

Policy #: TBA
Policy: Community Improvement Plan
Main Contact: TBA
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1 Policy Statement

The Township of Greater Madawaska is committed to supporting revitalization, attainable housing, and economic development across the Township. This Policy establishes the Township's Community Improvement Plan (CIP) under Section 28 of the Planning Act, designating the entire Township as a Community Improvement Project Area. The CIP provides a framework for financial incentives to encourage private-sector and community investment in attainable housing, business revitalization, tourism, accessibility, energy efficiency, and environmental sustainability.

This Community Improvement Plan operates in partnership with the County of Renfrew's *Helping Your Place Excel (HYPE)* Program and in accordance with Section 28 of the Planning Act. All incentive programs contained herein are designed to be stackable and reportable under the County's CIP framework.

2 Legislative Authority

This Policy is adopted as a Community Improvement Plan under Section 28 of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13. It is consistent with the County of Renfrew Official Plan, specifically Section 17.4 which states:

"Lower-tier community improvement projects are undertaken for the purpose of upgrading, redeveloping and rehabilitating the physical environment of older neighbourhoods, recreational areas, commercial centres, industrial areas, agricultural areas, affordable housing and environmental improvements.

The Community Improvement policies of this Plan are enabling policies under the Planning Act. The entire County of Renfrew is designated as a Community Improvement Area for which detailed Community Improvement Plans may be prepared. Community Improvement Plans are created for various situations where there is an identified community need. The implementing and project specific Community Improvement Plan Project Area by-laws may be passed by a local Council pursuant to the provisions of this Plan and in accordance with the provisions of the Planning Act. This provision of financial assistance in a Community Improvement Plan will be at the discretion of a local Council. Improvement Plans can be adopted for the following criteria:

- (a) A need to improve municipal services, such as roads, sidewalks, street lighting, parking, sewers, water supply, parks and recreation, community facilities, the waterfront areas or streetscaping. Improvements may apply to some or all of the listed services.
- (b) The cleanup and redevelopment of brownfield properties (if applicable) will be facilitated.
- (c) The phasing of improvements corresponds to the timing of improvements by the County and/or senior governments and is within the financial capability of the local municipality.
- (d) Improving a significant number of buildings in an area showing signs of deterioration and need of repair.
- (e) Improving the visual appearance or aesthetics of the overall streetscape.
- (f) Improving and strengthening the economic base of the community.
- (g) Addressing an environmental concern.

- (h) Addressing incompatible land uses.
- (i) Improving the affordable housing stock.
- (j) Heritage conservation.

(2) A regulation approved by the Province is required for the County to be able to implement a Community Improvement Plan. The implementing and project specific Community Improvement Plan Project Area by-laws may be passed by County Council pursuant to the provisions of this By-law.

3 Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to:

- Establish a clear framework for community improvement and financial incentives.
- Reduce barriers to attainable and rental housing development.
- Support local business and tourism growth through façade, signage, accessibility, and agri-tourism programs.
- Align Township priorities with the County of Renfrew Helping Your Place Excel (HYPE) Program, enabling funding partnerships and stacking opportunities.
- Promote investment that enhances sustainability, accessibility, and community well-being.

This Policy aligns with the Township's 2023–2026 Strategic Plan, advancing goals related to attainable housing, economic development, tourism, sustainability, and community wellness. It supports the Township's Grow Greater Together vision by encouraging planned growth, sustainable investment, and local revitalization that strengthen both the economy and quality of life for residents.

4 Scope

This Policy applies to all lands within the Township of Greater Madawaska, formally designating the Township as a Community Improvement Project Area under Section 28 of the Planning Act. Pursuant to Section 28(2) of the Planning Act, the Council of the Township of Greater Madawaska hereby designates the entire geographic area of the Township as the Community Improvement Project Area.

Priority may also be given to projects consistent with the County of Renfrew HYPE Program focus areas, including attainable and affordable housing creation, Village Core revitalization, and local business retention.

5 Exemptions

This Policy does not apply to:

- Projects that do not result in new attainable or affordable housing units (for housing-specific programs).
- Luxury or high-value residential projects that do not address community housing needs.
- Properties that are in tax arrears.
- Projects that have already started or been complete, prior to Council or staff approval.

Ineligible Property/Applicant Conditions:

- Applicants who do not own the property or have no written consent from the owner.
- Tenants applying without owner authorization.
- Non-taxable entities

Program Administration Exemptions:

- Council or staff may withhold funding where the application is incomplete, inaccurate, or misrepresents costs.
- Council may refuse grants if the applicant has previously defaulted on municipal payments or program requirements.

6 Guiding Ethics and Principles

The core values of the Township of Greater Madawaska shall be embodied and reflected as follows:

Accountability

We are accountable for all our actions by defining policies and procedures that guide successful service delivery.

Transparency

We promote an environment that embodies open and honest communication.

Respect

We strive to ensure equal access, opportunity, and representation for all.

Innovation

We foster municipal innovation by adapting to challenges with creativity and intention.

Sustainability

We view all actions through a sustainability lens to ensure environmental and operational resilience.

7 Definitions

- 7.1 **Attainable Housing:** Housing (rental or ownership) that is affordable to moderate-income households, generally those earning between 80% and 120% of the local or County median household income, with total shelter costs not exceeding 30% of gross income.
- 7.2 **Affordable Housing:** Housing (rental or ownership) for which total shelter costs, including rent or mortgage payments, property taxes, utilities, and related fees, do not exceed 30% of gross household income, consistent with the CMHC affordability benchmark and the PPS. Affordable housing shall generally be priced at or below 80% of the average market rent or sale price for comparable units within the County of Renfrew, as determined by CMHC or the County.
- 7.3 **Eligible Applicant:** Property owner or tenant with the owner's written consent
- 7.4 **Eligible Fees:** Township planning application fees (zoning by-law amendments, site plan, minor variance), building permit fees, and septic review fees.
- 7.5 **Eligible Works:** Renovations, upgrades, or new construction that result in code-compliant, legal housing units or improvements to commercial/industrial/agri-tourism properties.
- 7.6 **HYPE Program:** The County of Renfrew's Helping Your Place Excel Program, which provides matching funding for eligible projects within municipal CIPs.

8 Monitoring & Evaluation

Staff will maintain records of all applications, approvals, and outcomes, including the number and type of projects supported, attainable or affordable units created, private-to-public investment leverage, and HYPE co-funding obtained. An annual report will be provided to Council summarizing program performance and recommending improvements.

The annual report shall include all information required under the County of Renfrew HYPE Program reporting framework, including project summaries, total grants issued, attainable and affordable units created, and private-to-public investment leverage. The annual report will also be referenced through annual budget reporting.

9 Administration & Implementation

Applicants shall submit a completed application form including required drawings or site plans, cost estimates, proof of ownership or written consent, and confirmation of zoning and code compliance.

Applications will be evaluated for completeness, alignment with the Township's Community Improvement Plan (CIP) objectives, and readiness to proceed. The CAO and/or Treasurer are authorized to approve applications within program caps; exceptional cases may be referred to Council for review.

Approved grants or rebates will be issued upon satisfactory completion of the approved work and submission of receipts, photos, and inspection confirmation.

Coordination with County HYPE Program:

Applications eligible under both the Township's CIP and the County of Renfrew HYPE Program will be coordinated by the Township with County staff to ensure consistent eligibility, evaluation, and funding timelines.

Program Funding Parameters:

- Council will allocate an annual CIP budget during the annual budget process.
- Total grants disbursed per year shall not exceed the approved CIP budget.
- Per-property maximum: \$5,000 per year (combined across programs), except for tax increment financing and/or waiver of planning and building fees programs.
- Applications will be considered on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Stacking: Municipal grants may be stacked with County HYPE funding where eligible.
- Unused funds may be carried forward or reallocated at Council's discretion.

Detailed administrative requirements, forms, and evaluation criteria will be maintained separately by staff and may be updated as needed without amendment to this Plan.

10 Policy Review

This Policy will be reviewed every five years from the date of Council approval. Updates may be recommended sooner based on legislative changes, funding availability, or Township priorities.

11 Revision History

Date	Significant Change	By-law #
TBA	New Policy	TBA

Appendix A: Eligible Financial Incentive Programs

Table 1: Housing Programs

Program	Purpose / Eligible Works	Grant Value / Rebate	Key Conditions	Stacking (HYPE)
Accessibility Improvement Grant	Support installation of ramps, automatic doors, and accessibility upgrades.	50% of eligible costs up to \$2,500 per project	Must meet AODA standards.	Yes
Planning & Building Fee Rebate	Reduce financial barriers to attainable and affordable housing by rebating or waiving applicable Township fees.	100% rebate of eligible Township planning and building fees, up to \$2,500 per project.	Applies only to new attainable or affordable housing projects meeting CMHC or HYPE definitions.	Yes
Tax Increment Financing	Offset or relieve tax increases from improvements	5 year term, up to a maximum of \$25,000	Large-scale rehabilitation or redevelopment of buildings. Must align with CIP goals.	No

Table 2: Business & Revitalization Programs

Program	Purpose / Eligible Works	Grant Value / Rebate	Key Conditions	Stacking (HYPE)
Façade Improvement Grant	Improve building exteriors to enhance commercial areas.	50% of eligible costs up to \$2,500 per project	Must comply with Township design standards.	Yes
Signage Improvement Grant	Modernize and improve business signage.	50% of eligible costs up to \$1,500 per project	Must meet sign by-law and branding guidelines.	Yes
Accessibility Improvement Grant	Support installation of ramps, automatic doors, and accessibility upgrades.	50% of eligible costs up to \$2,500 per project	Must meet AODA standards.	Yes
Landscaping & Parking Enhancement Grant	Improve safety, beautification, and site functionality through landscaping or parking upgrades.	50% of eligible costs up to \$2,500 per project	Must enhance accessibility or site safety.	Yes
Tax Increment Financing	Offset or relieve tax increases from improvements	5-year term, up to a maximum of \$25,000	Large-scale rehabilitation or redevelopment of buildings. Must align with CIP goals.	No
Planning & Building Fee Rebate	Reduce financial barriers to attainable and affordable housing, agri-tourism and rural business development and business/revitalization by rebating and waiving applicable Township fees.	Up to 100% of eligible Township planning and building fees.	Must align with CIP goals.	Yes

Table 3: Economic Development & Sustainability Programs

Program	Purpose / Eligible Works	Grant Value / Rebate	Key Conditions	Stacking (HYPE)
Agri-Tourism & Rural Business Development Grant	Encourage diversification, farm-gate retail, and tourism-related upgrades.	50% of eligible costs up to \$2,500 per project	Must contribute to local economic development.	Yes
Energy Efficiency & Sustainability Grant	Support energy-efficient or low-carbon systems and retrofits.	50% of eligible costs up to \$2,500 per project	Must show measurable energy savings or efficiency improvement.	Yes
Study & Design Grant	Support preliminary design, feasibility, or environmental studies advancing eligible projects.	50% of study costs up to \$1,500 per project	Must align with CIP goals and demonstrate implementation potential.	Yes

Municipal grants may be stacked with County of Renfrew HYPE funding where eligible, subject to annual budget availability.