of corner properties, the front and exterior side facades, unless otherwise approved by the Town.

4.0 Ineligible Costs

The following are not eligible:

- Interior improvements, furnishings, fixtures, or equipment
- Business inventory or operating expenses
- Temporary or non-permanent improvements
- Routine maintenance not resulting in a significant upgrade
- Outdoor furniture or movable elements

- Artificial landscaping materials
- Mechanical equipment not integrated into the building
- Improvements not visible from the public realm
- Any costs incurred prior to approval
- Labour or service provided by the property owner, tenant, or persons related to the applicant, unless otherwise approved by the Town
- Any costs deemed ineligible by the Town

5.0 Financial Incentive Details

- a. The program shall be structured as a cost-sharing grant
- b. The Town may provide funding equal to 50% of eligible costs, to a maximum of \$20,000 per property
- c. The maximum grant may be increased at the discretion of the Town for projects involving multiple facades, corner properties, or buildings with significant streetscape impact
- d. A minimum private investment threshold may be required
- e. One application shall be permitted per property within a period of 10 years
- f. The grant is tied to the approved project and shall not be reassigned or transferred without the consent of the Town
- g. Where funding from other sources is received, such funding must be declared and may be considered in determining the final grant amount
- h. The Town reserves the right to reduce funding to avoid duplication of funding

6.0 Program Administration

6.1 General Administration

- a. All programs established under this Community Improvement Plan shall be administered by the Town
- b. Applications must conform to the goals and objectives of this Plan.
- c. Applications shall be reviewed and evaluated by Town Staff in accordance with this Community Improvement Plan.
- d. Approval of applications shall be in accordance with the Town's applicable Delegation of Authority By-law. Where delegated authority has not been established, approval shall be by Council.
- e. Approval of any application is subject to:
 - i. Availability of funding
 - ii. Satisfaction with all program requirements
 - iii. Compliance with all applicable legislation and municipal by-laws

6.2 Application Process

6.2.1 Application Submission

- a. A complete application must be submitted in a form prescribed by the Town.
- b. Applications must be submitted prior to:
 - i. The commencement of any works
 - ii. The issuance of a Building Permit (where applicable)
- c. Applications may be subject to intake periods, as determined by the Town
- d. The Town may circulate application internally for review
- e. The Town may request additional information or clarification at any time during the process

6.2.2 Complete Application Requirements

A complete application shall include, to the satisfaction of the Town:

Required Documentation

- a. Completed application form
- b. Proof of ownership or authorization
- c. Detailed description of proposed works
- d. Photographs of existing conditions
- e. Minimum three (3) cost estimates
- f. Plans, drawings, or renderings (where applicable)

Conditional Documentation (as determined by the Town)

- a. Site plan or survey
- b. Architectural drawings prepared by a qualified professional
- c. Heritage approvals (where applicable)
- d. Signed contracts
- e. Business case or justification for the project
- f. Any additional documentation required by the Town

6.3 Evaluation and Approval

- a. Applications shall be based on:
 - i. Consistency with the objectives of the Plan
 - ii. Eligibility of the project
 - iii. Quality and feasibility of proposed works
 - iv. Availability of funding
- b. The Town may undertake due diligence including:
 - i. Review of property tax status
 - ii. Review of compliance with by-law

- c. The Town may approve, defer, or refuse any application
- d. Approval of an application is at the discretion of the Town and shall not be deemed automatic, even where all criteria are met

6.4 Agreements

- a. The Town shall require the applicant to enter into a formal agreement prior to the issuance of any financial assistance
- b. The agreement may include:
 - i. Description of approved works
 - ii. Eligible costs and grant amount
 - iii. Timing requirements
 - iv. Payment conditions
 - v. Maintenance obligations
 - vi. Default and repayment provisions
- c. Agreements may be registered on title at the discretion of the Town

6.5 Commencement of Work

- a. Work must not commence prior to application approval
- b. Costs incurred prior to approval shall not be eligible unless otherwise approved by the Town

6.6 Timing of Work

- a. Approved works must be:
 - i. Commenced within the time established in the agreement
 - ii. Completed in accordance with the agreement
- b. Where timelines are not met, the Town may:
 - i. Cancel the application
 - ii. Withdraw financial assistance
- c. Extensions may be considered upon written requests where warranted by site-specific conditions and approved by the Town

6.7 Payment of Grants and Incentives

- a. Grants shall be paid upon completion of the approved work and fulfillment of all program requirements
- b. Payment is conditional upon:
 - i. Completion of works in accordance with approved plans
 - ii. Inspection by the Town confirming compliance

- iii. Submission of final invoices containing a detailed description of the completed work and itemized costs, issued by a third-party vendor, and clearly identifying the applicant and subject property
 - iv. Submission of proof of payment, including certified cheques, bank transfer documentation, or other documentation satisfactory to the Town confirming who made the payment, the amount paid, the date of payment, and the recipient of payment
 - v. Submission of photographic documentation
 - vi. Confirmation that all municipal accounts are in good standing
- c. Proof of payment by electronic transfer must include confirmation showing the sender, recipient, date, and amount, and must clearly correspond to the associated invoice. The Town reserves the right to request additional supporting documentation where necessary to verify eligible project costs
- d. The Town reserves the right to reject invoices or supporting documentation that are incomplete, unclear, or not directly related to approved project costs
- e. The Town may require an affidavit confirming that all contractors have been paid in full

6.8 Program Administration and Monitoring

- a. The Town may inspect any property that is subject to an application at any time
- b. The Town may audit project costs and supporting documentation where necessary
- c. The Town shall monitor the program uptake, funding allocation, and outcomes
- d. The Town may update program details from time to time, subject to Council approval

6.9 General Conditions

- a. Financial assistance shall not exceed total eligible project costs
- b. Where funding from other sources is secured, the Town may reduce funding to ensure total funding does not exceed eligible costs
- c. Properties that have received funding through the same or substantially similar Community Improvement Program within the previous ten (10) years may be deemed ineligible, unless otherwise approved by the Town
- d. All costs associated with the project shall be borne by the applicant
- e. Projects must comply with all applicable:
 - i. Legislation

- ii. Municipal by-laws
 - iii. Policies and guidelines
- f. The Town reserves the right to assess the reasonableness of all costs and may adjust eligible costs accordingly
- g. The applicant shall be responsible for obtaining all required permits and approvals
- h. All improvements funded through this program shall be maintained in good condition for a minimum period of five (5) years from the date of grant payment to the satisfaction of the Town
- i. The Town may require confirmation satisfactory to the Town that no construction liens related to the approved works remain registered against the Property. Where a construction lien has been registered, the Town may withhold payment until the lien has been discharged, withdrawn or otherwise resolved to the satisfaction of the Town.
- j. Where a project or cost is eligible under more than one program, the Town shall determine the most appropriate program for funding. Funding shall not be duplicated for the same improvement or cost

6.10 Default and Forfeiture

The Town may cancel, suspend, or require repayment of any grant approved under this program where:

- a. The project is not completed in accordance with approved plans or program requirements
- b. False, misleading, or incomplete information has been provided by the applicant
- c. The applicant is in default of any agreement with the Town
- d. The improvements are not maintained in accordance with the terms of the program or agreement
- e. The property becomes subject to non-compliance with applicable legislation, by-laws, or orders

Where a grant has been issued and any of the above conditions occur, the Town may require repayment of all or a portion of the funding in accordance with the terms of the applicable program agreement.

6.11 Discretion

The Town may, at its sole discretion:

- Determine the eligibility of any application, project, or cost

- Refuse any application, even where all program criteria are met
- Impose additional conditions on any approval
- Interpret the intent and application of this program
- Prioritize applications where funding is limited or multiple applications are received, based on alignment with the objectives of this Plan, strategic priorities, geographic focus areas, anticipated community benefit, or other considerations determined by the Town.

7.0 Mapping

This program applies to lands within the Community Improvement Project Areas, as shown on **Schedules A to F** of this Plan.

Town of Fort Erie

Core Area Community Improvement Plan



Appendix B

Professional Study Grant Program

1.0 Program Description

The Professional Study Grant Program is intended to support studies and technical work required to advance redevelopment, rehabilitation, or significant property improvements within designated Community Improvement Project Areas.

The program is designed to reduce upfront costs associated with planning, design, and technical analysis that are necessary to support viable development projects.

Financial assistance shall only be provided where the study is related to a proposed project and contributes to advancing that project toward implementation.

2.0 Program Eligibility

2.1 Eligible Areas

This program applies to lands within the Community Improvement Project Areas, as identified on **Schedules A to F** of this Plan.

2.2 Eligible Applicants

Applicants must be:

- The registered property owner; or
- An Authorized Agent or tenant with written authorization from the property owner(s)

For corporate applicants, all associated parties may be required to comply with the terms of the program agreement.

2.3 Eligible Projects

Eligible projects must:

- Be directly tied to a proposed development, redevelopment, or property improvement project
- Support a future planning application, building permit, or site improvement
- Demonstrate intent to proceed toward implementation

2.4 Property Requirements

To be eligible:

- The property must be located within a designated Community Improvement Project Area
- The proposed project must be consistent with the Town's Official Plan and applicable zoning

- All property taxes, utilities, and municipal charges must be paid in full
- The property must not be subject to outstanding work orders or violations

In addition, eligible properties must be used, or proposed to be used, in whole or in part for permitted commercial or mixed-use purposes.

Properties that are occupied solely by residential uses, including dwelling units permitted within commercial or mixed-use zones, are not eligible for funding under this program.

Where a property contains both residential and commercial uses, only the portions of the property used for commercial purposes, or improvements that directly support commercial activity, shall be eligible.

2.5 Timing Requirements

- Studies must be completed within one (1) year of approval to be eligible for payment
- Extensions may be granted upon written request, subject to Town approval and where justified by site-specific conditions

2.6 Additional Eligibility Requirements

- Applications must be submitted and approved prior to the commencement of any work
- Studies must be prepared by qualified professionals, as defined in the Plan
- The Town may determine additional eligibility requirements at its discretion where consistent with the intent of the program

3.0 Eligible Costs

Eligible costs are limited to studies prepared by qualified professionals that directly support redevelopment or site improvement.

Eligible studies may include:

- Feasibility studies and site development concepts
- Architectural or urban design studies
- Heritage impact assessments or conservation plans
- Servicing, infrastructure, and technical studies required to support development
- Accessibility assessments related to building improvements
- Cultural heritage evaluations
- Conservation plans for designated or listed properties
- Preliminary environmental assessments (non-brownfield program specific)

- Archeological assessments, where required under applicable legislation

4.0 Ineligible Costs

The following are not eligible:

- Studies not tied to a specific property
- General business plans or operational studies
- Ongoing operational or maintenance studies
- Studies completed prior to application approval
- Studies funded through another Town program
- Labour or services provided by the property owner, tenant, or persons related to the applicant, unless otherwise approved by the Town
- Any costs deemed ineligible by the Town

5.0 Financial Incentive Details

- a. The program shall be structured as a cost-sharing program
- b. The Town may provide funding equal to 50% of eligible study costs, to a maximum of \$7,500 per property
- c. A minimum study cost threshold may be required
- d. One application per property shall be permitted within a period of 10 years
- e. Where funding from other sources is secured, the Town may reduce the grant to ensure total funding does not exceed eligible costs
- f. Funding is subject to availability and Council approval

6.0 Program Administration

6.1 General Administration

- a. All programs established under this Community Improvement Plan shall be administered by the Town
- b. Applications must conform to the goals and objectives of this Plan
- c. Applications shall be reviewed and evaluated by Town Staff in accordance with this Community Improvement Plan.
- d. Approval of applications shall be in accordance with the Town's applicable Delegation of Authority By-law. Where delegated authority has not been established, approval shall be by Council.
- e. Approval of any application is subject to:
 - i. Availability of funding
 - ii. Satisfaction with all program requirements
 - iii. Compliance with all applicable legislation and municipal by-laws

6.2 Application Process

6.2.1 Application Submission

- a. A complete application must be submitted in a form prescribed by the Town
- b. Applications must be submitted prior to the commencement of any work
- c. Applications may be subject to intake periods, as determined by the Town
- d. The Town may circulate applications internally for review
- e. The Town may request additional information or clarification at any time during the process

6.2.2 Complete Application Requirements

A complete application shall include, to the satisfaction of the Town:

- a. Completed application form
- b. Proof of ownership or authorization
- c. Detailed description of the proposed study
- d. Scope of work prepared by a qualified professional
- e. Any additional documentation required by the Town

6.3 Evaluation and Approval

- a. Applications shall be evaluated based on:
 - i. Consistency with the objectives of the Plan
 - ii. Demonstrated connection to redevelopment or property improvement
 - iii. Reasonableness of proposed costs
 - iv. Availability of funding
- b. The Town may undertake due diligence including:
 - i. Review of property tax status
 - ii. Review of compliance with by-laws
- c. The Town may approve, defer, or refuse any application
- d. Approval of an application is at the discretion of the Town and shall not be deemed automatic, even where all criteria are met

6.4 Agreements

- a. The Town may require the applicant to enter into a formal agreement prior to the issuance of any financial assistance.
- b. The agreement may include:
 - i. Description of approved study
 - ii. Eligible costs and grant amount
 - iii. Timing requirements

- iv. Payment conditions
- v. Default and repayment provisions
- c. Agreements may be registered on title at the discretion of the Town

6.5 Commencement of Work

- a. Work must not commence prior to application approval
- b. Costs incurred prior to approval shall not be eligible unless otherwise approved by the Town

6.6 Timing of Work

- a. Approved studies must be completed within the timeframe established in the agreement
- b. Where timelines are not met, the Town may:
 - i. Cancel the application
 - ii. Withdraw financial assistance
- c. Extensions may be considered where warranted by site-specific conditions approved by the Town

6.7 Payment of Grants and Incentives

- a. Grants shall be paid upon completion of the approved work and fulfillment of all program requirements
- b. Payment is conditional upon:
 - i. Submission of the final study report
 - ii. Submission of final invoices containing a detailed description of the completed work and itemized costs, issued by a third-party vendor, and clearly identifying the applicant and subject property
 - iii. Submission of proof of payment, including certified cheques, bank transfer documentation, or other documentation satisfactory to the Town confirming who made the payment, the amount paid, the date of payment, and the recipient of the payment
- c. Proof of payment by electronic transfer must include confirmation showing the sender, recipient, date, and amount, and must clearly correspond to the associated invoice. The Town reserves the right to request additional supporting documentation where necessary to verify eligible costs
- d. The Town may require confirmation satisfactory to the Town that no construction liens related to the approved works remain registered against the Property. Where a construction lien has been registered, the Town may withhold payment until the lien has been discharged, withdrawn or otherwise resolved to the satisfaction of the Town.

- e. The Town reserves the right to reject invoices or supporting documentation that are incomplete, unclear, or not directly related to approved project costs
- f. The Town may require an affidavit confirming that all contractors have been paid in full

6.8 Program Administration and Monitoring

- a. The Town may review and assess the quality and completeness of submitted studies
- b. The Town may determine whether the study meets the intent of the program prior to issuing payment
- c. The Town shall monitor program uptake and outcomes

6.9 General Conditions

- a. Financial assistance shall not exceed total eligible project costs
- b. Where funding from other sources is secured, the Town may reduce funding to ensure total funding does not exceed eligible costs
- c. Properties that have received funding through the same or substantially similar Community Improvement Program within the previous ten (10) years may be deemed ineligible, unless otherwise approved by the Town
- d. All costs associated with the project shall be borne by the applicant
- e. The Town reserves the right to assess the reasonableness of all costs and may adjust eligible costs accordingly
- f. The applicant shall be responsible for obtaining all required permits and approvals
- g. Where a project or cost is eligible under more than one program, the Town shall determine the most appropriate program for funding. Funding shall not be duplicated for the same improvement or cost

6.10 Default and Forfeiture

The Town may cancel, suspend, or require repayment of any grant approved under this program where:

- a. The study is not completed in accordance with approved scope
- b. False, misleading, or incomplete information has been provided by the applicant
- c. The applicant is in default of any agreement with the Town
- d. The property becomes subject to non-compliance with applicable legislation, by-laws, or orders
- e. The study does not meet the intent of the program

Where a grant has been issued and any of the above conditions occur, the Town may require repayment of all or a portion of the funding in accordance with the terms of the applicable program agreement.

6.11 Discretion

The Town may, at its sole discretion:

- Determine the eligibility of any application, study, or cost
- Refuse any application, even where all program criteria are met
- Impose additional conditions on any approval
- Prioritize applications where funding is limited or multiple applications are received, based on alignment with the objectives of this Plan, strategic priorities, geographic focus areas, anticipated community benefit, or other considerations determined by the Town.

7.0 Mapping

This program applies to lands within the Community Improvement Project Areas, as shown on **Schedules A to F** of this Plan.

Town of Fort Erie

Core Area Community Improvement Plan



Appendix C

Sustainability and Climate Improvement Grant Program

1.0 Program Description

The Sustainability and Climate Improvement Grant Program is intended to support building and site improvements that enhance energy efficiency, reduce environmental impacts, and contribute to climate resilience within designated Community Improvement Project Areas.

The program supports the implementation of the Town's Climate Change Action Plan and encourages improvements that result in long-term environmental performance benefits.

Eligible improvements must be permanent in nature and demonstrate measurable environmental benefits and contribute to long-term sustainability outcomes.

All funded projects must demonstrate a clear public, environmental, economic, or community benefit consistent with the objectives of this Plan.

This program shall not provide financial assistance for minor upgrades, routine replacements, or improvements that do not result in a meaningful environmental benefit.

2.0 Program Eligibility

2.1 Eligible Areas

This program applies to lands located within the Community Improvement Project Areas, as identified on Schedules A to F of this Plan.

2.2 Eligible Applicants

Applicants must be:

- The registered property owner; or
- An Authorized Agent or tenant with written authorization from the property owner(s).

For corporate applicants, all associated parties may be required to comply with the terms of the program agreement.

2.3 Eligible Projects

Eligible projects must:

- Demonstrate a clear environmental or climate-related benefit
- Contribute to energy efficiency, emissions reduction, or climate resilience
- Be part of a broader building or site improvement initiative

- Be consistent with the objectives of the Town's Climate Change Action Plan

The Town may determine the eligibility of any improvement not explicitly identified, provided it aligns with the intent of the program.

2.4 Property Requirements

To be eligible:

- The property must be located within a designated Community Improvement Project Area
- The proposed improvements must be consistent with the Town's Official Plan and applicable zoning
- All property taxes, utilities, and municipal charges must be paid in full
- The property must not be subject to outstanding work orders or violations

In addition, eligible properties must be used, or proposed to be used, in whole or in part for permitted commercial or mixed-use purposes.

Properties that are occupied solely by residential uses, including dwelling units permitted within commercial or mixed-use zones, are not eligible for funding under this program.

Where a property contains both residential and commercial uses, only the portions of the property used for commercial purposes, or improvements that directly support commercial activity, shall be eligible.

2.5 Timing Requirements

- Applications must be submitted and approved prior to the commencement of any work
- Approved works must be completed within the timeframes established in the program agreement
- Extensions may be considered upon written requests where warranted by site-specific conditions and subject to approval by the Town.

2.6 Additional Eligibility Requirements

- Improvements must be permanent in nature and affixed to the property
- Contractors must be qualified, insured, and comply with WSIB requirements
- The Town may require supporting documentation (e.g., energy audits, technical specs) to demonstrate measurable environmental benefits
- The Town may determine additional eligibility requirements at its discretion where consistent with the intent of the program

3.0 Eligible Costs

Eligible costs are limited to permanent improvements that result in demonstrable environmental benefit to the satisfaction of the Town.

Eligible costs must form part of a comprehensive building or site improvement and shall not include standalone or minor upgrades.

Eligible costs may include:

3.1 Building Envelope Improvements

- Insulation upgrades exceeding minimum Building Code requirements
- Air sealing and building envelope improvements
- High-performance windows and doors, where part of a comprehensive building envelope or façade improvement

3.2 Energy Systems

- High-efficiency HVAC systems
- Heat pump systems
- Building automation systems
- Solar photovoltaic systems
- Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure

3.3 Green Infrastructure and Site Improvements

- Tree planting and urban greening (species requirements may apply)
- Native or pollinator landscaping
- Rain gardens, bioswales, and infiltration systems
- Permeable paving systems

3.4 Additional Eligible Costs

- Other sustainability-related improvements deemed eligible by the Town that support the objectives of this Plan.

4.0 Ineligible Costs

The following are not eligible:

- Routine replacements or minor upgrades that do not result in measurable environmental benefit
- Standalone minor fixtures or equipment, including but not limited to, plumbing fixtures, appliances, or similar low-cost items
- Interior-only upgrades with no demonstrated environmental impact

- Landscaping improvements that are primarily decorative in nature and do not provide a clear environmental or functional benefit (e.g., ornamental features without ecological or stormwater function)
- Portable or temporary installations
- Maintenance activities
- Improvements completed prior to application approval
- Labour or service provided by the property owner, tenant, or persons related to the applicant, unless otherwise approved by the Town
- Any costs deemed ineligible by the Town

5.0 Financial Incentive Details

- a. The program shall be structured as a cost-sharing grant
- b. The Town may provide funding equal to up to 50% of eligible costs, to a maximum of \$5,000 per property
- c. A minimum project value may be required
- d. One application shall be permitted per property within a period of ten (10) years
- e. Where funding from other sources is secured, the Town may reduce the grant to ensure total funding does not exceed eligible costs
- f. Funding is subject to availability and Council approval

6.0 Program Administration

6.1 General Administration

- a. All programs established under this Community Improvement Plan shall be administered by the Town
- b. Applications must conform to the goals and objectives of this Plan
- c. Applications shall be reviewed and evaluated by Town staff in accordance with this Community Improvement Plan.
- d. Approval of applications shall be in accordance with the Town's applicable Delegation of Authority By-law. Where delegated authority has not been established, approval shall be by Council.
- e. Approval of any application is subject to:
 - i. Availability of funding
 - ii. Satisfaction with all program requirements
 - iii. Compliance with all applicable legislation and municipal by-laws

6.2 Application Process

6.2.1 Application Submission

- a. A complete application must be submitted in a form prescribed by the Town
- b. Applications must be submitted prior to:
 - i. The commencement of any works
 - ii. The issuance of a Building Permit (where applicable)
- c. Applications may be subject to intake periods, as determined by the Town
- d. The Town may circulate application internally for review
- e. The Town may request additional information or clarification at any time during the process

6.2.2 Complete Application Requirements

A complete application shall include, to the satisfaction of the Town:

Required Documentation

- a. Completed application form
- b. Proof of ownership or authorization
- c. Detailed description of proposed works
- d. Three (3) Cost estimates or contractor quotations
- e. Supporting documentation demonstrating environmental benefit

Conditional Documentation (as determined by the Town)

- a. Energy audits or technical report
- b. Site plans or drawings
- c. Manufacturer specifications
- d. Any additional documentation required by the Town

6.3 Evaluation and Approval

- a. Applications shall be based on:
 - iii. Consistency with the objectives of the Plan
 - iv. Demonstrated environmental benefit
 - v. Alignment with the Climate Action Plan
 - vi. Scale and impact of the proposed improvements
 - vii. Availability of funding

Environmental benefit will be assessed based on supporting documentation provided by the applicant, which may include product specifications, energy efficiency ratings, design details, or other information demonstrating anticipated performance improvements, to the satisfaction of the Town.

- b. The Town may undertake due diligence including:
 - i. Review of property tax status
 - ii. Review of compliance with by-laws
- c. The Town may approve, defer, or refuse any application
- d. Approval of an application is at the discretion of the Town and shall not be deemed automatic, even where all criteria are met

6.4 Agreements

- a. The Town shall require the applicant to enter into a formal agreement prior to the issuance of any financial assistance
- b. The agreement may include:
 - i. Description of approved works
 - ii. Eligible costs and grant amount
 - iii. Timing requirements
 - iv. Payment conditions
 - v. Maintenance obligations
 - vi. Default and repayment provisions
- c. Agreements may be registered on title at the discretion of the Town

6.5 Commencement of Work

- a. Work must not commence prior to application approval
- b. Costs incurred prior to approval shall not be eligible unless otherwise approved by the Town

6.6 Timing of Work

- a. Approved works must be:
 - i. Commenced within the timeframe established in the agreement
 - ii. Completed within the timeframe established in the agreement
- b. Where timelines are not met, the Town may:
 - i. Cancel the application
 - ii. Withdraw financial assistance
- c. Extensions may be considered where warranted by site-specific conditions approved by the Town

6.7 Payment of Grants and Incentives

- a. Grants shall be paid upon completion of the approved work and fulfillment of all program requirements
- b. Payment is conditional upon:
 - i. Completion of works in accordance with approved plans

- ii. Inspection by the Town confirming compliance
- iii. Submission of final invoices containing a detailed description of the completed work and itemized costs, issued by a third-party vendor, and clearly identifying the applicant and subject property
- iv. Submission of proof of payment including certified cheques, bank transfer documentation, or other documentation satisfactory to the Town confirming who made the payment, the amount paid, the date of payment, and the recipient of payment
- v. Submission of supporting documentation
- vi. Confirmation that all municipal accounts are in good standing
- c. Proof of payment by electronic transfer must include confirmation showing the sender, recipient, date, and amount, and must clearly correspond to the associated invoice. The Town reserves the right to request additional supporting documentation where necessary to verify eligible project costs
- d. The Town reserves the right to reject invoices or supporting documentation that are incomplete, unclear, or not directly related to approved project costs
- e. The Town may require an affidavit confirming that all contractors have been paid in full

6.8 Program Administration and Monitoring

- a. The Town may inspect any property that is subject to an application at any time
- b. The Town may audit project costs and supporting documentation where necessary
- c. The Town shall monitor the program uptake, funding allocation, and outcomes
- d. The Town may update program details from time to time, subject to Council approval

6.9 General Conditions

- a. Financial assistance shall not exceed total eligible project costs
- b. Where funding from other sources is secured, the Town may reduce funding to ensure total funding does not exceed eligible costs
- c. Properties that have received funding through the same or substantially similar Community Improvement Program within the previous ten (10) years may be deemed ineligible, unless otherwise approved by the Town
- d. All costs associated with the project shall be borne by the applicant
- e. Projects must comply with all applicable:

- i. Legislation
 - ii. Municipal by-laws
 - iii. Policies and guidelines
- f. The Town reserves the right to assess the reasonableness of all costs and may adjust eligible costs accordingly
- g. The applicant shall be responsible for obtaining all required permits and approvals
- h. All improvements funded through this program shall be maintained in good condition for a minimum period of five (5) years. The Town may require applicants to demonstrate the ability to maintain installed improvements where ongoing performance is a key component of the project.
- i. The Town may require confirmation satisfactory to the Town that no construction liens related to the approved works remain registered against the Property. Where a construction lien has been registered, the Town may withhold payment until the lien has been discharged, withdrawn or otherwise resolved to the satisfaction of the Town.
- j. Where a project or cost is eligible under more than one program, the Town shall determine the most appropriate program for funding. Funding shall not be duplicated for the same improvement or cost

6.10 Default and Forfeiture

The Town may cancel, suspend, or require repayment of any grant approved under this program where:

- The project is not completed in accordance with approved plans or program requirements
- False, misleading, or incomplete information has been provided by the applicant
- The applicant is in default of any agreement with the Town
- The improvements are not maintained in accordance with the terms of the program or agreement
- The property becomes subject to non-compliance with applicable legislation, by-laws, or orders

Where a grant has been issued and any of the above conditions occur, the Town may require repayment of all or a portion of the funding in accordance with the terms of the applicable program agreement.

6.11 Discretion

The Town may, at its sole discretion:

- Determine the eligibility of any application, project, or cost
- Refuse any application, even where all program criteria are met
- Impose additional conditions on any approval
- Prioritize applications where funding is limited or multiple applications are received, based on alignment with the objectives of this Plan, strategic priorities, geographic focus areas, anticipated community benefit, or other considerations determined by the Town.
- Interpret the intent and application of this program

7.0 Mapping

This program applies to lands within the Community Improvement Project Areas, as shown on **Schedules A to F** of this Plan.

Town of Fort Erie

Core Area Community Improvement Plan



Appendix D

Residential Creation and Intensification Grant

1.0 Program Description

The Residential Creation and Intensification Grant Program is intended to support the creation of new residential dwelling units within the Town's designated Core Area Community Improvement Project Areas.

The program is intended to encourage residential intensification as part of broader Core Area revitalization by supporting increased residential activity, the adaptive reuse of underutilized buildings and upper floors, and mixed-use development.

Increasing the residential population within established commercial areas can contribute to increased activity throughout the day and evening, support for local businesses and services, more active main streets, and more efficient use of existing infrastructure and services.

The objective of the program is to encourage residential activity as one component of a broader Core Area revitalization strategy.

This program is distinct from the Town's Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan, which provides incentives specifically intended to support housing that meets the Town's established affordability requirements.

2.0 Program Eligibility

2.1 Eligible Areas

This program applies to lands located within the Community Improvement Project Areas, as identified on Schedules A to F of this Plan.

2.2 Eligible Applicants

Applicants must be:

- The registered property owner; or
- An Authorized Agent or tenant with written authorization from the property owner(s).

For corporate applicants, all associated parties may be required to comply with the terms of the program agreement.

2.3 Eligible Projects

Eligible projects must:

- Result in the creation of one or more new residential dwelling units;
- Be located within a designated Core Area Community Improvement Project Area;

- Be consistent with the applicable policies of the Town’s Official Plan and zoning by-law;
- Comply with all applicable Building Code and municipal requirements; and
- Contribute to residential intensification, mixed-use development, adaptive reuse, or broader Core Area revitalization.

Eligible projects may include:

- The construction of new residential space;
- The conversion of existing non-residential space to residential use;
- The adaptive reuse of existing buildings;
- The creation of residential units above commercial or other permitted non-residential uses; and
- Other forms of intensification that are consistent with the objectives of this Plan.

The Town may determine the eligibility of any improvement not explicitly identified, provided it aligns with the intent of the program.

2.4 Property Requirements

To be eligible:

- The property must be located within a designated Community Improvement Project Area
- The proposed improvements must be consistent with the Town’s Official Plan and applicable zoning
- All property taxes, utilities, and municipal charges must be paid in full
- The property must not be subject to outstanding work orders or violations

In addition, eligible properties must be used, or proposed to be used, in whole or in part for permitted commercial or mixed-use purposes.

Properties that are occupied solely by residential uses, including dwelling units permitted within commercial or mixed-use zones, are not eligible for funding under this program.

2.5 Timing Requirements

- Applications must be submitted and approved prior to the commencement of any work
- Approved works must be completed within the timeframes established in the program agreement

- Extensions may be considered upon written requests where warranted by site-specific conditions and subject to approval by the Town.

2.6 Additional Eligibility Requirements

- New residential units must comply with all applicable Building Code, zoning, fire, servicing, and other municipal requirements
- The proposed dwelling units must constitute new residential space and shall not include the renovation or upgrading of an existing dwelling until without the creation of additional habitable residential space
- The Town may establish additional eligibility requirements where consistent with the intent of the program.

3.0 Eligible Costs

Financial assistance under this program is intended to support projects that result in the creation of new habitable residential space.

Eligible costs may include costs directly related to the construction, conversion, or adaptive reuse required to create new residential dwelling units, including:

- Construction and renovation costs directly associated with the creation of new dwelling units;
- Interior construction required to convert non-residential space to residential use;
- Structural alterations required to accommodate new residential space;
- Building systems and servicing work directly associated with the creation of new dwelling units;
- Architectural, engineering, and other professional services directly related to the eligible residential development; and
- Other costs directly related to the creation of new habitable residential space, as determined by the Town.

The Town shall require itemized invoices and supporting documentation to confirm that costs are directly related to the eligible project.

4.0 Ineligible Costs

The following costs are not eligible:

- Renovation, repair, or upgrading of an existing dwelling unit where no new residential dwelling unit or habitable residential space is created;
- Routine maintenance or repair;

- Furnishings, appliances, or other movable equipment;
- Costs associated with work completed prior to approval of the application;
- Labour or services provided by the property owner, tenant, or persons related to the applicant, unless otherwise approved by the Town;
- Costs not directly related to the creation of new habitable residential space;
- Development charges, property taxes, or other municipal fees, unless specifically identified as eligible under another Town program; and
- Any costs determined by the Town to be unreasonable or ineligible.

5.0 Financial Incentive Details

- The program shall be structured as a cost-sharing grant
- Financial assistance shall be provided at a rate of \$10 per square foot of new habitable residential space.
- The maximum grant shall be \$5,000 per new dwelling unit.
- Financial assistance shall be limited to a maximum of four (4) new dwelling units per property.
- The amount of new habitable residential space shall be verified through plans, building permit documentation, inspection, or other information satisfactory to the Town.
- The Residential Creation and Intensification Grant shall not be combined with an incentive under the Town's Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan for the same residential unit or the same eligible costs.
- Where a project includes multiple components that are eligible under different Town incentive programs, the applicant may be eligible for separate incentives for separate eligible costs, provided that the same costs are not funded more than once.
- Funding is subject to the availability of funds and approval in accordance with the Town's applicable Delegation of Authority By-law or Council approval, where required.

6.0 Program Administration

6.1 General Administration

- All programs established under this Community Improvement Plan shall be administered by the Town
- Applications must conform to the goals and objectives of this Plan
- Applications shall be reviewed and evaluated by Town staff in accordance with this Community Improvement Plan.

- d. Approval of applications shall be in accordance with the Town's applicable Delegation of Authority By-law. Where delegated authority has not been established, approval shall be by Council.
- e. Approval of any application is subject to:
 - i. Availability of funding
 - ii. Satisfaction with all program requirements
 - iii. Compliance with all applicable legislation and municipal by-laws

6.2 Application Process

6.2.1 Application Submission

- a. A complete application must be submitted in a form prescribed by the Town
- b. Applications must be submitted prior to:
 - i. The commencement of any works
 - ii. The issuance of a Building Permit (where applicable)
- c. Applications may be subject to intake periods, as determined by the Town
- d. The Town may circulate application internally for review
- e. The Town may request additional information or clarification at any time during the process

6.2.2 Complete Application Requirements

A complete application shall include, to the satisfaction of the Town:

Required Documentation

- a. Completed application form
- b. Proof of ownership or authorization
- c. Detailed description of proposed works
- d. Three (3) Cost estimates or contractor quotations
- e. Plans, floor plans, drawings, or other documentation identifying the proposed new residential dwelling units
- f. Any other information required to confirm program eligibility

6.3 Evaluation and Approval

- a. Applications shall be based on:
 - iii. Consistency with the objectives of the Plan
 - iv. Consistency with applicable planning policies and zoning requirements
 - v. The number and type of new residential dwelling units proposed
 - vi. Scale and impact of the proposed improvements
 - vii. Availability of funding

- b. The Town may undertake due diligence including:
 - i. Review of property tax status
 - ii. Review of compliance with by-laws
- c. The Town may approve, defer, or refuse any application
- d. Approval of an application is at the discretion of the Town and shall not be deemed automatic, even where all criteria are met

6.4 Agreements

- a. The Town shall require the applicant to enter into a formal agreement prior to the issuance of any financial assistance
- b. The agreement may include:
 - i. Description of approved works
 - ii. Eligible costs and grant amount
 - iii. Timing requirements
 - iv. Payment conditions
 - v. Default and repayment provisions
- c. Agreements may be registered on title at the discretion of the Town

6.5 Commencement of Work

- a. Work must not commence prior to application approval
- b. Costs incurred prior to approval shall not be eligible unless otherwise approved by the Town

6.6 Timing of Work

- a. Approved works must be:
 - i. Commenced within the timeframe established in the agreement
 - ii. Completed within the timeframe established in the agreement
- b. Where timelines are not met, the Town may:
 - i. Cancel the application
 - ii. Withdraw financial assistance
- c. Extensions may be considered where warranted by site-specific conditions approved by the Town

6.7 Payment of Grants and Incentives

- a. Grants shall be paid upon completion of the approved work and fulfillment of all program requirements
- b. Payment is conditional upon:
 - i. Completion of works in accordance with approved plans
 - ii. Inspection by the Town confirming compliance

- iii. Submission of final invoices containing a detailed description of the completed work and itemized costs, issued by a third-party vendor, and clearly identifying the applicant and subject property
 - iv. Submission of proof of payment including certified cheques, bank transfer documentation, or other documentation satisfactory to the Town confirming who made the payment, the amount paid, the date of payment, and the recipient of payment
 - v. Submission of supporting documentation
 - vi. Confirmation that all municipal accounts are in good standing
- c. Proof of payment by electronic transfer must include confirmation showing the sender, recipient, date, and amount, and must clearly correspond to the associated invoice. The Town reserves the right to request additional supporting documentation where necessary to verify eligible project costs
- d. The Town reserves the right to reject invoices or supporting documentation that are incomplete, unclear, or not directly related to approved project costs
- e. The Town may require an affidavit confirming that all contractors have been paid in full

6.8 Program Administration and Monitoring

- a. The Town may inspect any property that is subject to an application at any time
- b. The Town may audit project costs and supporting documentation where necessary
- c. The Town shall monitor the program uptake, funding allocation, and outcomes
- d. The Town may update program details from time to time, subject to Council approval

6.9 General Conditions

- a. Financial assistance shall not exceed total eligible project costs
- b. Where funding from other sources is secured, the Town may reduce funding to ensure total funding does not exceed eligible costs
- c. Properties that have received funding through the same or substantially similar Community Improvement Program within the previous ten (10) years may be deemed ineligible, unless otherwise approved by the Town
- d. All costs associated with the project shall be borne by the applicant
- e. Projects must comply with all applicable:
 - i. Legislation
 - ii. Municipal by-laws

iii. Policies and guidelines

- f. The Town reserves the right to assess the reasonableness of all costs and may adjust eligible costs accordingly
- g. The applicant shall be responsible for obtaining all required permits and approvals
- h. The Town may require confirmation satisfactory to the Town that no construction liens related to the approved works remain registered against the Property. Where a construction lien has been registered, the Town may withhold payment until the lien has been discharged, withdrawn or otherwise resolved to the satisfaction of the Town.
- i. Where a project or cost is eligible under more than one program, the Town shall determine the most appropriate program for funding. Funding shall not be duplicated for the same improvement or cost
- j. Where a proposed residential unit meets the eligibility requirements of the Town's Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan, the applicant may be directed to the applicable affordable housing program. The same residential unit shall not receive financial assistance under both this program and the Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan.

6.10 Default and Forfeiture

The Town may cancel, suspend, or require repayment of any grant approved under this program where:

- The project is not completed in accordance with approved plans or program requirements
- False, misleading, or incomplete information has been provided by the applicant
- The applicant is in default of any agreement with the Town
- The improvements are not maintained in accordance with the terms of the program or agreement
- The property becomes subject to non-compliance with applicable legislation, by-laws, or orders

Where a grant has been issued and any of the above conditions occur, the Town may require repayment of all or a portion of the funding in accordance with the terms of the applicable program agreement.

6.11 Discretion

The Town may, at its sole discretion:

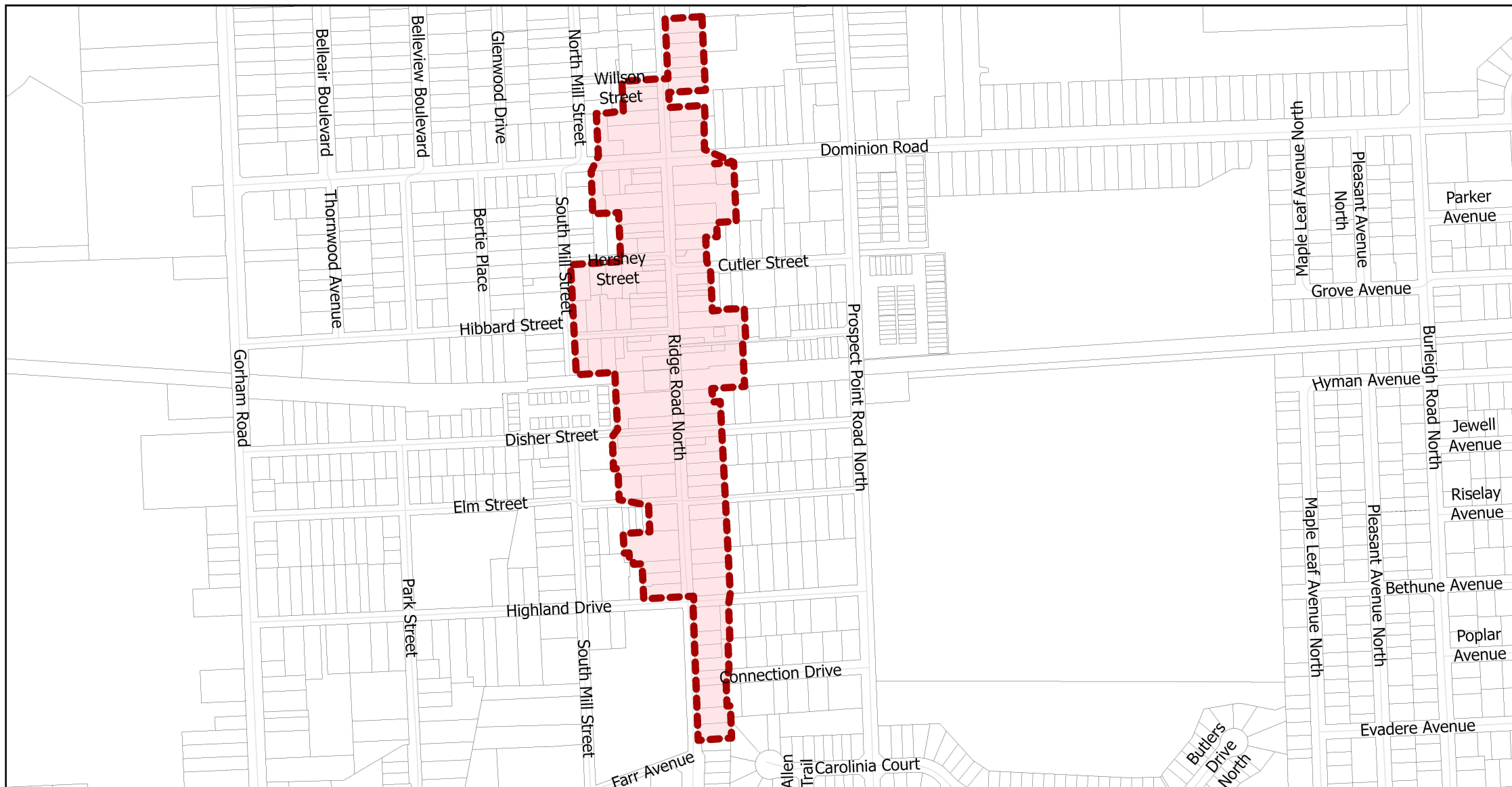
- Determine the eligibility of any application, project, or cost

- Refuse any application, even where all program criteria are met
- Impose additional conditions on any approval
- Prioritize applications where funding is limited or multiple applications are received, based on alignment with the objectives of this Plan, strategic priorities, geographic focus areas, anticipated community benefit, or other considerations determined by the Town.
- Interpret the intent and application of this program

7.0 Mapping

This program applies to lands within the Community Improvement Project Areas, as shown on **Schedules A to F of this Plan.**

Schedule "A"- Ridgeway Core Area



Town of Fort Erie Community Improvement Plan Project Area



Ridgeway Core Area, Fort Erie

0 65 130 260 Meters

N



Key Map

Schedule "B"- Bridgeburg Core Area



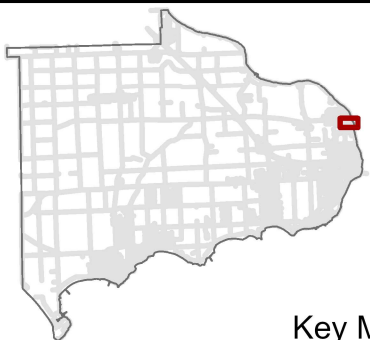
Town of Fort Erie Community Improvement Plan Project Area



Bridgeburg Core Area, Fort Erie

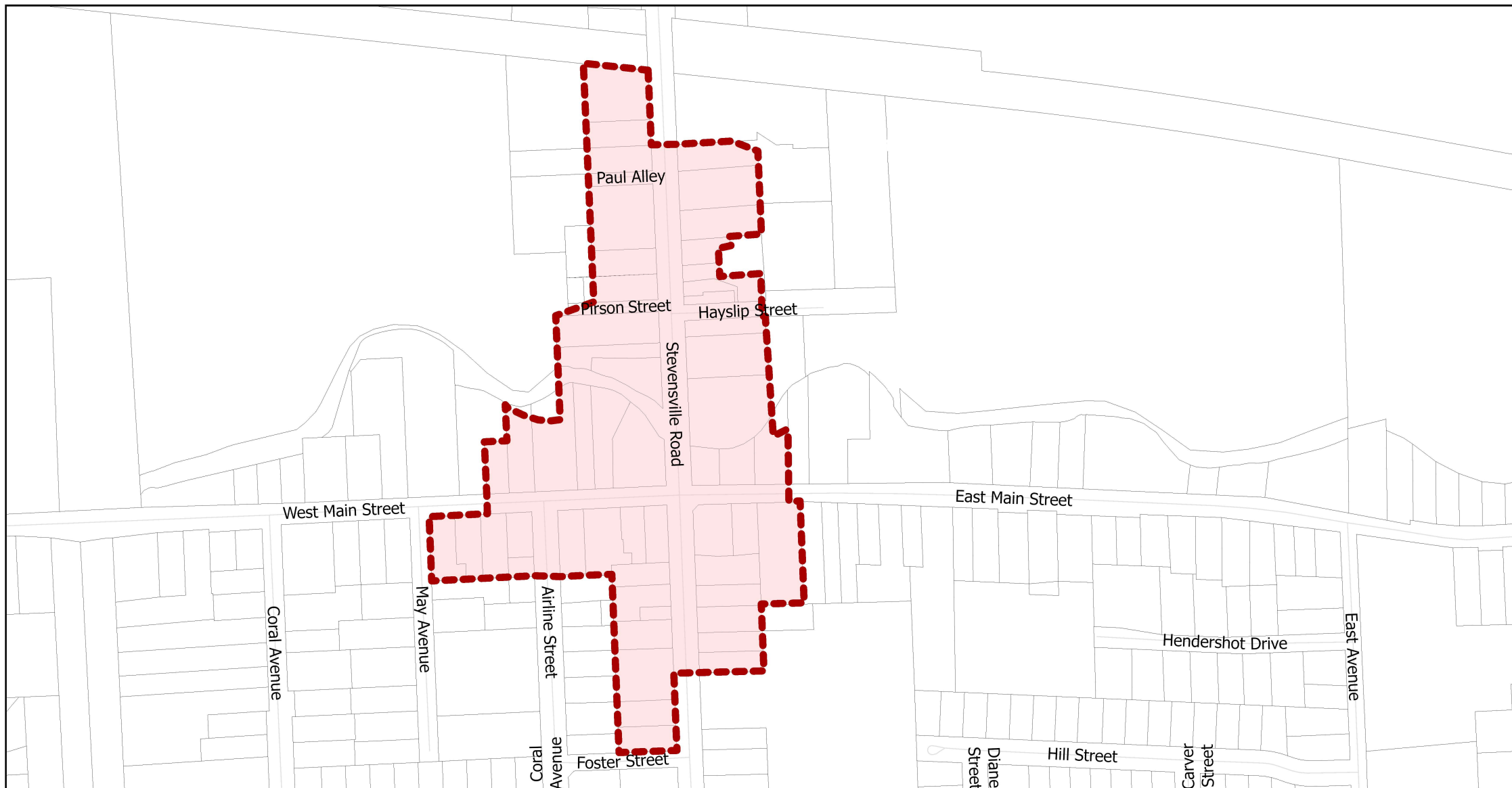
0 25 50 100 Meters

N



Key Map

Schedule "C"- Stevensville Core Area



Town of Fort Erie Community Improvement Plan Project Area



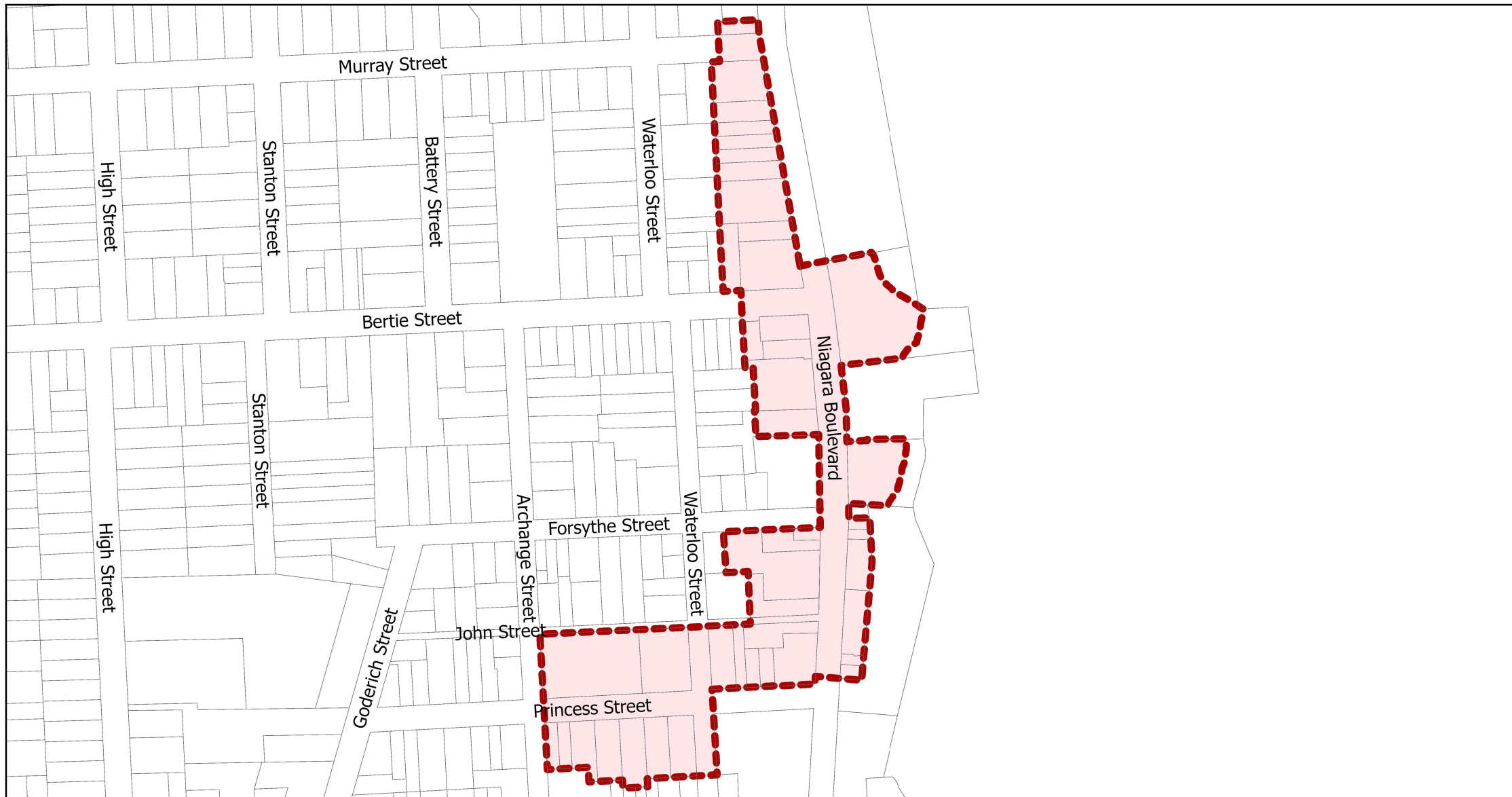
Stevensville Core Area, Fort Erie

0 35 70 140 Meters



Key Map

Schedule "D"- South End/ Riverwalk Core Area



Town of Fort Erie Community Improvement Plan Project Area



South End/ Riverwalk Core Area, Fort Erie

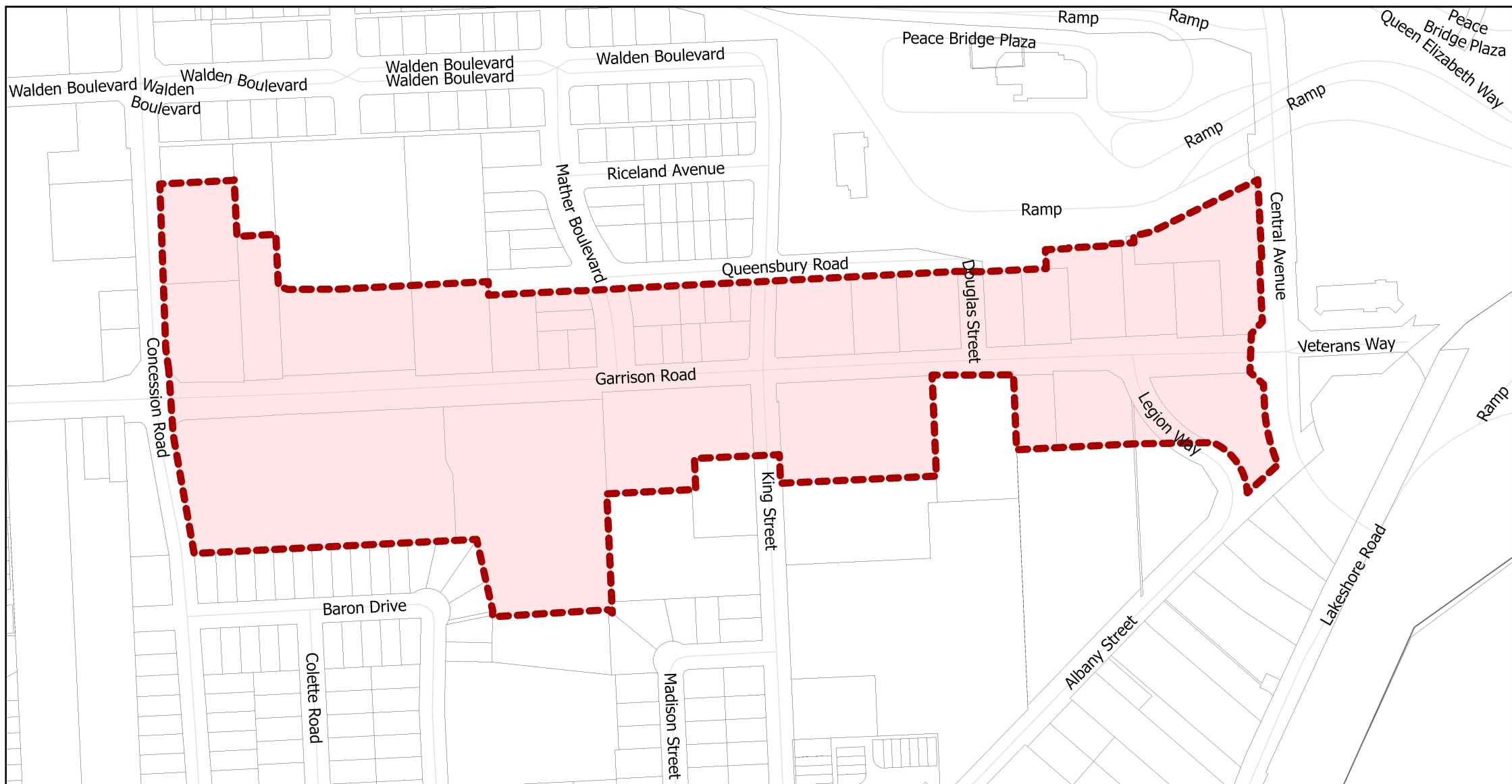


Key Map

0 2 4 8 Kilometers
A scale bar with markings for 0, 2, 4, and 8 kilometers.



Schedule "E"- Gateway Core Area



Town of Fort Erie Community Improvement Plan Project Area



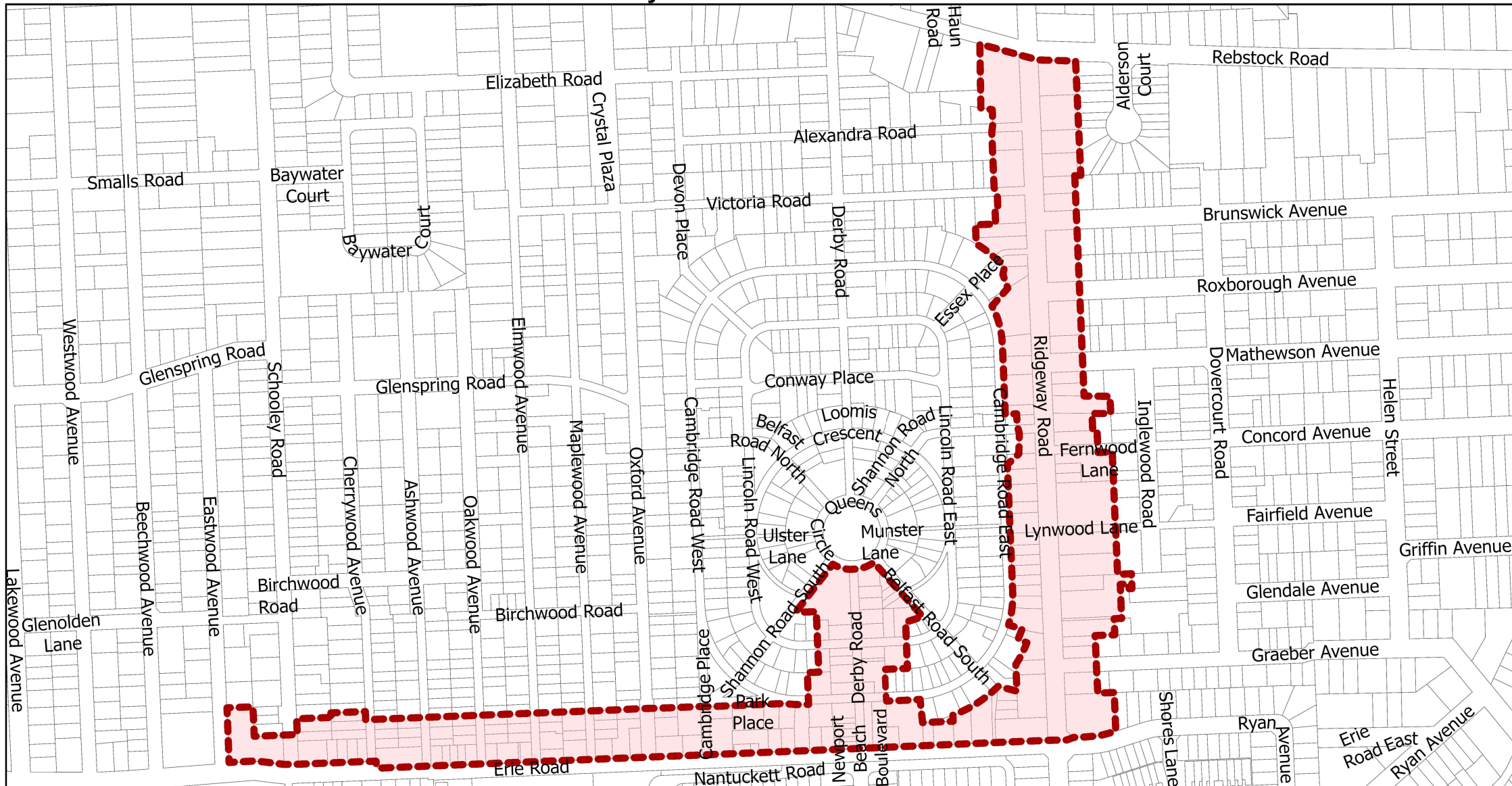
Gateway Core Area



Key Map



Schedule "F"- Crystal Beach Core Area



Town of Fort Erie Community Improvement Plan Project Area



Crystal Beach Core Area, Fort Erie



Key Map