



**Elg**incentives  
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

**Town of Aylmer (April 2026)**

The logo features a stylized graphic of a blue and orange swoosh above the word "Elgincentives". "Elgin" is in dark blue and "centives" is in orange. Below this, the words "COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN" are written in a smaller, dark blue, all-caps sans-serif font.

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# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Introduction

As part of its progressive approach to economic development, Elgin County has established a coordinated, County-wide framework for community improvement planning, with the Elgincentives Community Improvement Plan (CIP) serving as the cornerstone of this approach. Originally prepared in 2014 and adopted by each Local Municipal Partner (LMP) in 2015, the Elgincentives CIP has since guided public and private reinvestment across the County. Over the past decade, the program has supported nearly **300 community improvement projects through more than \$1.5 million in approved grants**, leveraging an estimated \$9.4 million in private-sector reinvestment. These outcomes highlight the role of the CIP as a practical and effective implementation tool, translating County-wide economic priorities and local policy objectives into tangible, on-the-ground improvements to buildings, businesses, and sites across Elgin County.

## 1.2 Purpose

The Elgincentives CIP is a planning document enabled under the Planning Act and sets out tools and strategies to support improvements to the economic, built, and social environment within participating municipalities. It is intended to function as a coordinating, long-term instrument to encourage reinvestment, support local businesses, stimulate redevelopment, and diversify the

economic base of Elgin County's seven local municipalities. This CIP forms part of a broader County-wide framework, under which each local municipality adopts a locally applicable version of the Elgincentives Community Improvement Plan.

In developing the Elgincentives framework, the overarching intent has been to align community improvement tools with County and local economic development priorities. The CIP recognizes the importance of Elgin County's multi-faceted rural economy and seeks to support a diverse range of community improvement projects across our urban and rural areas. To support economic growth and reinvestment in key focus areas, the primary purpose of this Plan is to establish a County-wide vision for community improvement as well as the tools for achieving it, including:

- **Municipal Leadership Initiatives** providing high level guidance and inspiration for County and Municipal-led improvement projects to public lands, infrastructure, spaces, and buildings (e.g., streetscaping); and,
- **Financial Incentives** providing direct funding to property and building owners, tenants, and businesses to support improvement projects that align with the vision of the CIP (e.g., Facade Improvement, Building Redevelopment).

The Town of Aylmer will work in partnership with Elgin County to implement the Plan, including the

determination of which financial incentive programs to offer and which, if any, of the municipal leadership initiatives to explore further or pursue. County participation in the implementation of this plan, and specifically financial incentive programs, will occur in accordance with the Planning Act.

- Finally, **Sections 12 through 14** address program administration, marketing, monitoring, and future updates, outlining how the Plan will be implemented, evaluated, and refined over time.

## 1.3 Document Structure

This Community Improvement Plan is organized to provide a clear understanding of the policy basis, implementation framework, and incentive tools that guide community improvement across the Town of Aylmer and Elgin County.

- **Sections 2 through 4** establish the legislative authority and policy foundation for the Plan, including an overview of Community Improvement Plans, applicable provisions of the Planning Act, and the County-wide economic, land use, and housing priorities that support community improvement.
- **Sections 5 through 9** outline the evolution of Elgincentsives, the County-wide vision, goals, and objectives, and the geographic focus of community improvement, including Community Improvement Project Areas and priority focus areas.
- **Sections 10 and 11** describe municipal leadership initiatives and the financial incentive programs available under this Plan, including program objectives, eligibility criteria, and available forms of assistance.

## 2.0 What is a CIP?

A Community Improvement Plan (CIP) is a municipal planning and economic development tool enabled under Section 28 of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13. A CIP allows Ontario municipalities to promote the rehabilitation, revitalization, and redevelopment of defined areas or key sectors within the community through the use of different powers and incentivization tools. The Planning Act definition of “Community Improvement” is quite flexible and, as a result, CIPs are commonly used to support a wide range of priorities, including but not limited to main street revitalization, rural economic development, affordable housing, employment growth, and brownfield redevelopment.

Many municipalities across Ontario have adopted CIPs to help achieve important community goals, such as:

- Facilitating and coordinating the transition of neighbourhoods and key areas;
- Stimulating economic growth and private-sector investment;
- Assisting businesses and property owners with repair, rehabilitation, and redevelopment projects; and
- Raising awareness of local needs, opportunities, and priorities.

Simply put, a CIP is a planning document that sets out a vision for improving certain aspects of the community and offers tools and strategies to help achieve it. A key component of most CIPs is the use of financial incentives to encourage private investment that aligns with municipal objectives – an action that would otherwise be considered “Bonusing” under the Municipal Act, which is not permitted without a CIP. In addition to financial incentives, a CIP may also support municipally-led initiatives, policy coordination, and strategic investments intended to reinforce broader community improvement objectives.

## 3.0 Legislative Authority & Powers

Community Improvement Plans are primarily enabled through the Municipal Act and Planning Act. These Acts establish the authority and limitations under which municipalities may undertake community improvement activities and provide financial incentives.

### **Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c.25**

Section 106 of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c.25 generally prohibits municipalities from directly or indirectly assisting commercial or industrial enterprises through the provision of grants, loans, guarantees, or other forms of financial assistance, commonly referred to as “bonusing.”

Subsection 106(3), however, establishes an important exception by permitting municipalities to provide financial assistance where such assistance is carried out in accordance with a Community Improvement Plan adopted under the Planning Act. This exception provides the legal authority for municipalities to offer grants, loans, tax assistance, and other financial incentives to private landowners, tenants, and businesses, provided it is in alignment with an adopted CIP.

### **Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13**

The Planning Act provides the primary legislative authority for community improvement planning in Ontario. Section 28 establishes the framework under which municipalities may designate Community Improvement Project Areas and adopt Community Improvement Plans.

The Act defines “community improvement” broadly, encompassing the planning, redevelopment, rehabilitation, and improvement of land, buildings, infrastructure, and facilities for a wide range of residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, and other uses. The Act explicitly recognizes the provision of affordable housing as a form of community improvement.

Where an official plan contains provisions relating to community improvement, Section 28 authorizes a municipal council to designate, by by-law, the whole or any part of the municipality as a Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA). Once a CIPA has been designated, council may prepare and adopt a Community Improvement Plan to guide revitalization and improvement efforts within the area.

In addition to local municipalities, the Planning Act now clarifies that upper-tier municipalities may designate Community Improvement Project Areas and participate in community improvement planning, subject to applicable legislative and regulatory requirements.

Section 28 further authorizes municipalities, for the purpose of carrying out an adopted CIP, to:

- Acquire, hold, clear, and prepare land within a Community Improvement Project Area;

- Construct, repair, rehabilitate, or improve buildings on municipally owned land in conformity with the CIP; and
- Sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of municipally owned lands and buildings for uses consistent with the CIP.

Municipalities are also authorized to make grants or loans, in conformity with an adopted CIP, to registered owners, assessed owners, and tenants of lands and buildings within a Community Improvement Project Area to pay for all or part of the eligible costs of community improvement projects. Eligible costs may include, but are not limited to, expenses related to environmental site assessment, remediation, development, redevelopment, rehabilitation, and improvements that enhance energy efficiency or building performance.

The Planning Act also enables financial participation between upper-tier and lower-tier municipalities in the implementation of Community Improvement Plans. This authority allows municipalities to work collaboratively in funding and delivering community improvement initiatives, while ensuring that implementation remains consistent with the adopted CIP. As described in Section 6, this is a key foundation to how Elgincentives is administered between the County and local municipal partners.

## 4.0 Basis for Community Improvement

### 4.1 County-wide Economic Goals/Priorities

Elgincentives is intended to function as a coordinated, County-wide framework for applying community improvement tools consistently across the County's seven local municipalities. The overarching objective of this approach is to advance shared economic development, land use, and community-building priorities.

In support of this objective, a review of the County's Economic Development and Tourism Plan, County Official Plan, and related policy documents was undertaken to identify common goals and priority areas where community improvement initiatives can deliver broad public benefit. This review confirms that community improvement planning is a well-established and appropriate mechanism for addressing a range of County-wide challenges, including reinvestment in aging building stock, rural and downtown economic vitality, affordable housing delivery, employment growth, tourism development, and placemaking.

### 4.2 Elgin County Economic Development & Tourism Plan (2025)

Elgin County's Economic Development and Tourism Plan provides strong strategic direction in support of continued and enhanced community improvement efforts. The Strategy emphasizes the need to strengthen economic resilience, support business retention and expansion, attract new investment, and ensure that communities across the County are competitive, adaptable, and investment-ready. Community improvement incentives are identified as a practical tool for addressing these focus areas.

The Strategy highlights the economic and social importance of vibrant downtowns, main streets, and settlement areas. These areas function as centres of employment, commerce, tourism, and community life. Incentives that support building reinvestment, adaptive reuse, accessibility improvements, and placemaking initiatives are recognized as critical to sustaining their long-term viability.

Agriculture and rural economic diversification are similarly identified as foundational to the County's long-term prosperity. Opportunities related to value-added agriculture, agri-tourism, and on-farm diversification are viewed as key drivers of rural economic resilience. Community improvement programming can support

these activities by assisting with the adaptive reuse or expansion of existing buildings to accommodate new or evolving rural enterprises.

Tourism development is another core pillar of the Strategy, with emphasis placed on enhancing visitor experiences, supporting tourism-oriented businesses, and leveraging the County's natural, cultural, and recreational assets. Strategic reinvestment in buildings, sites, and amenities along key corridors and within destination areas aligns directly with the objectives of community improvement planning.

Overall, the Strategy reinforces the role of Elgin incentives as an implementation tool that translates high-level economic development and tourism priorities into tangible, place-based improvements across the County.

### 4.3 Elgin County Official Plan

The Elgin County Official Plan provides a comprehensive policy framework that supports the use of community improvement planning to advance County-wide land use, economic development, housing, and placemaking objectives.

From a growth management perspective, the Official Plan promotes intensification and redevelopment within existing built-up areas as a means of making efficient use of land and infrastructure. Community improvement programs can be an effective funding mechanism to support redevelopment and intensification initiatives, particularly where reinvestment may otherwise be constrained by cost or site conditions.

Economic development policies in the Official Plan emphasize the protection and enhancement of employment areas, agricultural operations, and key transportation and infrastructure corridors, while reinforcing the role of downtowns, main streets, waterfronts, and scenic routes as focal points for business activity, tourism, and community identity. These policies support targeted reinvestment in buildings, sites, and public-facing improvements that strengthen economic function and visual quality.

Tourism-related policies further recognize the County's lakeshore, scenic routes, downtowns, and cultural assets as important economic drivers. The Official Plan supports initiatives that enhance the quality, appearance, and functionality of these areas, including investments in design, wayfinding, heritage conservation, and placemaking.

The Official Plan also places strong emphasis on the creative economy and placemaking as tools to attract talent, investment, and visitors. Policies encourage the development of distinctive, high-quality places through urban design, public art, adaptive reuse, and the celebration of local cultural and natural heritage. Community improvement planning is identified as a mechanism to support these outcomes, particularly where initiatives demonstrate broader County-wide economic or tourism benefit.

Housing policies within the Official Plan further reinforce the role of community improvement tools in supporting affordable housing delivery, intensification, and redevelopment. The Plan identifies a County-wide target

for affordable housing and encourages the exploration of community improvement programming as a means of facilitating housing affordability, adaptive reuse, and the efficient use of existing lands and buildings.

Within the Rural Area, the Official Plan supports the long-term viability of agriculture while encouraging appropriate on-farm diversified uses, agri-tourism, and rural economic development that complement agricultural operations and rural character. Community improvement incentives can assist in achieving these objectives by supporting the adaptation and improvement of existing buildings for new or expanded rural uses.

Settlement area policies similarly emphasize compact, complete, and pedestrian-oriented communities centred on vibrant main streets and commercial cores. Community improvement planning is recognized as an important local implementation tool to support reinvestment, redevelopment, and environmental sustainability within these areas, while respecting local context and character.

## 4.4 Community Improvement as an Implementation Tool

Taken together, the County's Economic Development and Tourism Plan and Official Plan establish a clear policy basis for the continued use of community improvement planning as a coordinated implementation tool. The Elgincentives Community Improvement Plan provides a structured framework through which County-wide priorities related to economic development, housing, rural diversification, tourism, placemaking, and environmental sustainability can be advanced in partnership with local municipalities.

By aligning financial incentives and municipal leadership initiatives with established policy direction, the CIP supports reinvestment in existing communities, strengthens local economies, and contributes to the long-term social, economic, and environmental well-being of Elgin County.

# 5.0 Elgincentives History & Update

## 5.1 Developing Elgincentives

In October 2014, Elgin County initiated the process to develop the County-wide framework for community improvement planning. The goal of the project was to prepare a CIP that would be:

- Strongly aligned with the County’s economic development goals;
- Endorsed by County Council and supported by Elgin’s seven local municipalities; and
- Administered by senior staff at the County, in partnership with the local municipalities.

As part of the work program, background research and additional analysis was completed in order to determine the needs, goals, and opportunities for a County-wide framework for community improvement planning. Specifically, the following tasks were undertaken:

1. A review of County and local municipal planning and economic development background materials;
2. Additional independent research with respect to the legislative framework for upper- and lower-tier municipal community improvement planning and relevant best practices;
3. Consultation with the local municipalities and community stakeholders, including multiple needs assessment workshops and a community survey;
4. On-going meetings with the Elgin Economic Development Advisory Group; and
5. Consultation with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing in order to obtain input on the County’s overall approach to the CIP.

The findings of this work were compiled and used to inform the ultimate preparation of the first iteration of Elgincentives, adopted County-wide by each local municipality in 2015.



## 5.2 Industrial & Brownfield Lands Update (2017)

Due to the success of the Elgincntives CIP, in 2017 the County initiated a review and update of Elgincntives to determine where and how incentives could be made available to industrial and employment land uses to further support the economic goals and objectives for the County. This update exercise confirmed that Elgincntives had been effective in supporting community improvement projects, particularly within downtowns and main streets, but that additional tools were required to encourage reinvestment, redevelopment, and remediation in industrial and employment areas. As a result, the CIP was updated to expand eligibility and introduce new incentive mechanisms to better support industrial and brownfield redevelopment.

## 5.3 Elgincntives 10-Year Review (2025)

In late 2024 and 2025, Elgin County undertook a comprehensive review of Elgincntives to assess its performance over ten years of implementation and to confirm its continued relevance as a County-wide economic development tool. The review included an analysis of program uptake and outcomes, a comparison with similar community improvement programs in other Ontario municipalities, and input from municipal staff and interested parties across the County. The intent of the review was not to reconsider the overall County-wide framework, which has proven effective, but rather to identify opportunities to modernize and strengthen

Elgincntives in response to changing economic conditions, policy priorities, and market realities. The review confirmed that Elgincntives has played an important role in supporting reinvestment in existing buildings, strengthening local business activity, and encouraging private-sector investment across Elgin County's communities. At the same time, the review identified several areas where updates were warranted to ensure the program remains effective and responsive over the next decade.

Key conclusions from the 10-year review included the following:

- The scope of eligible community improvement projects should be broadened to better support evolving priorities, including affordable housing, agritourism, and rural economic diversification;
- Funding levels and grant caps should be reviewed and updated to better reflect current construction and rehabilitation costs;
- Program structure and documentation should be simplified to improve clarity and accessibility for applicants and municipal staff; and
- A refreshed and updated CIP document would help reinvigorate awareness of the program and support continued uptake across the County.

These findings directly informed the updates and refinements incorporated into the 2026 update to the Elgincntives CIP and are reflected throughout the focus areas, incentive programs, and administrative framework described herein.

## 5.4 Elgincntives Results to Date

Since its adoption in 2015, Elgincntives has supported a wide range of community improvement projects across Elgin County, demonstrating strong uptake and sustained interest from property owners and businesses in both urban and rural areas. Over the last decade, a total of 287 grants were approved under the Elgincntives program, representing more than \$1.56 million in public investment. These grants are estimated to have leveraged approximately \$9.44 million in private-sector investment in community improvement projects across the County.

Program data indicates that the most frequently utilized incentive programs during this period were those supporting reinvestment in existing buildings and visible improvements to commercial areas. The table on the right provides a summary of the most popular programs over the last decade from 2015 to 2024.

Collectively, these results demonstrate the effectiveness of Elgincntives as a catalyst for private investment and incremental improvement across a diverse range of communities and property types. The program has supported reinvestment in historic downtowns and main streets, improvements to rural and agricultural-related properties, and the modernization of existing building stock, contributing to broader economic development and placemaking objectives. The outcomes achieved to date reinforce the value of maintaining a coordinated, County-wide approach to community improvement planning.

Elgincntives Most Popular Programs (2015-2024)
<b>Building Improvement and Restoration Program</b> 149 grants / \$773,000
<b>Facade Improvement Program</b> 93 grants / \$333,000
<b>Signage Improvement Program</b> 89 grants / \$160,000
<b>Property Improvement Program</b> 61 grants / \$153,000
<b>Building Conversion and Expansion Program</b> 15 grants / \$76,000

# 6.0 Implementation Framework

## 6.1 County-Led Approach to Implementation

This Community Improvement Plan has been adopted by the Council of the Town of Aylmer as part of the Elgincentives County-wide framework for community improvement planning. While the Plan is a local statutory document under the Ontario Planning Act, it is implemented through a County-led administration and delivery model, with Elgin County assuming primary responsibility for program coordination, application intake and review, funding participation, and overall program oversight.

As the upper-tier municipality, Elgin County plays a central leadership role in advancing community improvement initiatives that align with County-wide economic development, tourism, housing, and land use priorities. Through Elgincentives, the County administers a consistent suite of financial incentive programs and municipal leadership initiatives across participating municipalities, helping to ensure clarity, efficiency, and consistency in program delivery while reducing administrative burden at the local level.

Under this framework, the Town of Aylmer retains authority over the adoption of this Community Improvement Plan and participation in community improvement initiatives within its jurisdiction. Elgin County leads the day-to-day operation of the program, including application review, funding recommendations,

and monitoring, while working collaboratively with municipal staff as needed to ensure local context, policy conformity, and site-specific considerations are addressed.

While Elgincentives is intended to be primarily administered and funded through County participation, nothing in this Plan precludes the Town of Aylmer from directly contributing to community improvement initiatives at its discretion. This may include, but is not limited to, providing additional funding toward financial incentive applications, participating in cost-sharing arrangements, or advancing complementary municipal leadership initiatives such as streetscape improvements, public realm investments, or placemaking projects. Where pursued, such local participation may occur independently or in coordination with Elgin County and is encouraged as a means of strengthening the overall effectiveness and local impact of the CIP. Further details regarding program administration, funding mechanisms, application processes, and the delivery of municipal leadership initiatives are outlined in Sections 10 through 12 of this Plan.

## 6.2 The Elgincentives Framework

The Elgincentives framework consists of the following:

### **The Community Improvement Plan, establishing:**

- Community improvement vision & goals;
- The Community Improvement Project Area and program focus areas within the Municipality;
- Financial incentive programs that may be offered during the term of the Plan;
- Municipal leadership initiatives that may be actioned during the term of the Plan; and
- Supporting marketing and monitoring approaches.

### **County-led Administration, which:**

- Administers financial incentive programs on behalf of the Municipality;
- Leads application intake, evaluation, and approval processes;
- Provides County funding participation where applicable; and
- Oversees program monitoring, reporting, and updates.

While the policy framework and incentive programs are coordinated County-wide, implementation within the Town of Aylmer occurs only where this Plan has been adopted and where Council has elected to participate in specific programs.

## 6.3 Elgincentives Implementation Committee

Financial incentive programs under this Plan are administered through the Elgincentives Implementation Committee, which has been established by Elgin County to deliver the Elgincentives program on behalf of participating municipalities, including the Town of Aylmer. The Implementation Committee is responsible for:

- Receiving and reviewing all applications for financial incentives under this Plan;
- Evaluating applications against the eligibility criteria and objectives of the CIP;
- Making decisions to approve or refuse applications (or preparing recommendations to County/Local Council where necessary); and,
- Overseeing the administration of approved grants and tax-based incentives.

The Committee is composed primarily of senior Elgin County staff as well as representation from municipal staff, who have responsibility for all administrative, evaluative, and decision-making functions related to Elgincentives (unless a Council decision is required per this plan). Final decisions regarding incentive approvals, funding allocation, and program administration rest with the County-led Implementation Committee, consistent with the County's role in administering the Elgincentives program.

The Implementation Committee is also responsible for:

- Coordinating marketing and promotion of incentive programs available in the Town of Aylmer;
- Monitoring program uptake and outcomes within the Municipality; and
- Reporting on program performance to County Council and the Council of the Town of Aylmer, as required.

Further details regarding committee composition, application procedures, and approval processes are provided in Section 12 – Administration.

## 6.4 Municipal Leadership Initiatives & Financial Incentive Programs

Community improvement within the Town of Aylmer may be supported through two complementary mechanisms under this Plan:

- **Financial Incentive Programs**, which are administered through the County-led Elgincentives framework and represent the primary implementation tool of this CIP; and
- **Municipal Leadership Initiatives**, which may be undertaken by the Town of Aylmer, Elgin County, or jointly, to support placemaking, public realm improvements, or strategic investments aligned with community improvement objectives.

Financial incentive programs are delivered through a centralized application and approval process administered by Elgin County. Municipal leadership initiatives, where pursued, are coordinated with the Elgincentives framework to ensure alignment with the goals and priorities of this Plan.

Nothing in this Plan shall obligate the County of Elgin or the Town of Aylmer to provide funding or otherwise participate financially in the implementation of this Plan, including any Municipal Leadership Initiatives or Financial Incentive Programs.

Roles, responsibilities, and funding arrangements related to these initiatives are addressed in greater detail in Sections 10, 11, and 12 of this Plan.

# 7.0 County-Wide Vision, Goals, & Objectives

## 7.1 Guiding Community Improvement

The Elgincentives Community Improvement Plan is guided by a shared vision and a set of County-wide goals that reflect Elgin County’s long-term economic development, land use, and community-building priorities. Together, the vision and goals establish the strategic intent of the CIP and provide a framework for evaluating incentive programs, municipal leadership initiatives, and investment decisions over the life of the Plan. More detailed objectives, performance measures, and indicators associated with these goals are addressed through the monitoring and reporting framework outlined in Section 14 of this Plan.

## 7.2 Vision Statement

*“Through the Elgincentives CIP, Elgin County will provide leadership in community improvement planning by offering incentives to eligible owners and tenants of lands and buildings in key sectors/areas of economic activity, County-wide. Over the next 10 years, the Elgincentives CIP will advance the County’s economic goals and priorities; assist with improvement to the built and social environment; and support diversification of the local economic base.”*

## 7.3 Community Improvement Goals



### Create more Affordable Housing Options

This goal recognizes the critical role community improvement tools can play in responding to the housing crisis by supporting the creation and retention of affordable housing. The CIP is intended to help facilitate new housing supply, protect existing affordable units, and encourage a broader range of housing forms, including purpose-built rental housing, additional dwelling units, and community housing.



### **Revitalize Sense of Place in Core Areas and Main Streets**

Strong, attractive, and active main streets and core areas are essential to economic vitality, community identity, and quality of life. This goal focuses on reinvestment in downtowns and main streets through improvements to private properties and key sites, helping to enhance streetscapes, support local businesses, and foster civic pride.



### **Support Agri-Tourism and Rural Economic Diversification**

Elgin County's rural economy is a defining asset that continues to evolve beyond traditional agricultural production. This goal supports value-added agriculture, agri-tourism, and on-farm diversified uses that strengthen rural economic resilience while remaining compatible with agricultural land use policies and rural character.



### **Improve Building Efficiency and Support Sustainable Development**

Improving the performance and resilience of existing buildings is an important component of long-term community sustainability. This goal encourages energy efficiency upgrades, climate-resilient design, and sustainable development practices that reduce operating costs, extend building lifespans, and contribute to environmental stewardship.



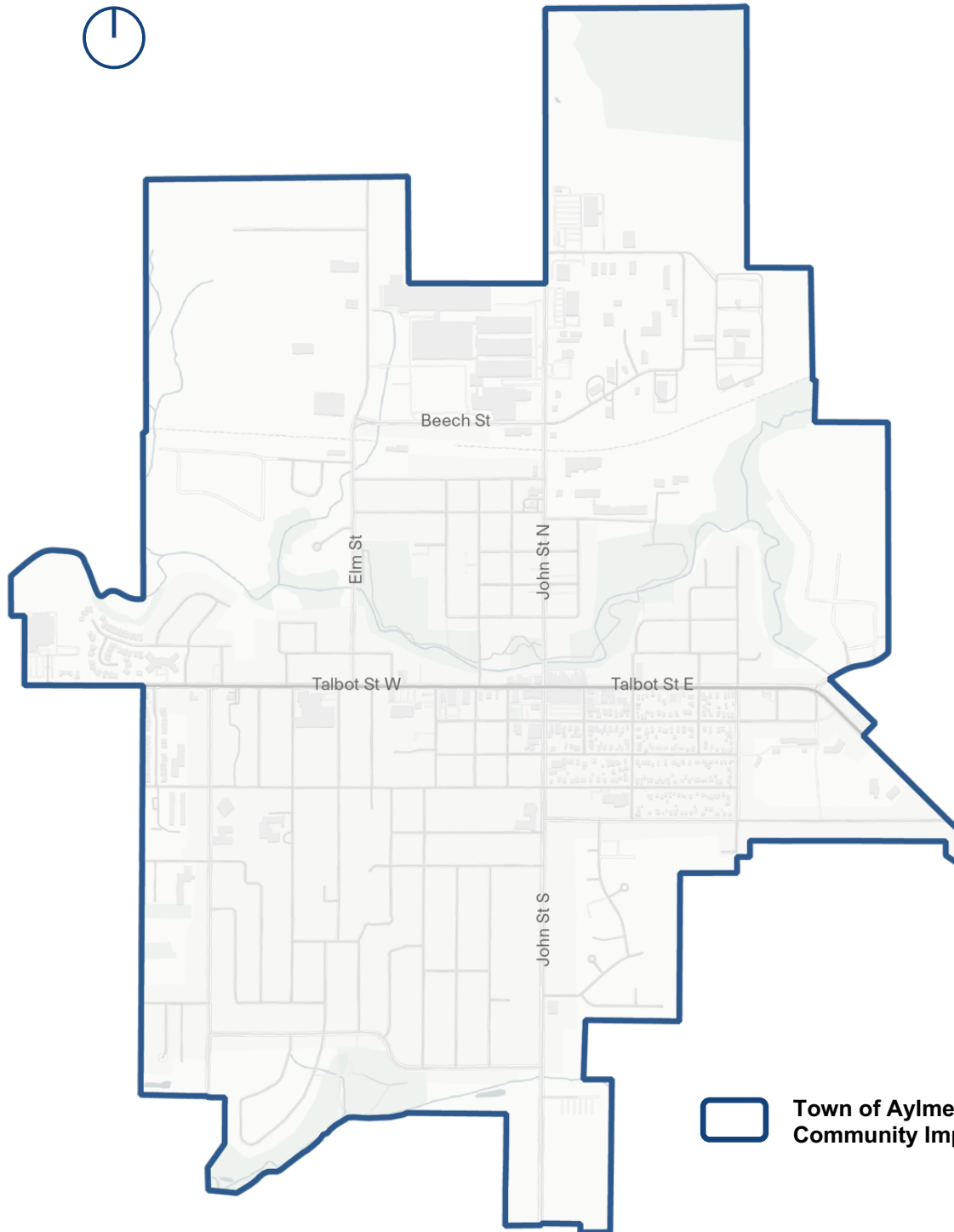
### **Stimulate Economic Growth and Local Vitality**

This goal seeks to strengthen Elgin County's economic base by supporting business growth, expansion, and investment across a range of sectors. Through targeted incentives, the CIP aims to encourage business retention and expansion, attract new enterprises, support creative and tourism-related industries, reduce vacancy, increase employment opportunities, and grow the assessment base in key areas of economic activity.



# 8.0 Community Improvement Project Area

Subsection 28(1) of the Planning Act defines a Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA) as “a municipality or an area within a municipality, the community improvement of which in the opinion of the council is desirable because of age, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement, unsuitability of buildings, or for any other environmental, social, or community economic development reason.” For the purpose of this Plan, the entirety of the Town of Aylmer is designated as a Community Improvement Project Area.



## 9.0 Focus Areas

To support the effective application of financial incentives and align community improvement programming with local planning objectives, this CIP organizes the Town of Aylmer into a series of Focus Areas. The Focus Areas provide a clear policy and geographic framework for determining eligibility, prioritizing projects, and directing incentives to locations where they can achieve the greatest community benefit, supporting transparency for applicants and consistent program delivery.

The four Focus Areas identified in this Plan are:

1. **Main Street Corridors**, which capture the traditional commercial and mixed-use cores that form the heart of many communities in the Town of Aylmer.
2. **Settlement Areas**, which include the primary built-up areas where most growth, redevelopment, and housing activity is expected to occur. This focus area overlaps with the Main Street Corridors focus area.
3. **Agricultural Area**, which includes lands that support the agricultural system, rural economy, and agri-tourism opportunities.
4. **Employment Lands**, which consist of the municipality's industrial and employment districts that support job creation and economic development.

Each Focus Area is supported by a description of its purpose, and a list of intended focus and priority uses, which together guide the application of incentive programs in the Town of Aylmer.

In addition to the above, there is a **Tourism Corridor Overlay**, which is identified in accordance with Elgin County's Tourism Corridor system in the County Official Plan. This overlay generally includes properties which abut a County or local road that has been identified as "Tourism Corridor".

## 9.1 Focus Area 1: Main Street Corridors

Main Street Corridors include the traditional commercial main streets and mixed-use cores within the settlement areas of the Town of Aylmer. These areas typically contain a concentration of commercial storefronts, pedestrian-oriented streetscapes, historic building stock, and a mix of community-serving businesses and services.

For the purpose of this CIP, Main Street Corridor boundaries are established using the County Road network as the base structure. Properties located within approximately 50 metres on either side of the designated County Road are included, which captures the majority of commercial frontages, older building fabric, and active mixed-use areas. This approach ensures the mapped area reflects the linear nature of traditional main streets while capturing rear-lot connections, laneways, secondary access points, and adjacent parcels that function as part of the commercial core.

### Intended Focus & Priority Uses:

- Support for active storefronts, small businesses, restaurants, services, and retail uses.
- Encouraging upper-storey residential units, including adaptive reuse of vacant or underutilized space.
- Improvements that enhance walkability, public realm quality, streetscape character, and overall sense of place.

- Prioritizing projects that contribute to downtown revitalization, facade enhancement, accessibility improvements, and reinvestment in older building stock.
- Complementing municipal leadership initiatives such as streetscaping, wayfinding, and public space improvements.

## 9.2 Focus Area 2: Settlement Areas

Settlement Areas include all lands identified as Settlement Areas in the County Official Plan. These areas contain the primary built-up portions of the Town of Aylmer, including residential neighbourhoods, mixed-use districts, commercial areas, community facilities, and other community-serving uses. They also represent the locations where most growth, redevelopment, and community improvement activity is anticipated to occur. For the purpose of this CIP, the boundaries of the Settlement Areas are taken directly from the County Official Plan to ensure consistency with local planning policy and growth management direction.

### Intended Focus & Priority Uses:

- Encouraging diverse housing options, including additional dwelling units (ADUs), purpose-built rental housing, and community housing.
- Supporting commercial and mixed-use redevelopment, adaptive reuse of existing

buildings, and site improvements that enhance neighbourhood character.

- Promoting infill development and redevelopment that makes efficient use of existing infrastructure.
- Supporting investments that improve energy efficiency, climate resiliency, or site design performance.
- Reinforcing compact, complete communities with a mix of housing, shops, services, and community facilities.

### 9.3 Focus Area 3: Agricultural Area

The Agricultural Area includes all lands located outside Settlement Area boundaries that are designated Agricultural or Rural in the County Official Plan and supporting Local Municipal Partner Official Plans. These lands form part of the broader agricultural system and rural economy within the Town of Aylmer, and consist of working farms, value-added agricultural operations, on-farm diversified uses permitted by policy, and associated rural landscapes. The Agricultural Area contributes to both the economic base and the cultural identity of the municipality and represents an important focus for rural economic diversification and agri-tourism activities that are compatible with agricultural land use policies.

#### Intended Focus & Priority Uses:

- Supporting agri-tourism and on-farm diversified uses permitted by OMAFRA guidelines and local

planning policy (e.g., value-added production, educational experiences, tours, small events, farm cafés, roadside stands).

- Encouraging rural economic diversification through low-impact, farm-compatible enterprises that supplement agricultural livelihoods.
- Prioritizing improvements to visitor experience, safety, site function, and accessibility, such as facade upgrades, signage, parking, and building retrofits.
- Reinforcing and enhancing the agriculture-based tourism economy while protecting the County’s agricultural land base and minimizing land use conflicts.
- Ensuring all projects align with Provincial Planning Statement policies regarding agricultural land, on-farm diversified uses, and agri-tourism.

### 9.4 Focus Area 4: Employment Lands

Employment Lands include all areas designated for industrial, manufacturing, warehousing, logistics, and related employment uses in the County Official Plan and supporting Local Municipal Partner Official Plans. These areas form an important part of the economic base of the Town of Aylmer, providing locations for businesses that generate jobs, support goods movement, and contribute to local and regional economic growth. Employment Lands may include established industrial parks, business parks, and vacant lands identified for future employment

development in accordance with long-term land use planning and economic development objectives.

### Intended Focus & Priority Uses:

- Supporting the growth, expansion, and modernization of employment-generating businesses.
- Facilitating the development of new industrial or advanced manufacturing facilities and redevelopment of underutilized lands.
- Prioritizing projects that create or retain local jobs, diversify the economic base, and support investment readiness.
- Encouraging site improvements that address environmental performance, modern building standards, and site functionality (e.g., circulation, loading, landscaping, screening).
- Aligning with County-wide economic development goals, including attraction of targeted sectors and support for high-impact industrial projects.

system. These corridors represent key travel routes and visitor destinations within **the Town of Aylmer** and play an important role in supporting the local tourism economy, agri-tourism activities, and rural recreational experiences.

This overlay applies in addition to the four primary Focus Areas and is used to identify locations where certain incentive programs may receive enhanced support. Properties located within the Tourism Corridor Overlay Area may be eligible for increased funding under the following programs:

- Facade, Signage, and Property Improvement Program
- Building Improvement, Conversion, and Expansion Program
- Agri-Tourism and Rural Diversification Program

For clarity, the Tourism Corridor Overlay includes properties that are located within approximately 50 metres of a designated Tourism Corridor roadway and that are adjacent to, predominantly fronting on, or directly accessed from the corridor. The overlay is intended to apply only to properties that have a clear functional and visual relationship to the tourism corridor.

## 9.5 Tourism Corridor Overlay

The Tourism Corridor Overlay Area consists of properties located along the County's identified Tourism Corridor

# 10.0 Municipal Leadership Initiatives

In addition to the financial incentive programs outlined in this Plan, the Elgincentives Community Improvement Plan identifies Municipal Leadership Initiatives that may be undertaken by the Town of Aylmer, Elgin County, or collaboratively between both parties. Municipal leadership initiatives support community improvement by helping to enhance public spaces, improve development readiness, address long-term challenges, and reinforce sense of place. When pursued alongside financial incentives, they can help strengthen the overall effectiveness of the CIP by aligning public investment with private improvement activity.

The initiatives identified in this section are not prescriptive and do not constitute a formal commitment or implementation schedule. Rather, they are intended to serve as a flexible menu of potential actions that may be considered over the life of the CIP, subject to Council direction, local priorities, and available resources. Roles and responsibilities will be coordinated between the Town of Aylmer and Elgin County in accordance with the framework set out in this Plan.

The municipal leadership initiatives identified for consideration under this CIP include, in no order of priority:

- **Streetscaping & Public Space Improvement Strategy**
- **Public Land Inventory and Opportunity Analysis**
- **Brownfield Inventory**
- **Ready-to-Build Additional Dwelling Unit (ADU) Catalogue**
- **Climate Change Adaptation/Resiliency**

*The initiatives, example actions, and potential partners in the following sections are illustrative and non-prescriptive. **These initiatives are not financial incentive programs.** The identification, timing, and scope of any initiative and/or involvement of one or more partners would be determined at the discretion of Council and coordinated with Elgin County, subject to available resources and priorities.*

## 10.1 Streetscaping & Public Space Improvement Strategy

Main streets, downtowns, and public spaces play a critical role in shaping community identity, economic vitality, and quality of life. Welcoming, attractive, and pedestrian-friendly streetscapes can help support local businesses, draw residents and visitors, and reinforce civic pride. Municipal leadership in the public realm also helps set the tone for private-sector reinvestment, ensuring that improvements to buildings and sites supported through the Elgincentives CIP are complemented by visible and functional public-space enhancements.

This initiative encourages coordinated leadership by the Town of Aylmer and Elgin County in identifying and implementing streetscaping, public space, and gateway improvements within the municipality. These initiatives focus on enhancements to publicly owned lands and infrastructure—such as roads, sidewalks, parks, and civic spaces—that contribute to a high-quality public realm and support broader community improvement objectives.

### Example Actions

- Streetscape improvements such as sidewalk upgrades, curb extensions, pedestrian crossings, lighting, street trees, and street furniture.
- Accessibility improvements within public rights-of-way and civic spaces to support universal access.
- Public space enhancements, including plazas, parks, waterfront areas, and community gathering spaces.

- Temporary or pilot placemaking initiatives such as planters, seasonal installations, or flexible street treatments.
- Gateway treatments and wayfinding signage along key entry points and tourism corridors.
- Public art and placemaking projects that reflect local identity, culture, and heritage.

### Potential Partners

- The Town of Aylmer
- Elgin County
- Local business associations and community organizations
- Accessibility advisory committees
- Arts, culture, and tourism organizations
- Senior levels of government and external funding agencies

## 10.2 Public Land Inventory & Opportunity Analysis

### Description

A Public Land Inventory and Opportunity Analysis would identify publicly owned lands that may be underutilized, surplus, or strategically positioned to advance community improvement objectives. These lands can represent a significant opportunity to support affordable housing, economic development, placemaking, or other public-interest outcomes when considered proactively and in coordination with private-sector investment. By maintaining an up-to-date land inventory, the Town of Aylmer and Elgin County would be better positioned to respond to funding opportunities, support strategic partnerships, and align public land assets with long-term community improvement goals.

Through a coordinated County–local approach, this initiative would involve cataloguing publicly owned parcels and evaluating their current use, planning context, servicing, constraints, and redevelopment potential. The analysis would help establish a shared understanding of which sites may be suitable for future initiatives such as affordable or community housing, mixed-use redevelopment, business incubation, or community facilities. Section 28(6) of the Planning Act provides municipalities with clear authority to develop, improve, sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of lands within a Community Improvement Project Area in conformity with an adopted CIP, reinforcing the relevance of this initiative as a practical implementation tool.

### Example Actions

- Prepare a consolidated inventory of municipally and County-owned lands
- Evaluate each parcel based on criteria such as current use, zoning and policy permissions, servicing availability, constraints, and development potential.
- Identify sites with potential to support affordable housing, mixed-use redevelopment, employment uses, or community-serving facilities.
- Establish a GIS-based layer or internal database to support ongoing review, monitoring, decision-making.
- Use the inventory to inform partnerships, funding applications, or future municipal-led redevelopment

### Potential Partners

- Elgin County (Economic Development, Planning, GIS)
- Local Municipal Partner departments (Planning, Public Works, Finance)
- Affordable housing providers and non-profit housing organizations
- Provincial and federal funding agencies
- Indigenous communities and organizations, where applicable
- Private-sector or not-for-profit development partners

## 10.3 Brownfield Inventory

Brownfield sites, including vacant or underutilized properties affected by real or perceived environmental contamination, represent both a challenge and an opportunity for community improvement. These sites can constrain reinvestment, contribute to underutilization of serviced lands, and limit the efficient use of existing infrastructure. At the same time, they often occupy strategic locations within settlement areas, employment lands, or along key corridors where redevelopment could deliver significant economic, housing, or placemaking benefits.

A coordinated brownfield inventory would support the goals of this CIP by improving understanding of the scale, location, and redevelopment potential of brownfield sites within the Town of Aylmer. By proactively identifying and assessing these properties, the Municipality and Elgin County can better align incentive programming, target outreach efforts, and reduce uncertainty for prospective investors. This initiative would also help position the Municipality to leverage senior government brownfield funding programs and support more efficient redevelopment of existing urban lands.

### Example Actions

- Prepare and maintain a confidential or controlled-access inventory of known or suspected brownfield sites, including basic site characteristics, land use context, and redevelopment potential.

- Work collaboratively with property owners to confirm site conditions, identify barriers to redevelopment, and communicate available incentive programs
- Coordinate with provincial agencies to align local brownfield priorities with existing remediation, risk assessment, and redevelopment programs.
- Use the inventory to support targeted application of CIP incentives, particularly for projects that support housing, employment, or strategic redevelopment
- Explore opportunities to integrate brownfield data into broader land use, economic development, and investment-readiness initiatives.

### Potential Partners

- Elgin County
- Local Municipal Partner departments (planning, economic development, engineering)
- Property owners and developers
- Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP)
- Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and other senior government funding bodies
- Environmental consultants and technical service providers

## 10.4 Ready-to-Build Additional Dwelling Unit Catalogue

Additional Dwelling Units (ADUs) represent a practical and incremental approach to increasing housing supply within existing neighbourhoods, particularly in settlement areas where servicing and infrastructure already exist. ADUs can help address housing affordability, provide flexible housing options for seniors and extended families, and support gentle intensification while maintaining neighbourhood character.

A Ready-to-Build ADU Catalogue would support the objectives of this CIP by reducing barriers to ADU construction and accelerating delivery. By pre-identifying a set of standardized, policy-compliant ADU designs, the Municipality, in coordination with Elgin County, can simplify the approvals process, reduce planning and design costs for homeowners, and improve certainty for applicants. This initiative would complement CIP incentive programs by pairing financial assistance with streamlined implementation tools.

### Example Actions

- Develop a catalogue of pre-approved or pre-reviewed ADU building designs that comply with applicable zoning, Official Plan policies, and Ontario Building Code requirements.
- Include a range of ADU typologies (e.g., detached, attached, garage-based, secondary suites) that respond to different lot sizes and neighbourhood contexts.

- Establish a fast-tracked or simplified planning and building permit process for ADUs selected from the catalogue.
- Align the catalogue with CIP incentives, such as reduced or rebated planning application fees and building permit fees for eligible ADU projects.
- Provide clear guidance materials to homeowners outlining eligibility, approval steps, and available incentives tied to catalogue-based ADU construction.

### Potential Partners

- Elgin County
- Local Municipal Partner planning and building departments
- Housing and community services departments
- Architects, designers, and building professionals
- Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC)
- Local builders and residential contractors

## 10.5 Climate Change Adaptation/Resiliency

As climate change continues to affect communities, municipalities play a critical role in strengthening local resilience and advancing sustainability. While the financial incentive programs in this CIP encourage private-sector investment in energy efficiency, sustainable construction, and green infrastructure, municipal leadership is equally important. Strategic investments in publicly owned buildings, facilities, and lands allow the Municipality, in coordination with Elgin County, to lead by example and reinforce community-wide climate action objectives.

Municipal leadership initiatives focused on climate adaptation and resiliency can help mitigate the impacts of extreme weather, reduce long-term operating costs, and improve the health, safety, and livability of public spaces. These initiatives support both environmental and economic goals by enhancing the performance of public assets while contributing to placemaking and community well-being.

### Example Actions

- Integrate green infrastructure into public spaces, such as permeable paving, rain gardens, bioswales, and enhanced stormwater management systems to reduce flooding and heat-related impacts.
- Retrofit municipally owned buildings to improve energy efficiency, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and increase climate resilience.

- Expand tree canopy coverage and naturalized landscapes in settlement areas, main streets, and public gathering spaces to provide shade, manage stormwater, and improve urban comfort.
- Incorporate climate-resilient design principles into streetscaping, park improvements, and municipal capital projects.
- Align municipal climate investments with CIP objectives to reinforce private-sector improvements and support tourism, economic vitality, and long-term sustainability.

### Potential Partners

- Elgin County
- Local Municipal Partner public works, parks, and facilities departments
- Conservation Authorities
- Provincial and federal climate and infrastructure funding programs
- Utility providers and energy service organizations
- Environmental and community-based organizations

# 11.0 Financial Incentive Programs

## 11.1 Overview

This Community Improvement Plan establishes a suite of eight financial incentive programs intended to support a broad range of community improvement objectives across the Town of Aylmer. Each program is designed to address specific types of development, reinvestment, or redevelopment activity and is aligned with the Vision, Goals, and Focus Areas of the Elgincentives CIP. Collectively, these programs are intended to encourage private-sector investment, improve the built environment, support housing and economic development priorities, and strengthen the overall vitality and resilience of the community.

The following financial incentive programs may be implemented over the life of the CIP, subject to annual funding availability and program activation decisions:

- Facade, Signage, and Property Improvement Program
- Building Improvement, Conversion, and Expansion Program
- Brownfield Remediation Program
- Building Efficiency and Sustainability Program
- Industrial Stimulus Program
- Affordable Rental Housing Program
- Additional Dwelling Unit Program

- Agri-Tourism and Rural Diversification Program

One or more incentives may be combined between the programs above unless otherwise restricted by eligibility criteria and so long as it would not constitute a “double-dipping” of incentives (i.e. receiving grant money from two separate programs for the same improvement project/component).

Financial incentive programs will be funded through a partnership between the Town of Aylmer and Elgin County. As part of the annual budgeting process, both Councils will identify community improvement funding allocations to be made available for the upcoming year, if any. For more details on the financing of incentive programs, please see Section 12.3.

## Incentive Program Availability

In addition to general and program-specific eligibility criteria, incentive program availability will largely depend on where a subject property is located. The table below provides a summary of program availability by Focus Area.

	Main Street Corridors	Settlement Areas	Agricultural Area	Employment Lands
Facade, Signage, and Property Improvement	✓	x	x	x
Building Improvement, Conversion, & Expansion	✓	✓	x	x
Brownfield	✓	✓	✓	✓
Building Efficiency & Development Sustainability	✓	✓	x	x
Industrial Stimulus	x	x	x	✓
Affordable Housing	✓	✓	x	x
Additional Dwelling Unit	✓	✓	x	x
Agri-Tourism & Rural Diversification	x	x	✓	x

## 11.2 Grant Types

Each financial incentive program offered through this CIP may include one or a combination of the grant types described below. These grant types are used to define eligible costs and establish how financial assistance may be calculated.

### Materials and Labour

Includes the costs of materials and labour associated with construction, development, renovation, or installation works. Eligible costs must be supported by a quote or invoice from a qualified construction company, tradesperson, developer, and/or other construction-related business with a valid GST number.

### Professional Fees

Includes costs associated with consulting services provided by one or more qualified professionals engaged in the preparation of plans, studies, drawings, reports, or other materials required to support, inform, or guide the proposed improvements. Eligible professional services may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Architect or Landscape Architect
- Engineer
- Planner
- Urban Designer
- Graphic Designer

### Building and Planning Fees

Includes municipal and/or County fees associated with development approvals and permits, in accordance with the applicable municipal fee schedule. Eligible fees generally include fees associated with building permits and planning applications (site plan control, minor variance or permission, etc.)

### Tax Increment Grant (TIG)

A grant calculated as a percentage of the net increase in municipal and/or County property taxes resulting from a completed development or redevelopment project. The grant is based on the difference between the pre-development assessment and the post-development assessment, commonly referred to as the "tax increment."

### Tax Cancellation

The cancellation of all or a portion of the municipal and/or County property taxes levied against a property, typically applied during a defined rehabilitation, redevelopment, or construction period.

## 11.3 General Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for any financial incentive program offered under this Community Improvement Plan (CIP), all applications must satisfy the general eligibility criteria outlined below. In addition, applicants must meet any program-specific eligibility criteria identified within the applicable incentive program(s).

### General Eligibility

1. The lands and buildings subject to an application must be located within the Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA) designated by by-law for the purposes of this CIP.
2. The property must be located within an appropriate Focus Area, and the proposed project must align with an eligible project type identified within the applicable incentive program(s).
3. All proposed projects must result in a demonstrable improvement or rehabilitation of existing conditions and shall not be limited to routine maintenance or standard life-cycle replacement.
4. All projects must contribute to achieving or aligning with one or more of the community improvement goals identified in Section 7.2 of this Plan.
5. Unless otherwise specified within a particular program, only registered owners, assessed owners, or tenants of private lands or buildings (with the written consent of the owner) are eligible to apply for financial incentives.
6. The total value of all grants, loans, and tax assistance provided in respect of a project shall not exceed the total value of eligible costs as defined within the applicable incentive program(s) and shall otherwise not exceed the total eligible costs of the project.
7. Except where otherwise specified (including for Tax Increment Grants), a property may be eligible for multiple incentive programs, and applicants may submit more than one application during the term of this CIP. In all cases, the combined value of incentives approved in any given year shall not exceed the total eligible costs of the project.
8. Financial incentives shall not be applied retroactively. Any works commenced prior to the written approval of an application are not eligible for funding. Costs incurred prior to the adoption of this CIP are not eligible.
9. At the time of application, the subject property must have no outstanding property tax arrears or other outstanding Municipal or County accounts receivable.
10. Applicants must disclose all other sources of funding or incentives being used to support the proposed project, including governmental, private, or not-for-profit funding. These sources will be considered during application review, and the value of incentives approved under this CIP may be adjusted accordingly. Projects receiving funding under this CIP are not eligible to receive funding for the same works

under any other Community Improvement Plan adopted by Municipal Council.

11. All proposed works must conform with applicable Municipal and County policies, standards, and procedures, including the Official Plan, Zoning By-law, design guidelines (where applicable), heritage requirements, and all necessary planning approvals and building permits under the Ontario Building Code.

### **Additional Eligibility Criteria for Tax Increment Grants**

In addition to the general eligibility criteria above, the following criteria apply specifically to applications for Tax Increment Grants.

1. A property is eligible to receive a Tax Increment Grant once during the term of this CIP, unless otherwise approved by the County and/or municipality in writing.
2. To be eligible, the proposed project must be considered “major,” meaning it is anticipated to result in a reassessment and corresponding increase in municipal and/or County property taxes (the tax increment).
3. The total value of all Tax Increment Grants approved for a project shall not exceed the total eligible costs invested by the applicant or shall not be paid beyond the defined period in the incentive program under which it applies.

4. Applications for Tax Increment Grants may be subject to additional requirements, including:
  - a. A financial pro forma prepared at the applicant’s expense;
  - b. An independent third-party financial review, where required, at the applicant’s expense; and
  - c. A grant agreement setting out terms, conditions, performance expectations, and the duration of the grant.
5. If a participating property is sold, in whole or in part, prior to the expiry of the approved grant period, the applicant and/or any subsequent owner is not entitled to receive any remaining grant payments. At its sole discretion, the Municipality may enter into a new agreement with a subsequent owner to permit continued receipt of grant payments.
6. Unless otherwise specified within a particular incentive program, applicants receiving a Tax Increment Grant shall not be eligible to receive additional financial incentive programs under this Plan during the same year.



## 11.4 Facade, Signage, & Property Improvement Program

### Program Summary

The Facade, Signage, & Property Improvement Program provides financial support to property and business owners and tenants (with consent of the owner) looking to invest in projects that enhance the look, feel, and functionality of their buildings and properties. Its purpose is to advance vibrancy, placemaking, and universal accessibility by encouraging high-quality aesthetic and material upgrades. Through grants that cover materials and labour, professional fees, and permit fees, the program reduces financial barriers to improvements that might otherwise be cost-prohibitive. Eligible projects range from facade upgrades and signage enhancements to landscaping features, and accessibility improvements.

### Eligible Areas

This program is available to properties located within the following Focus Areas:

- Main Street Corridors

### Eligible Projects

The following improvements are eligible for funding under this program. Final eligibility is determined by the Elgincentives Implementation Committee.

Project Type	Eligible Improvements
Facade Improvement	Permanent physical improvements to the exterior wall(s) of a building that faces and is openly visible from a public street, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restoration or replacement of exterior building treatments, such as brickwork/cladding/siding;</li> <li>• Restoration or replacement of cornices, eaves, and parapets;</li> <li>• Restoration or replacement of windows, doors and awnings;</li> <li>• Restoration or replacement of exterior lighting;</li> <li>• Exterior painting, including artistic murals;</li> </ul>

Project Type	Eligible Improvements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chemical or other facade cleaning;</li> <li>• Redesign of storefront or entrance modifications, including provisions to improve accessibility; and</li> <li>• Such other similar improvements and repairs that may be necessary to improve the appearance of a building facade exterior</li> </ul>
<p><b>Signage Improvement</b></p>	<p>Permanent improvement to the main storefront sign(s), such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New or replacement permanent signage (building-mounted or freestanding)</li> <li>• Signage integrated into an overall facade redesign</li> </ul>
<p><b>Property Improvements</b></p>	<p>Permanent aesthetic or functional improvements to the property including the front yard and other publicly visible areas of the property, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addition of landscaping features (plants/green space, including sod, trees, vegetation, etc.);</li> <li>• Addition of street-facing patios, terraces, or publicly accessible outdoor spaces tied to a business</li> <li>• Addition of permanent landscaping elements such as fencing, benches, planters, and lighting;</li> <li>• Addition of new parking/existing parking area upgrades for cars, motorcycles, and bicycles;</li> <li>• Improvements to rear building entrances and rear parking areas;</li> <li>• Addition of walkways; and</li> <li>• Such other similar improvements and repairs that may be necessary to improve the aesthetics of a property or otherwise improve the compatibility of the building with neighbouring land uses (i.e. screening).</li> </ul>

## Available Grants

The following grants are available under this program. Where a project involves a combination of project types, the corresponding grant amounts available for each may be combined so long as no component of the project receives duplicate funding, and the resulting grant does not exceed the total project costs.

	Materials & Labour	Professional Fees	Building & Planning Fees
Facade Improvement	50% of eligible costs, up to \$10,000 <sup>1</sup>	50% of eligible costs, up to \$2,500	50% of eligible costs, up to \$2,500
Signage Improvement	50% of eligible costs, up to \$3,500 <sup>2</sup>	50% of eligible costs, up to \$1,000	50% of eligible costs, up to \$1,000
Property Improvement	50% of eligible costs, up to \$5,000	50% of eligible costs, up to \$1,000	50% of eligible costs, up to \$1,000

1. Maximum may be increased to \$12,500 where a project involves multiple facades fronting onto a public road (e.g., corner lots).
2. Maximum may be increased to \$7,000 where a project involves multiple facades fronting onto a public road (e.g., corner lots).
3. (applies to all projects) Where the premises is located within the Tourism Corridor Overlay, an additional \$2,500 may be added to the maximum grant amount, so long as it does not result in a combined grant amount over 50% of the eligible project costs

## Program-Specific Eligibility Criteria

In addition to the general eligibility criteria outlined in Section 11.3, all improvement projects seeking funding through this program are subject to conformity with the following criteria:

1. The property or use that is the subject of the application must be a permitted commercial, mixed-use, institutional, or other non-residential use. Properties used exclusively or predominantly for residential purposes are not eligible.
2. All proposed improvements must be visible from a public right-of-way or publicly accessible space (e.g., parks, laneways, municipal parking lots).
3. The property must be accessible to and/or serve the general public, employees, or clients and contribute to the public life and its surrounding community.

## Program-Specific Design Considerations

In addition to meeting the general and program-specific eligibility criteria, applicants are encouraged to propose improvements that consider local design elements and enhance placemaking and identity by retaining architectural character and historic legacy. Design interventions should reinforce the existing scale, colour, and material palette of the building and surrounding streetscape, while also supporting contemporary needs such as accessibility, energy efficiency, and business visibility. Applications that integrate the following design considerations may be prioritized:

1. Consistency with the original architectural design of the building (e.g., form, materials, proportions, detailing);
2. A substantial visual improvement to the facade and/or surrounding site;
3. Alignment with urban design and heritage conservation policies of the Official Plan;
4. Incorporation of cultural or historic design elements (e.g., signage style, period appropriate detailing);
5. Removal of incompatible cladding (e.g., vinyl, aluminum) and replacement with context-appropriate materials; or,
6. Restoration or enhancement of key facade components (windows, doors, signage, cornices, etc.).



## 11.5 Building Improvement, Conversion, & Expansion Program

### Summary

The Building Improvement, Conversion, and Expansion Program supports upgrades, repairs, renovations, and adaptive reuse projects that improve the safety, functionality, and usability of existing buildings. The program assists property and business owners in completing improvements that may otherwise be cost prohibitive, including work required to meet Building Code standards, enhance accessibility, improve interior layout and performance, or address structural and safety needs. Routine lifecycle replacements are not intended to be eligible. The program also supports the conversion of vacant or underutilized non-residential space into new commercial, mixed-use, institutional, or other eligible uses, as well as eligible expansions that increase operational capacity or accommodate business growth. These improvements help strengthen the long-term viability of buildings and contribute to economic vitality.

### Eligible Areas

This program is available to properties located within the following Focus Areas:

- Main Street Corridors
- Settlement Areas

### Eligible Projects

The following improvements are eligible for funding under this program. Final eligibility is determined by the Elgincentives Implementation Committee.

Project Type	Eligible Improvements
<p><b>Building Improvement</b></p>	<p>Eligible improvements may include interior or structural work that improves the safety, functionality, and long-term performance of an existing building. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structural repairs to walls, ceilings, floors, or foundations</li> <li>• Interior renovation, layout reconfiguration, or interior design improvements</li> <li>• Repair, replacement, or installation of building systems, including plumbing, electrical, HVAC, or fire protection</li> </ul>

Project Type	Eligible Improvements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repair, replacement, or installation of roofing, windows, or doors</li> <li>• Weatherproofing or building envelope improvements that enhance performance</li> <li>• Accessibility upgrades for people with disabilities</li> <li>• Improvements required to bring a building into compliance with the Ontario Building Code or to address health, safety, or risk management issues</li> </ul>
<p><b>Building Conversion &amp; Expansion</b></p>	<p>Eligible improvements may include the conversion or expansion of space to accommodate a new or expanded use. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conversion of vacant or underutilized non-residential space into new commercial, mixed-use, institutional, or other eligible uses</li> <li>• Conversion of upper-storey space into new residential units, where permitted</li> <li>• Expansion of an existing building containing a permitted non-residential use to increase floor area or functional capacity of the building</li> </ul>

**Available Grants**

The following grants are available under this program. Where a project involves a combination of project types, the corresponding grant amounts available for each may be combined so long as no component of the project receives duplicate funding, and the resulting grant does not exceed the total project costs.

	Materials & Labour	Professional Fees	Building & Planning Fees
<p><b>Building Improvement</b></p>	<p>50% of eligible costs, up to \$15,000</p>	<p>50% of eligible costs, up to \$2,500</p>	<p>50% of eligible costs, up to \$2,500</p>
<p><b>Building Conversion &amp; Expansion</b></p>	<p>\$20/ft<sup>2</sup> up to \$15,000</p>	<p>50% of eligible costs, up to \$2,500</p>	<p>50% of eligible costs, up to \$2,500</p>

1. *(applies to all projects) Where the premises is located within the Tourism Corridor Overlay, an additional \$2,500 may be added to the maximum grant amount, so long as it does not result in a combined grant amount over 50% of the eligible project costs. This does not apply to the Tax Increment Grant described below.*

<b>Tax Increment Grant (Major Projects Only)</b>						
<p>As an alternative to the grants above, a Tax Increment Grant (TIG) may be offered for major improvement, conversion, or expansion projects that are expected to generate a significant increase in property assessment. The TIG provides an annual grant based on all or a portion of the County and/or Municipal tax increase that results from the completed project (the increment). This option is intended for large-scale improvements where the projected tax increment is expected to exceed the combined value of the grants otherwise available.</p> <p>The Tax Increment Grant (TIG) will follow the payment schedule below, depending on where the property is located. The lifetime amount of a TIG shall not exceed the total costs of the project.</p>						
<b>Year</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Increment Amount - County Portion</b> (within Tourism Corridor Overlay)	100%	90%	80%	70%	60%	0%
<b>Increment Amount - County Portion</b> (outside the Tourism Corridor Overlay)	100%	80%	60%	40%	20%	0%
<b>Increment Amount – Local Portion</b>	Initial increment amount and reduction schedule to be determined by the local municipality in its sole discretion.					

### Program-Specific Eligibility Criteria

In addition to the general eligibility criteria outlined in Section 11.3, all improvement projects seeking funding through this program are subject to conformity with the following criteria.

1. The property or use that is the subject of the application must be a permitted commercial, mixed-use, or institutional use. Properties used exclusively or predominantly for residential purposes are not eligible.
2. The project must involve improvements to an existing building. New standalone buildings or detached additions that do not relate to the functional improvement or expansion of an existing structure are not eligible.
3. The work must result in a measurable functional, structural, or code-related improvement. Projects that simply replace materials or finishes with no demonstrated functional benefit are not eligible.

4. Routine lifecycle replacements are not eligible. Eligible improvements must extend the useful life of the building, address deficiencies, or provide a functional upgrade beyond basic maintenance.
5. Conversions must involve a change in use or purpose of a space. Examples include adapting vacant or underutilized interior space for commercial, mixed-use, or institutional purposes, or other eligible uses identified in the CIP.
6. Expansions must be directly tied to business or operational needs. Eligible expansions include increases in floor area or functional capacity required to accommodate a permitted and active use.
7. Accessibility improvements shall comply with minimum regulatory requirements to create a safer, more inclusive, or barrier-free environment.
8. The Tax Increment Grant (TIG) component of this program is subject to the specific requirements of (11.3). Applicants seeking a TIG will be required to submit information that demonstrates the anticipated reassessment impact of the project. The municipality will confirm eligibility based on a preliminary assessment estimate and may offer a TIG in lieu of the standard grant types where this form of assistance provides a more suitable level of support for the scale and impact of the proposed work.

### **Program-Specific Design Considerations**

The following design considerations are intended to guide applicants and municipal staff in shaping and evaluating projects submitted under this program. Projects that effectively address one or more of these considerations may be viewed more favourably during the review process, particularly where they demonstrate clear community benefit or high-quality design outcomes.

1. Projects should enhance the long-term functionality and adaptability of the building, particularly where improvements support evolving business needs or future reuse opportunities.
2. Proposed work should demonstrate a clear contribution to the overall vitality of the surrounding area, including benefits such as improved building condition, increased activity, or renewed occupancy.
3. Interior improvements should prioritize user safety, accessibility, and comfort, including energy efficiency and indoor environmental quality where appropriate.

4. Where heritage or older building stock is present, applicants are encouraged to maintain or sensitively restore character-defining features, while ensuring modern standards of performance and safety.
5. Applicants should consider how improvements can support economic resilience, such as creating flexible spaces, enabling business growth, or improving operational efficiency.
6. The scale and scope of work should be proportional to the intended use of the space and should reflect thoughtful investment that strengthens the value and longevity of the building.
7. Collaboration with qualified professionals, including architects, engineers, or designers, is encouraged to support high-quality outcomes and ensure technical feasibility.
8. Projects that address long-term deficiencies, resolve persistent functional challenges, or enable the productive use of previously underutilized spaces are especially encouraged.



## 11.6 Brownfield Remediation Program

### Summary

The Brownfield Remediation Program provides financial support to encourage the assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment of contaminated or potentially contaminated sites, known as “Brownfields”. Brownfield sites often consist of former industrial, commercial, or institutional properties that are vacant, underutilized, or impacted by past uses. These properties may present significant barriers to redevelopment due to environmental uncertainty or remediation costs. The program offers assistance for environmental studies, remediation activities, and tax relief during the rehabilitation and redevelopment period. By reducing financial barriers and de-risking early investigative work, the program aims to support environmental improvement, enable adaptive reuse, and return underutilized lands to productive use consistent with local planning policy and revitalization goals.

### Eligible Areas

This program is available to any identified Brownfield in the entire municipality.

### Eligible Projects

The following improvements are eligible for funding under this program. Final eligibility is determined by the Elgincivatives Implementation Committee.

Project Type	Eligible Improvements
<b>Environmental Studies</b>	<p>Eligible studies may include work required to assess the extent and nature of contamination, evaluate risk, and prepare for remediation or the filing of a Record of Site Condition (RSC). Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (ESA)</li> <li>• Remedial Action Plan or Remedial Work Plan</li> <li>• Risk Assessment and Risk Management Plans</li> <li>• Other environmental studies required under the Environmental Protection Act to support an RSC filing</li> </ul>
<b>Remediation and Risk</b>	<p>Eligible remediation work must be undertaken to reduce or manage contaminants on a site in order to permit redevelopment for an intended use. Examples include:</p>

Project Type	Eligible Improvements
<b>Management Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental remediation activities such as soil excavation, removal, or treatment</li> <li>• Costs of preparing an RSC, including subsurface characterization work required to support filing</li> <li>• Placement of clean fill and site grading</li> <li>• Installation of environmental or engineering controls, such as vapour mitigation or groundwater control systems</li> <li>• Monitoring, maintaining, and operating environmental or engineering controls</li> <li>• Environmental insurance premiums directly related to remediation or risk management</li> <li>• Other eligible costs as permitted under Section 365.1 of the Municipal Act, 2001</li> </ul>
<b>Redevelopment</b>	Redevelopment of a former brownfield property for a new commercial, mixed-use, institutional, industrial, or multi-unit residential use following the investigation and subsequent remediation of a site, as well as the filing of a Record of Site Condition, in support of redevelopment.

### Available Grants

The following grants are available under this program. Where a project involves a combination of project types, the corresponding grant amounts available for each may be combined so long as no component of the project receives duplicate funding, and the resulting grant does not exceed the total project costs.

	Professional Fees	Tax Cancellation
<b>Environmental Study</b>	50% of eligible costs, up to \$10,000	N/A
<b>Remediation Activities</b>	N/A	Up to 100% of municipal and/or County portion of taxes cancelled for up to three years, from the date a Phase II ESA described in Note 1 below was completed for the property <sup>1</sup>

1. In accordance with Section 365.1 of the Municipal Act, to be eligible for tax cancellation, a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment must be prepared and submitted by a qualified professional demonstrating that the property did not meet the

*standards that must be met under subparagraph 4 i of subsection 168.4 (1) of the Environmental Protection Act to permit a record of site condition to be filed under that subsection in the Environmental Site Registry.*

**Tax Increment Grant (Major Projects Only)**

In addition to the grants above, a Tax Increment Grant (TIG) may be offered for redevelopment projects that are expected to generate a significant increase in property assessment on a former brownfield. The TIG provides a grant based on all or a portion of the County and/or municipal tax increase that results from the completed project (the increment). This option is intended for large-scale improvements where the projected tax increment is expected to exceed the combined value of the grants otherwise available.

The Tax Increment Grant (TIG) will follow the payment schedule below, depending on where the property is located. The lifetime amount of a TIG shall not exceed the total costs of the project.

Year	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Increment Amount - County Portion</b> (within Tourism Corridor Overlay)	100%	90%	80%	70%	60%	0%
<b>Increment Amount - County Portion</b> (outside the Tourism Corridor Overlay)	100%	80%	60%	40%	20%	0%
<b>Increment Amount – Local Portion</b>	Initial increment amount and reduction schedule to be determined by the local municipality in its sole discretion.					

**Program-Specific Eligibility Criteria**

In addition to the general eligibility criteria outlined in Section 11.3, all improvement projects seeking funding through this program are subject to conformity with the following criteria.

1. The property must meet the definition of a brownfield site and must be confirmed or suspected to be contaminated based on a Phase I ESA.
2. All studies supported under this program shall be completed by a Qualified Person.
3. Applicants must submit all required documentation, including study results, certifications, and detailed cost estimates, prior to reimbursement.
4. For environmental study grants, applicants must provide one hard copy and one digital copy of completed studies along with proof of payment.

5. Applicants must provide written consent allowing the Town of Aylmer to use non-sensitive study findings to inform future planning or economic development initiatives.
6. The program is intended for non-residential, mixed-use redevelopment, or multi-unit residential redevelopment projects comprising four (4) or more units.
7. Grants will only be offered where there is demonstrated potential for redevelopment, renovation, or adaptive reuse of an existing building or site.
8. Applicants must be the registered owner or assessed owner of the property. Tenants are not eligible to apply.
9. Remediation work supported through this program must support the eventual filing of an RSC in the Environmental Site Registry.

### **Additional information on Provincial Programming**

To further support brownfield revitalization, the municipality may work with eligible applicants to pursue the Province of Ontario's Brownfields Financial Tax Incentive Program (BFTIP). This provincial tool allows municipalities to request a matching cancellation of the education portion of property tax from the Province. Eligibility under the provincial matching program requires:

- that the site is located within a designated CIP area; and
- that a Phase II ESA confirms the presence of contamination requiring remediation.

Through BFTIP, the Province may cancel education property taxes for up to six (6) years for business development and up to ten (10) years for residential development, proportionate to the municipal cancellation.

For more information on provincial brownfield programming, please visit: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/brownfields-financial-tax-incentive-program>



## 11.7 Building Efficiency & Sustainability Program

### Program Summary

The Building Efficiency & Sustainability Program provides financial support to upgrade the environmental efficiency and sustainability of their buildings and sites. Its purpose is to advance climate resilience, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and promote sustainable building practices through high performance building envelopes, efficient mechanical systems, and renewable energy installations. These improvements will also support improved comfort, durability, and operating

efficiency while supporting broader community sustainability objectives.

### Eligible Areas

This program is available to properties located within the following Focus Areas:

- Main Street Corridors
- Settlement Areas

### Eligible Projects

The following improvements are eligible for funding under this program. Final eligibility is determined by the Elgincentives Implementation Committee.

Project Type	Eligible Improvements
All Projects	<p>Major Interior or exterior renovations that result in a third-party certification or meet a third-party energy efficiency standard which exceeds the requirements of the Ontario Building Code and demonstrably increases energy efficiency including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interior or exterior renovations that result in any level of LEED certification as determined by the Canada Green Building Council.</li> <li>• Interior or exterior renovations that result in compliance with ASHRAE SNAE Standard 90.1.1999 or newer energy performance standards for buildings except low rise residential buildings as certified by a professional engineer or professional architect.</li> </ul>

Project Type	Eligible Improvements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Installing roof upgrades for energy or water management such as a green roof, cool roof materials, reflective roof coatings, or other improvements that help reduce heat, save energy, or better manage rainwater.</li> <li>• Installation of green infrastructure to support draining of stormwater such as bioswales, permeable surfacing, or rain gardens</li> <li>• Improvements that increase the building’s resiliency to climate change impacts such as improved drainage systems to mitigate flood risk</li> <li>• Installation of small-scale renewable energy systems such as solar panels, heat pumps, solar water heaters, geothermal.</li> </ul>

### Available Grants

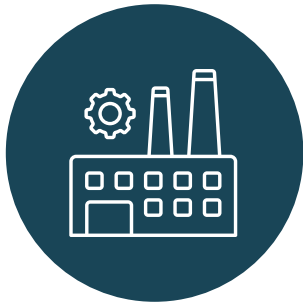
The following grants are available under this program. Where a project involves a combination of project types, the corresponding grant amounts available for each may be combined so long as no component of the project receives duplicate funding, and the resulting grant does not exceed the total project costs.

	Materials & Labour	Professional Fees	Building & Planning Fees
All Projects	50% of eligible costs, up to \$7,500	50% of eligible costs, up to \$2,500	50% of eligible costs, up to \$1,500

### Program-Specific Eligibility Criteria

In addition to the general eligibility criteria outlined in Section 11.3, all improvement projects seeking funding through this program are subject to conformity with the following criteria.

1. The property or use that is the subject of the application must be a permitted commercial, mixed-use, or institutional use. Properties used exclusively or predominantly for residential purposes are not eligible.
2. Applications may be required to be supported by a professional energy audit completed in order to determine and demonstrate the need for energy efficiency upgrades.



## 11.8 Industrial Stimulus Program

### Summary

The Industrial Stimulus Program is intended to encourage private investment in major projects that establish or significantly expand employment-generating uses within designated Employment Areas. The program supports large-scale industrial and employment developments that create new jobs, diversify the local economy, and strengthen the municipality’s long-term competitiveness. Funding is intended for high-impact projects with clear economic benefits.

### Eligible Areas

This program is available to support employment and industrial-focused development projects on any lands designated employment lands or industrial in the Official Plan.

### Eligible Projects

The following improvements are eligible for funding under this program. Final eligibility is determined by the Elgincentives Implementation Committee.

Project Type	Eligible Improvements
<p><b>Industrial Development, Redevelopment, or Expansion</b></p>	<p>Major development or redevelopment projects that support the establishment, expansion, or modernization of an industrial or employment-generating use, where the project would result in an increase in assessment value on the lands. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction of new buildings or facilities for industrial, manufacturing, logistics, warehousing, or other employment uses;</li> <li>• Expansion of existing industrial or employment buildings to increase production capacity or operational space; and/or</li> <li>• Redevelopment or adaptive reuse of underutilized or vacant employment lands for new industrial or advanced manufacturing uses.</li> </ul>

## Available Grants

The following grants are available under this program. Where a project involves a combination of project types, the corresponding grant amounts available for each may be combined so long as no component of the project receives duplicate funding, and the resulting grant does not exceed the total project costs.

<b>Tax Increment Grant (Major Projects Only)</b>											
<p>A Tax Increment Grant (TIG) is available to support major development projects that are expected to generate a significant increase in property assessment. The TIG provides an annual grant based on all or a portion of the County and/or municipal tax increase that results from the completed project. This grant is intended for large-scale improvement projects only.</p> <p>The Tax Increment Grant (TIG) will follow the payment schedules outlined below, subject to all eligibility criteria being satisfied. The lifetime amount of a TIG shall not exceed the total costs of the project.</p>											
<b>Year</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Basic Increment Amount (County Portion)</b> – all other eligible project types	100%	90%	80%	70%	60%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Enhanced Increment Amount (County Portion)</b> – project must be directly associated with a manufacturing <sup>1</sup> use and result in a minimum of 60,000 ft <sup>2</sup> in new building construction	100%	90%	80%	70%	60%	50%	40%	30%	20%	10%	0%
<b>Increment Amount (Local Portion)</b>	Initial increment amount and reduction schedule to be determined by the local municipality in its sole discretion.										

1. Final determination of what constitutes a manufacturing use shall be at the sole discretion of Elgin County and/or the Town of Aylmer staff.

## Program-Specific Eligibility Criteria

In addition to the general eligibility criteria outlined in Section 11.3, all improvement projects seeking funding through this program are subject to conformity with the following criteria.

1. Projects must involve the establishment of a new employment-generating use or a significant expansion of an existing eligible industrial or employment use.
2. The proposed development must be permitted by the zoning bylaw and consistent with the Official Plan designation for the site.
3. The project should demonstrate clear economic benefits, including job creation, increased assessment, business expansion, or strengthened competitiveness.
4. A minimum capital investment threshold may be required, to be determined by the County and/or the Town of Aylmer at the time of application.
5. Applicants may be required to submit a business plan, development concept, or financial pro forma to demonstrate feasibility and economic impact.
6. A scoring system or evaluation matrix may be used to prioritize projects that provide the greatest benefits to the Town of Aylmer or align with targeted sectors.
7. Applicants requesting a TIG must also meet the TIG-specific eligibility criteria set out in Section 11.3 and may be required to submit assessment impact estimates prepared by a qualified third party.
8. Routine maintenance or minor alterations are not eligible. Only substantial industrial development, redevelopment, or expansion projects qualify under this program.
9. The property must be located within a designated Employment Area as defined by the Official Plan.



## 11.9 Affordable Rental Housing Program

### Summary

This program supports the creation of new affordable, purpose-built rental housing to diversify the local housing supply and expand housing options for residents. By offering financial incentives such as municipal fee relief and tax increment grants, the program helps offset the reduced revenues experienced by housing providers when offering units at affordable rental rates. The program encourages collaboration between the development community and local or regional

housing service providers, such as the City of St. Thomas Housing and Homelessness Services, to align projects with community housing needs and priorities. For the purpose of administrating this program, the County and Municipality will maintain an annual statement of Average Market Rent (AMR) for each of the following unit types, to be updated as-needed: Bachelor / 1-Bedroom / 2-Bedroom / 3+ Bedroom

### Eligible Areas

This program is available to properties located within the following Focus Areas:

- Main Street Corridors
- Settlement Areas

### Eligible Projects

The following improvements are eligible for funding under this program. Final eligibility is determined by the Elgincentives Implementation Committee.

Project Type	Eligible Improvements
<p><b>New Rental Housing Creation</b></p>	<p>New multi-unit development resulting in the creation of four or more new housing units on a property where at least 20% of the units (with a minimum of 1) are purpose-built rentals having rent(s) maintained at or below Average Market Rent (AMR), as determined by the Municipality, for the lifetime of the grant period.</p>

## Available Grants

The following grants are available under this program. Where a project involves a combination of project types, the corresponding grant amounts available for each may be combined so long as no component of the project receives duplicate funding, and the resulting grant does not exceed the total project costs.

	Professional Fees	Building & Planning Fees
All Eligible Projects	50% of eligible costs, up to \$5,000 (one time)	100% of eligible costs, up to \$5,000 (one time)

### Tax Increment Grant

A Tax Increment Grant (TIG) will be offered in combination with the grants above to provide greater support to affordable housing creation. The TIG for this program differs from the other TIGs in this CIP in that the total annual grant offered under the Tax Increment Grant (TIG) will be tied to the number of rental housing units provided at each level of affordability, the combined maximum of which shall not exceed 50% of the tax increment annually.

TIG amounts will be determined in accordance with the level of affordability achieved and maintained for the minimum grant period, which is measured as a percentage of the current Average Market Rent (AMR) for the respective unit type/size. The grant amounts shown below are an annual payment made on a per-unit basis.

Affordability Level <sup>1</sup>	Percentage of AMR	Grant Per Unit
Average Market Rent	91% to 100%	\$2,000 annually for up to 10 Years
Near-Market Rent	81% to 90%	\$3,500 annually for up to 10 Years
Affordable Rent	≤80%	\$5,000 annually for up to 10 Years

- Elgin County and/or the Town of Aylmer shall maintain full discretion in the determination of Average Market Rent (AMR) based on unit size/type and the maximum rent permitted to qualify for each Affordability Level described above.*

## Program-Specific Eligibility Criteria

In addition to the general eligibility criteria outlined in Section 11.3, all improvement projects seeking funding through this program are subject to conformity with the following criteria.

1. Registered owners of lands and buildings must enter into an agreement with the Municipality outlining the obligations and responsibilities of the owner, including but not limited to the criteria listed in this section.
2. A minimum of 20% of the total housing units in the development must be rented at or below Average Market Rent (AMR) for a minimum period 10 years from occupancy, known as the Grant Period.
3. If any unit(s) change in their affordability level but remain eligible for funding under this program, the grant amount(s) may be adjusted accordingly. If the units are no longer deemed to be affordable per the definition in this program, the Municipality may cancel the annual grants paid under this program and/or may require past grant funding, plus interest, to become repayable to the Municipality in full.
4. During tenancy, the housing provider must agree not to increase the rent during the affordability period by more than the prevailing rent increase guideline established for each calendar year pursuant to the *Residential Tenancies Act, 2006* or any successor legislation or the rental rates established through the agreement, whichever is less. However, the rent rate established through the agreement may be adjusted to the current year during unit turnover.
5. The total combined annual maximum grant offered under the Tax Increment Grant (TIG) component shall not exceed 50% of the tax increment as defined below:

*Tax Increment: The incremental increase in property taxes generated by an eligible project. Determined as the difference between pre- and post-project completion municipal property taxes levied as a result of the revaluation of the property by Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC).*

6. Tenancy for Affordable Units rented at 80% or less of AMR should be coordinated with City of St. Thomas Housing and Homelessness Services to ensure those most in need of housing have priority access, based on wait list or other available data deemed appropriate.
7. Any housing unit (affordable or not) within a development supported under this program shall not be used as a short-term rental for the duration of the grant period.
8. Prior to the payment of any TIG grants, the following must be satisfied:

- The development is complete and occupancy permits have been issued;
  - The property has been reassessed by MPAC;
  - Property taxes for the respective year have been paid in full, and each year subsequent;
  - The Municipality has confirmed the rent levels are in accordance with the requirements of the CIP and any funding agreement(s).
9. In addition to the above, applicants must meet the TIG-specific eligibility criteria set out in Section 11.3 and may be required to submit assessment impact estimates prepared by a qualified third party.



## 11.10 Agri-Tourism & Rural Diversification

### Program Summary

The Agri-Tourism & Rural Diversification Program provides financial support to establish, expand, or enhance non-traditional, agriculture-related ventures that contribute to Elgin County’s rural economy and tourism landscape. Its purpose is to encourage value-added agricultural enterprises, on-farm diversified uses, agri-tourism experiences, and rural recreation amenities that celebrate the County’s agricultural heritage while advancing economic diversification. The program is not

intended to fund general production-based agricultural activities such as livestock operations, dairy production, cash cropping, or conventional horticulture. Instead, it supports projects that introduce new visitor experiences, create additional revenue streams for rural properties, and strengthen the vitality and resilience of Elgin County’s rural area.

### Eligible Areas

This program is available to properties located within the following Focus Areas:

- Agricultural Area

### Eligible projects

The following improvements are eligible for funding under this program. Final eligibility is determined by the Elgincentives Implementation Committee.

Project Type	Eligible Improvements
All Projects	<p>Eligible improvements generally include the permanent establishment, expansion, or improvement of a bona fide agri-tourism, on-farm diversified, or rural recreation use permitted under the Provincial Planning Statement and the Municipality’s Official Plan. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction of new buildings or additions directly associated with the use;</li> <li>• Renovations or upgrades to existing buildings, including Fire safety, electrical, HVAC, plumbing systems, and general compliance with the Ontario Building Code for the proposed use(s) to support the conversion of buildings or structures to accommodate occupancy related to the use;</li> <li>• Facade, signage, and property improvements generally consistent with the eligible projects supported under the Facade, Signage, and Property Improvement Program</li> </ul>

## Available Grants

The following grants are available under this program. Where a project involves a combination of project types, the corresponding grant amounts available for each may be combined so long as no component of the project receives duplicate funding, and the resulting grant does not exceed the total project costs.

	Materials & Labour	Professional Fees	Building & Planning Fees
All Projects	50% of eligible costs, up to \$10,000	50% of eligible costs, up to \$2,500	50% of eligible costs, up to \$2,500

1. *Where the premises is located within the Tourism Corridor Overlay, an additional \$2,500 may be added to the maximum grant amount, so long as it does not result in a combined grant amount over 50% of the eligible project costs*

## Program-Specific Eligibility Criteria

In addition to the general eligibility criteria outlined in Section 11.3, all improvement projects seeking funding through this program are subject to conformity with the following criteria.

1. The project must be directly tied to a bona fide agri-tourism use, value-added agricultural use, on-farm diversified use, or commercial rural recreation use permitted in the Official Plan.
2. All proposed uses must be consistent with OMAFRA's guidelines for permitted uses in the agricultural area.
3. Any improvements related to a dwelling or residential portion of a use or business are not eligible. Properties used exclusively for residential purposes are not eligible, unless the proposed improvement is clearly integral to an eligible agri-tourism or value-added agricultural activity.
4. Eligible uses must generally be open and accessible to the public to access the service, experience, or good(s).
5. The project must support activities that are compatible with agricultural operations and do not compromise the long-term function of the agricultural land base.



## 11.11 Additional Dwelling Unit Program

### Program Summary

The Additional Dwelling Unit (ADU) Program provides financial support to property owners seeking to create new ADUs or legalize existing units that were not previously compliant with zoning, building, or fire code requirements. Given shifting demographics and increased housing pressures, the use of ADUs can help increase the affordable housing stock and provide alternate housing options within existing lots and at often a lower cost. The purpose of the Additional Dwelling Unit (ADU) Program is to encourage the development of safe, functional, and well-designed secondary units that expand housing choice and support gentle residential intensification within designated areas of the community.

### Eligible Areas

This program is available to properties located within the following Focus Areas:

- Main Street Corridors
- Settlement Areas

### Eligible Projects

The following improvements are eligible for funding under this program. Final eligibility is determined by the Elgincivites Implementation Committee.

Project Type	Eligible Improvements
All Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The establishment of a new permanent Additional Dwelling Unit in compliance with the Municipality’s Official Plan and Zoning By-law.</li> <li>• Where one or more code-related deficiencies exist with an existing ADU, permanent upgrades or renovations directly related to bringing the ADU into compliance with applicable building, fire, and safety codes.</li> </ul>

## Available Grants

The following grants are available under this program. Where a project involves a combination of project types, the corresponding grant amounts available for each may be combined so long as no component of the project receives duplicate funding, and the resulting grant does not exceed the total project costs.

	Materials & Labour	Professional Fees	Building & Planning Fees
All Projects	50% of eligible costs, up to \$10,000	50% of eligible costs, up to \$2,500	50% of eligible costs, up to \$2,500

## Program-Specific Eligibility Criteria

In addition to the general eligibility criteria outlined in Section 11.3, all improvement projects seeking funding through this program are subject to conformity with the following criteria.

1. All proposed ADU projects must comply with the applicable Official Plan policies, Zoning By-law provisions, and the Ontario Building Code, including any required planning approvals and building permits.
2. Eligible works must be functional in nature and directly related to the creation, legalization, or improvement of an additional dwelling unit. Cosmetic or purely decorative improvements (e.g., painting, flooring replacement, or aesthetic upgrades) are not eligible for funding unless they form part of a broader, eligible scope of work.
3. As a condition of funding, the financial assistance agreement shall prohibit the use of any additional dwelling unit supported under this program as a short-term rental for a minimum period of five (5) years. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in the requirement to repay all or a portion of the grant funding, in accordance with the terms of the agreement.
4. No portion of any works associated with the main residence or dwelling unit will be eligible for funding support (i.e., the primary dwelling unit).

## Program-Specific Design Considerations

Applications under this program will be evaluated in the context of the Municipality's Official Plan policies related to additional dwelling units, including considerations related to scale, compatibility, location, servicing, and access. In addition, to ensure that supported projects contribute positively to neighbourhood quality, livability, and long-term housing outcomes, priority may be given to applications that demonstrate strong design and planning merit in one or more of the following areas.

1. The additional dwelling unit is well integrated with the principal dwelling and surrounding neighbourhood, including compatibility in form, massing, scale, and materials, and reflects the established character of the area.
2. The project incorporates barrier-free design features or enhances housing accessibility for seniors, persons with disabilities, or individuals with mobility challenges (e.g., ground-level units, single-storey layouts, or direct pedestrian access).
3. The project incorporates energy-efficient design strategies or environmentally responsible materials that exceed minimum building code requirements.
4. The placement and orientation of entrances, windows, and access points respect adjacent properties, minimize privacy impacts, and contribute positively to the public realm.
5. The additional dwelling unit supports identified housing needs within the community, such as increasing rental supply, providing workforce housing, or enabling aging in place.

These design considerations are intended to inform the review and prioritization of applications and do not represent mandatory eligibility thresholds. Where funding is limited, projects that best reflect these principles may be prioritized for support.

# 12.0 Administration

This section outlines the administrative framework for the implementation of the Elgincentives within the Town of Aylmer, including the term of the Plan, governance structure, funding approach, and application requirements for financial incentive programs. While this Plan is adopted locally under the Ontario Planning Act, it is administered through a County-led delivery model in partnership with Elgin County, as described below.

## 12.1 Term of the CIP

It is anticipated that the Elgincentives Community Improvement Plan will be implemented over a ten (10) year period from 2026 to 2036. An amendment to this CIP is not required to extend the term of this plan if there is a desire to do so, unless any updates or revisions trigger the need under the Planning Act. The ultimate term of Elgincentives shall be determined by the County and the Town of Aylmer at their sole discretion.

## 12.2 Administrative Body

This Community Improvement Plan will be administered through a County-led committee structure, in partnership with the Town of Aylmer. Specifically, an Elgincentives Implementation Committee has been established to oversee delivery of the financial incentive programs contained in this Plan. The Elgincentives Implementation Committee is responsible for:

1. Receiving and reviewing all applications for financial incentives;
2. Coordinating the further exploration and pursuit of municipal leadership initiatives; and

3. Making decisions on whether applications should be approved or refused, in accordance with the eligibility criteria and program requirements outlined in this Plan OR preparing recommendations to council where required to approve tax-related incentives.

In addition, the Elgincentives Implementation Committee will be responsible for:

4. Marketing the Elgincentives CIP in accordance with the Marketing Strategy outlined in Section 13.0 of this Plan, with Elgin County taking a lead role; and
5. Monitoring program uptake and performance, including the financial incentive programs, in accordance with the Monitoring framework set out in Section 14.0 of this Plan.

The Committee will consist primarily of senior staff from Elgin County, who will assume responsibility for day-to-day program administration, application intake, evaluation, and coordination. Staff from the Town of Aylmer will participate on the Committee on an as-needed basis, including the review of applications originating within the municipality and coordination of local implementation considerations. Applications will be

evaluated based on criteria established by the Elgincentives Implementation Committee, which are grounded in the Vision, Goals, and policy direction set out in this CIP.

## 12.3 Funding of Financial Incentives

Any number of the financial incentive programs identified in this Plan may be brought into effect during the term of the CIP, subject to the availability of funds and other resources. On an annual basis, the Elgincentives Implementation Committee will report to the Council of the Town of Aylmer and Elgin County Council regarding which incentive programs will be in effect for that year.

Financial incentive programs will be funded through a partnership between the Town of Aylmer and Elgin County. As part of the annual budgeting process, both Councils will identify community improvement funding allocations to be made available for the upcoming year, if any.

During the annual budgeting exercise, the Councils of the Town of Aylmer and Elgin County will also determine the extent to which each level of government will participate in the incentive programs that are activated for that year. Subject to available resources, up to 100% of certain grant programs may be funded by Elgin County. Exceptions include tax-based programs such as the Tax Increment Grant, Application and Permit Fee Rebates, and Brownfield Tax Assistance, where each level of government may only fund its respective portion of the tax increase or fee.

The provision of incentives in any given year is subject to available funding. Once approved annual budgets have been fully allocated, no further incentives will be granted until additional funding is approved.

Annual budgets for financial incentives do not apply to tax-based incentive programs, as these programs do not represent direct “out-of-pocket” expenditures. Funding for tax-based incentives is provided through cancellation or reimbursement in the year following payment and does not require upfront budget allocation.

Actual payment of all incentives, including both the municipal and County-funded portions, will remain the responsibility of the Town of Aylmer, with County contributions transferred to the Municipality accordingly, not directly to the applicant.

It is recognized that other Community Improvement Plans may exist or be adopted in the future by the Town of Aylmer. This Plan is separate from any other CIP adopted by Municipal Council. Elgin County participation is limited to the financial incentive programs contained within this CIP.

## 12.4 Financial Incentive Application Process

### 1. Pre-Consultation

All applicants are required to participate in a pre-consultation meeting with a representative of the Elgincentives Implementation Committee prior to

submitting a formal application. The purpose of pre-consultation is to improve application quality and administrative efficiency by:

- Confirming general and program-specific eligibility;
- Identifying appropriate financial incentive programs;
- Clarifying required supporting documentation;
- Providing preliminary feedback on project alignment with the goals and objectives of this CIP; and
- Identifying whether the proposed project may involve any tax-based incentives requiring Council approval.

Pre-consultation does not constitute approval of an application or guarantee funding.

## 2. Application Submission

Following pre-consultation, applicants may submit a formal application for financial incentives in accordance with the requirements of this Plan. Applications must include:

1. One (1) completed application form, signed by the registered or assessed owner, or tenant with owner consent;
2. Supporting documentation, as identified through pre-consultation and as determined by the Elgincentives Implementation Committee, which may include, but is not limited to:

- a. Specifications of the proposed project, including plans, drawings, and studies;
- b. Photographs of the existing building or site condition;
- c. Past or historical photographs and/or drawings, where available;
- d. Two (2) cost estimates for eligible work provided by qualified contractors;
- e. Disclosure of all other funding sources or incentives supporting the project;
- f. A statement describing how the proposed project meets the goals and objectives of this CIP; and
- g. Any additional information required by the Committee.

### 3. Completeness and Eligibility Review

Upon receipt of an application, a designated representative of the Elgincentives Implementation Committee will conduct an initial review to confirm that the submission is complete and generally consistent with the eligibility requirements of this Plan. Only applications deemed complete will be circulated to the full Elgincentives Implementation Committee for evaluation. Incomplete applications will be returned to the applicant with written notice identifying deficiencies.

### 4. Application Review and Committee Decision

Complete applications will be evaluated by the Elgincentives Implementation Committee based on the general and program-specific eligibility criteria outlined in this Plan, as well as alignment with the CIP's goals and priorities. Based on this review, the Committee may:

- a) Approve the application, in whole or in part;
- b) Refuse the application, with reasons provided; or
- c) Request revisions or additional information prior to making a final decision.

Applicants will be notified in writing of the Committee's decision.

### 5. Council Approval for Tax-Based Incentives

Notwithstanding Sections 12.4.3 and 12.4.4, any application that includes a tax-based incentive—such as a Tax Increment Grant, tax cancellation, tax rebate, or tax deferral—shall require approval by the respective Council having authority over that portion of taxes.

Where an application includes both grant-based incentives and tax-based incentives:

- The Elgincentives Implementation Committee may approve the grant-based components of the application, subject to Council approval of the tax-based incentive; and,
- The tax-based incentive component, along with a recommendation from the Committee, shall be forwarded to the respective Council having authority over that portion of taxes for consideration.

No tax-based incentive shall be provided unless Council approval has been granted.

### 6. Appeal of Committee Decisions

If an application is refused by the Elgincentives Implementation Committee the applicant may appeal the decision to Municipal Council. Applications refused due to lack of funding availability are not eligible for appeal but may be resubmitted in a future funding cycle.

In considering an appeal, Council may approve or refuse the application upon reconsideration. If Council approves the application, the Elgincentives Implementation Committee will proceed with execution of the Financial Assistance Agreement. All Decisions of Council are final.

## 7. Financial Assistance Agreement

For approved applications, a Financial Assistance Agreement shall be prepared and executed between the Town of Aylmer and the applicant. The Agreement will outline:

- Approved works and incentive amounts;
- Terms and conditions of funding;
- Required permits and approvals;
- Timelines for project initiation and completion;
- Documentation and inspection requirements; and
- Default provisions and remedies.

No CIP-funded work may commence prior to execution of the Financial Assistance Agreement, unless expressly authorized in writing.

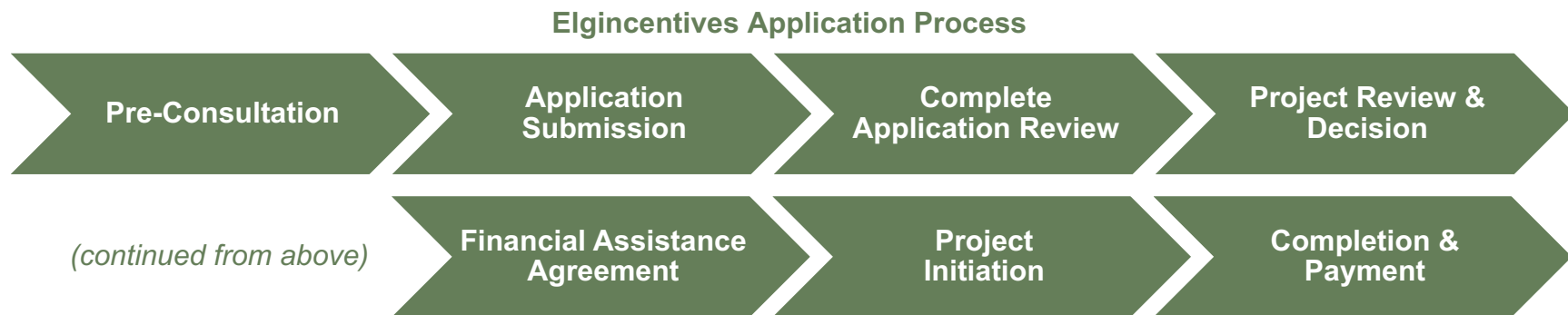
## 8. Project Initiation, Completion, and Payment

Unless otherwise specified in the Financial Assistance Agreement:

1. Approved projects must commence within six (6) months of agreement execution.

2. Projects must be completed within twelve (12) months of commencement.
3. Requests for extensions must be submitted in writing and are subject to approval at the discretion of the Elgincitives Implementation Committee.
4. Upon project completion, applicants must submit:
  - A statement of completed works;
  - Invoices and proof of payment;
  - Photographic documentation; and
  - Any additional documentation required by the Agreement.

The Elgincitives Implementation Committee reserves the right to inspect completed works or audit project costs prior to authorizing payment. Incentives may be delayed, reduced, cancelled, or recovered if project requirements are not met.



# 13.0 Marketing

The success of Elgincentives will depend in large part on how effectively it is communicated to eligible applicants, partners, and the broader community. A coordinated and sustained marketing approach is essential to ensure awareness of available programs, support program uptake, and reinforce the role of the CIP as a key economic development and community improvement tool. Marketing and communications activities will be led by the Elgincentives Implementation Committee, with support from Elgin County and the Town of Aylmer and will be adapted over time based on program performance, available resources, and evolving priorities.

## 13.1 Target Markets

Primary Target Markets	Secondary Target Markets
<p>Property owners and operating businesses located within the Community Improvement Project Area, particularly within identified Focus Areas, to ensure awareness of available incentives and program requirements.</p> <p>Commercial and industrial real estate professionals, to encourage the inclusion of CIP incentives as part of the value proposition for properties located within the Community Improvement Project Area.</p>	<p>The broader business community and potential investors, both within and outside Elgin County, to promote the Municipality’s proactive approach to economic development and reinvestment; and</p> <p>The general public, to build awareness of community improvement initiatives and their contribution to local economic vitality and quality of place.</p>

A key communications activity will also be regular reporting to the Councils of the Town of Aylmer and Elgin County, including updates on program uptake, outcomes, and any recommended changes to the CIP. Reporting is discussed further in Section 14.0.

## 13.2 Key Messages

Communications related to the Elgincentives CIP will be tailored to the needs and interests of each target market. Key messages may include the following.

Target Market	Communication and Messaging Approach
<b>Property Owners and Business Managers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear direction on how to access information on available incentive programs, including application guides and forms;</li> <li>• An overview of the application and approval process; and</li> <li>• Emphasis on the financial and strategic benefits of participating in the CIP, including assistance with reinvestment, modernization, and business growth.</li> </ul>
<b>Commercial and Industrial Realtors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Messaging that highlights the CIP as a tool that enhances property attractiveness and marketability within the Community Improvement Project Area;</li> <li>• Positioning realtors as partners in promoting awareness of available incentives; and</li> <li>• Sharing examples of successful projects supported through the CIP.</li> </ul>
<b>Agricultural Operators and Agri-Tourism Businesses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information on how the CIP can support value-added agriculture, agri-tourism, and rural economic diversification;</li> <li>• Emphasis on the ability of incentives to leverage private investment; and</li> <li>• Clear guidance on eligibility and alignment with agricultural land use policies.</li> </ul>
<b>Tourism Businesses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Messaging that emphasizes how the CIP can support investment in visitor-serving uses and facilities;</li> <li>• Alignment with broader County and municipal tourism objectives; and</li> <li>• Use of success stories, including before-and-after examples, where available.</li> </ul>
<b>Business and Community Organizations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encouragement to help promote awareness of the CIP among members;</li> <li>• Emphasis on the broader economic and community benefits of reinvestment; and</li> <li>• Sharing of program outcomes and success stories.</li> </ul>

Target Market	Communication and Messaging Approach
Potential Investors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Messaging that reinforces the Town of Aylmer and Elgin County as investment-ready communities;</li> <li>• Emphasis on coordinated planning, available incentives, and a supportive development environment.</li> </ul>
General Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing of visible community improvement outcomes;</li> <li>• Use of project examples to demonstrate how the CIP contributes to community vitality, placemaking, and economic development.</li> </ul>
Municipal and County Councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular reporting on implementation, program uptake, and progress toward achieving CIP goals; and</li> <li>• Identification of any recommended adjustments to improve program effectiveness.</li> </ul>

### 13.3 Marketing and Communications Tools

Marketing and communications activities may be undertaken as part of the initial launch of the CIP and will continue on an ongoing basis throughout the lifetime of the Plan. Efforts may be refreshed periodically to maintain visibility, share success stories, and encourage continued participation.

A range of marketing and communications tools may be used to promote the Elgincentives CIP and increase awareness of available programs and opportunities. Tools will be selected and deployed by the Elgincentives Implementation Committee based on effectiveness, available resources, and target audiences. In addition, the Elgincentives Implementation Committee may identify specific properties, areas, or sectors on an annual basis

where community improvement would be particularly beneficial. Targeted outreach or direct engagement with property owners or business operators may be undertaken to promote awareness of the CIP and encourage program uptake.

#### Dedicated CIP Web Presence

A dedicated Elgincentives website will serve as the primary source of information for the CIP and may include:

- Program goals and objectives;
- Descriptions of available financial incentive programs;

- Community Improvement Project Area maps and Focus Areas;
- Application requirements, process, and key timelines; and
- Contact information for program inquiries and pre-consultation.

A link to this website may also be provided on the Town of Aylmer and Elgin County websites.

### **Digital Communications and Direct Outreach**

Digital tools may be used to communicate directly with eligible applicants and interested parties, including:

- Email notifications or newsletters;
- Targeted outreach to property owners and businesses within identified Focus Areas; and
- Periodic reminder communications to maintain awareness over the life of the CIP.

### **Printed Materials and Information Packages**

Program guides, information sheets, and summary materials may be prepared for distribution at municipal offices, community events, or through partner organizations.

### **Presentations and Stakeholder Engagement**

Presentations or information sessions may be delivered to property owners, business operators, agricultural organizations, business associations, and members of the public to communicate program opportunities and application processes.

### **Media and Promotional Activities**

Traditional and digital media may be used to support program awareness, including local newspaper notices or feature stories, social media communications, and short promotional or informational videos.

### **Sector-Specific Outreach**

Targeted materials may be prepared for specific sectors, such as agriculture and agri-tourism, and distributed through relevant organizations to ensure information reaches appropriate audiences.

# 14.0 Monitoring, Amendments, & Updates

Ongoing monitoring and evaluation are essential to ensuring that the the Town of Aylmer Elgincentives Community Improvement Plan (CIP) remains effective, responsive, and aligned with local and County-wide priorities. This section establishes a framework for tracking program performance, assessing outcomes, and identifying when adjustments or formal amendments to the CIP may be required over its life.

## 14.1 Purpose

The purpose of the monitoring strategy is to:

1. Track financial incentives provided through the CIP to owners and tenants of lands and buildings located within the Community Improvement Project Area;
2. Track funding contributions from the Town of Aylmer and Elgin County toward financial incentive programs;
3. Evaluate whether the incentive programs and related initiatives are achieving the overall Vision and Goals of the CIP;
4. Identify opportunities for program refinement, reallocation of resources, or implementation improvements; and
5. Provide a transparent basis for reporting on the uptake, outcomes, and effectiveness of the Elgincentives CIP to the Councils of the Town of Aylmer and Elgin County.

## 14.2 Monitoring Frequency & Review Cycles

Data collection related to financial incentive applications, approvals, and completed projects will occur on an ongoing basis throughout the implementation of this Plan. Program performance and outcomes will be evaluated annually using the measures outlined in Section 14.3. In recognition that community improvement programs require time to build awareness and momentum, aggregate performance targets should be assessed over rolling five-year periods rather than on a year-by-year basis.

## 14.3 Measures

Monitoring of the Elgincentives Community Improvement Plan will be undertaken using a structured framework that links each Plan Goal to a set of supporting objectives and corresponding performance indicators. This approach is intended to support clear, transparent, and repeatable evaluation over the life of the Plan. The objectives describe the specific outcomes the CIP seeks to achieve under each goal, while the performance indicators identify both quantitative and qualitative metrics that can be tracked through program administration, applicant reporting, and periodic evaluation. Together, these measures provide the basis for annual reporting to Council and longer-term assessment of program effectiveness.



### Goal 1: Create More Affordable Housing Options

Objective	Performance/Monitoring Measure
<p><b>Increase the supply of new affordable rental housing units.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of new housing units supported through CIP incentives</li> <li>• Number of affordable or below-market rental units supported</li> <li>• Type of housing supported (e.g., purpose-built rental, ADU, community housing)</li> <li>• Location of supported housing projects by Focus Area</li> </ul>
<p><b>Support the retention and reinvestment in existing affordable housing stock.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of existing rental units improved or rehabilitated</li> <li>• Type of improvements completed (e.g., building systems, accessibility, energy efficiency)</li> <li>• Estimated extension of building life or continued affordability (where applicable)</li> </ul>



## Goal 2: Revitalize Sense of Place in Core Areas and Main Streets

Objective	Performance/Monitoring Measure
<p><b>Improve the appearance, function, and vibrancy of downtowns, main streets, and core areas.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of facade, signage, and property improvement projects supported</li> <li>• Geographic distribution of projects along main street corridors</li> <li>• Before-and-after photographic documentation of completed projects</li> <li>• Number of vacant or underutilized storefronts improved or reactivated</li> </ul>
<p><b>Enhance the visual quality of gateways, tourism corridors, and prominent sites.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of projects supported within Tourism Corridor Overlay areas</li> <li>• Types of improvements completed (e.g., signage, landscaping, building upgrades)</li> <li>• Visual documentation demonstrating improvement to key sites or corridors</li> </ul>



## Goal 3: Diversify Agri-Tourism and Rural Economic Opportunities

Objective	Performance/Monitoring Measure
<p><b>Support value-added agriculture, agri-tourism, and rural diversification initiatives.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of agri-tourism or rural diversification projects supported</li> <li>• Types of uses supported (e.g., farm retail, visitor amenities, value-added processing)</li> <li>• Location of projects within the Agricultural Area</li> <li>• Estimated investment leveraged in rural and agricultural settings</li> </ul>



## Goal 4: Improve Building Efficiency and Sustainability of Development

Objective	Performance/Monitoring Measure
<p><b>Encourage sustainable building practices and energy-efficient reinvestment.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of projects incorporating energy efficiency or sustainability upgrades</li> <li>• Types of improvements completed (e.g., insulation, HVAC, renewable energy, green infrastructure)</li> <li>• Estimated reduction in energy consumption or improvement in building performance (where available)</li> <li>• Number of projects aligned with climate adaptation or resilience objectives</li> </ul>



## Goal 5: Stimulate Economic Growth and Vitality

Objective	Performance/Monitoring Measure
<p><b>Support business expansion, start-ups, and reinvestment across key economic sectors.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of businesses supported by sector (commercial, industrial, agri-business, creative economy)</li> <li>• Number of business expansions or start-ups assisted</li> <li>• Type of business activity supported (new, expansion, relocation, modernization)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Encourage reinvestment in employment lands and underutilized buildings.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of industrial or employment-related projects supported</li> <li>• Square footage of employment space improved, expanded, or repurposed</li> <li>• Change in utilization of previously vacant or underutilized buildings or sites</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strengthen the municipal assessment base over time.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change in assessed value for properties receiving CIP assistance</li> <li>• Aggregate assessed value change within Focus Areas over time</li> <li>• Comparison of total incentives provided to long-term assessment growth (trend-based)</li> </ul>

## Comprehensive Elgincntives Performance Measures

In addition to goal-specific measures, the following indicators should be tracked annually:

- Total number of applications received, approved, and declined
- Total value of grants approved and paid
- Total estimated private-sector investment leveraged
- Distribution of funding by incentive program and Focus Area
- Average processing time from application submission to approval
- Summary of notable or catalytic projects supported during the year

## 14.4 Reporting

An annual monitoring report will be prepared to summarize program activity, funding allocations, and outcomes achieved through the Elgincntives CIP. The report will be presented to the Council of the Town of Aylmer and Elgin County Council for information and consideration. The annual report may include:

- A summary of applications received, approved, and completed;
- Total incentive funding committed and leveraged private investment;
- Findings from the monitoring activities undertaken in Section 14.3, in accordance with available data;
- Progress toward achieving the Goals of the CIP;
- Geographic and sectoral distribution of incentives; and
- Identification of emerging trends, challenges, or opportunities.

Where appropriate, the report may also recommend program adjustments, implementation refinements, or amendments to the CIP, as outlined in Section 14.5.

## 14.5 Adjustments and Amendments to the CIP

Over time, it may be necessary to review and update the CIP to reflect the results of the monitoring exercises above, evolving community needs, legislative changes, or emerging opportunities. Any proposed adjustment or change to the Plan contemplated should be assessed to determine whether it requires a formal amendment under the Planning Act.

The table below provides guidance as to what Plan adjustments or changes would trigger an amendment to the Plan in accordance with the requirements of the Planning Act.

Adjustment or Change	Amendment Required?
<b>Modify Vision or Goals</b>	Yes
<b>Modification to Community Improvement Project Area</b>	No, but requires by-law amendment
<b>Repeal of Community Improvement Project Area</b>	No, but requires by-law repeal
<b>Add, modify, or remove financial incentive programs or initiatives</b>	Yes, except for technical changes, clarification, or error correction
<b>Add, modify, or remove general eligibility criteria</b>	Yes
<b>Adjust funding allocations (budgetary allocation)</b>	No
<b>Activate or cancel financial incentive programs</b>	No
<b>Administering the Plan beyond the 10-year horizon</b>	No

Any amendment to this CIP will be adopted by the Council of the Town of Aylmer in accordance with the Planning Act. For any proposed amendments or updates, the County will lead and coordinate the statutory approvals process.

# Appendix A | Glossary

## **Additional Dwelling Unit (ADU)**

A self-contained residential dwelling unit located on the same lot as a principal residential dwelling, including units within, attached to, or detached from the main building, that contains independent kitchen, bathroom, and sleeping facilities and is permitted in accordance with the Official Plan and zoning by-law.

## **Affordable Ownership Housing**

For the purposes of this plan, means the least expensive of:

- housing for which the purchase price results in annual accommodation costs which do not exceed 30 percent of gross annual household income for low- and moderate-income households, where low- and moderate-income households refers to households with incomes in the lowest 60% of the income distribution for owner households in the municipality; or
- housing for which the purchase price is at least 10 percent below the average purchase price of a resale unit in the municipality.

## **Affordable Rental Housing**

For the purposes of this plan, means the least expensive of:

- a unit for which the rent does not exceed 30% of gross annual household income for low- and moderate-income households, where low- and moderate-income households refers to

households with incomes in the lowest 60% of the income distribution for renter households in the municipality; or

- a unit for which the rent is at or below the average market rent (AMR) of a unit in the municipality.

In determining the average market rent of a unit in the regional market area, the County should reference Canada Housing and Mortgage Corporation (CMHC) data and/or the “Affordable Residential units for the Purposes of the Development Charges Act, 1997 Bulletin” published annually by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (<https://data.ontario.ca/dataset/affordable-residential-units-for-the-purposes-of-the-development-charges-act-1997-bulletin>). In the event this bulletin is discontinued, or more up-to-date information is available from another source approved by the County, the County may use any such method that, in its opinion, is appropriate for determining average market rent for the purpose of implementing the programming under this community improvement plan.

## **Agri-Tourism Use**

A tourism-related use located on, or in association with, a farm operation that promotes agricultural activities, rural culture, or farm-based experiences, and is compatible with agricultural uses, as permitted by provincial policy, OMAFRA guidelines, and local planning regulations.

**Applicant**

A registered owner, assessed owner, tenant (with owner consent), or other eligible party who submits an application for financial incentives or support under this Community Improvement Plan.

**Average Market Rent (AMR)**

For the purposes of this CIP, the average rent charged for a rental housing unit in the Municipality, County, or Regional Market Area (according to available data), according to building type and number of bedrooms.

**Brownfield**

A property that may be vacant, underutilized, or abandoned, and where past industrial, commercial, or institutional uses have resulted in actual or perceived environmental contamination requiring assessment, remediation, or risk management prior to redevelopment.

**Community Improvement Plan (CIP)**

A statutory planning document adopted by municipal council under Section 28 of the Planning Act that establishes a framework for community improvement, including the designation of a Community Improvement Project Area and the authorization of financial incentive programs and municipal initiatives.

**Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA)**

A municipality or defined area within a municipality designated by by-law under Section 28 of the Planning Act, where community improvement is considered desirable due to environmental, social, economic, or physical conditions.

**County**

The Corporation of the County of Elgin.

**Development**

The creation of a new building or structure, or a change in use, including construction, reconstruction, or expansion, as defined under the Planning Act and applicable municipal regulations.

**Eligible Costs**

Costs that are directly related to an approved eligible project and are permitted under this Community Improvement Plan and the specific incentive program, including materials and labour, professional services, fees, or other costs expressly identified as eligible.

**Eligible Project**

A development, redevelopment, rehabilitation, or improvement project that meets the general and program-specific eligibility criteria of this Community Improvement Plan and is approved for support.

**Elgincentives Implementation Committee**

The County-led committee responsible for administering the Elgincentives CIP, including reviewing applications, making funding decisions, coordinating program delivery, and monitoring results, with local municipal participation as required.

**Employment Lands**

Lands designated for industrial, manufacturing, warehousing, logistics, business park, or other employment-generating uses in the County Official Plan and supporting local Official Plans.

### **Financial Assistance Agreement**

A legally binding agreement between the Municipality and an approved applicant that sets out the terms, conditions, funding amounts, timelines, reporting requirements, and default provisions associated with approved financial incentives.

### **Focus Area**

A defined geographic or land use category within the Community Improvement Project Area used to guide the application, eligibility, and prioritization of incentive programs under this Plan.

### **Intensification Project / Infill**

Development or redevelopment that occurs within existing built-up areas, including the reuse of vacant or underutilized land or buildings, resulting in more efficient use of land and infrastructure.

### **Mixed-Use**

A development or building containing two or more different land uses, such as residential, commercial, office, or institutional uses, integrated within a single structure or site.

### **Multiple Facades**

More than one exterior building wall that faces a public street, park, or publicly accessible space and is visible from the public realm.

### **Municipal Leadership Initiative**

A public-sector initiative identified in this Community Improvement Plan that may be undertaken by the Municipality and/or County to support community improvement goals, including investments in public

spaces, infrastructure, land use planning, or strategic studies.

### **Municipality**

The local lower-tier municipality adopting this Community Improvement Plan.

### **On-Farm Diversified Use**

A small-scale commercial or industrial use that is secondary to a principal farm operation, compatible with agriculture, and permitted by provincial policy, OMAFRA guidelines, and local planning regulations.

### **Owner**

The registered owner or assessed owner of land or buildings subject to an application under this Community Improvement Plan.

### **Professional Fees**

Costs associated with consulting services provided by qualified professionals, including architects, engineers, planners, designers, or other specialists, required to prepare plans, studies, reports, or designs for an eligible project.

### **Sustainability Improvements / Green Infrastructure**

Improvements that enhance environmental performance or climate resilience, including energy efficiency upgrades, renewable energy systems, water conservation measures, low-impact development features, and natural or nature-based infrastructure.

### **Tax Increment**

The net increase between the pre-development and post-development municipal and/or county property taxes

levied as a result of the revaluation of the property by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC).

**Tourism Corridor Overlay**

An overlay applied to properties located along designated tourism corridors identified in the County Official Plan, recognizing areas where incentive programs may be enhanced or prioritized due to tourism visibility and economic significance.