



# Township of West Lincoln Affordable Housing CIP

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BACKGROUND REPORT AND  
DRAFT CIP DISCUSSION

Presented By:

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Planning

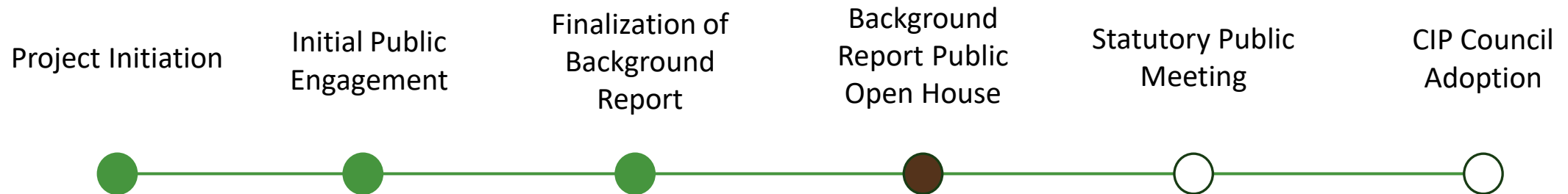


# Project Overview and Timeline

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## Key Engagement Opportunities:

- October 13, 2025 – November 13, 2025: Initial Online Public Survey
- December 2025 – Release of Background Report
- **January 14, 2026 – Draft CIP for Public and Stakeholder Review Presentation**
- **January 14, 2026 to January 31, 2026 – Background Report and Preliminary CIP Public Survey**
- February 9, 2026 – Statutory Public Meeting of Council
- March 2 & 23, 2026 – Council Adoption of West Lincoln's Affordable Housing CIP



# What is a CIP?

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CIP stands for “**Community Improvement Plan**”. Provincial prohibitions on “bonussing” under the Municipal Act mean that without a CIP in place the Township cannot incentivize the types of development they are looking to encourage.

The creation of this Affordable Housing CIP enables the Township to offer grants, loans, or other forms of support to encourage projects that meet local goals, such as creating more affordable housing.

This proposed CIP will give the Township a structured way to partner with residents, developers, and community organizations to make it easier and more affordable to build the types of housing that meet our community’s needs.



# Legislative Context

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## **Provincial Legislation**

- The Planning Act
- The Development Charges Act

## **Provincial and Regional Policy Context**

- Provincial Planning Statement (2024)
- Niagara Region Official Plan (2022) and CIP Programs

## **Local Policy Context**

- Township of West Lincoln Official Plan (2021)

## **Other Township Plans, Policies, and Guidelines**

- West Lincoln Strategic Plan, 2023-2026, and Economic Development Strategy Refresh



# Initial Engagement Survey

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To begin the creation of the Affordable Housing CIP, the Township launched an engagement survey in October 2025 to help inform the project. We received a total of 88 responses.

- Overall, respondents expressed strong support for the development of an Affordable Housing CIP and identified a range of local housing needs.
- Common themes included the desire to see more affordable rental units and attainable homeownership opportunities, particularly family-sized units.
- Many participants noted the importance of increasing housing options for seniors and young adults to support aging in place and community retention.
- Respondents also expressed interest in partnerships with nonprofit housing providers and social service organizations to deliver supportive housing, community spaces, and related services.



**The Township of West Lincoln**  
*Affordable Housing Community  
Improvement Plan*

Background Study Report  
December 2025



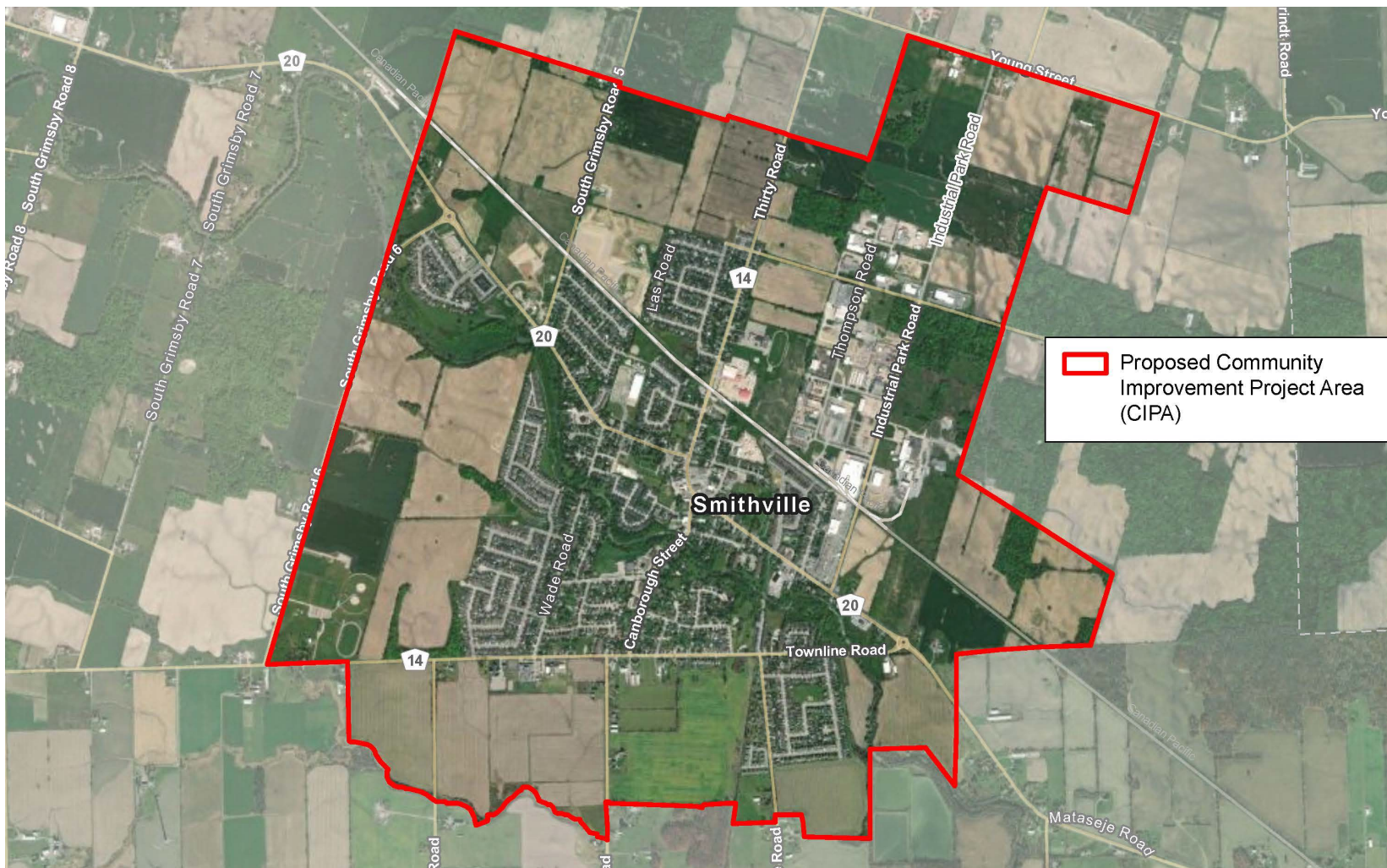
# Background Report

Released in December 2025, the Affordable CIP background report outlines the legislative and local context that will inform the Affordable Housing CIP.

Survey feedback showed strong interest in incentives that:

- Reduce upfront development costs
- Improve clarity and predictability in the process
- Non-financial supports are also important:
- Clearer guidance and communication
- Streamlined approvals
- Better support for homeowners and small-scale builders





# Community Improvement Project Area

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# Best Practices Review

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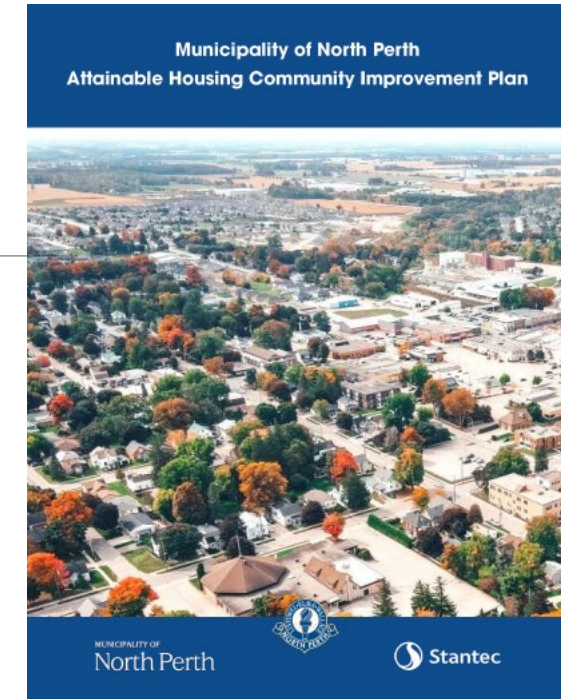
## Municipality of North Perth – Attainable Housing CIP (2024)

### Non-Financial Programs

- Secondary Dwelling Unit Advertising Program
- County TIEG Program Partnership
- Residential Rental Registry Program
- Strategic Land Banking Program

### Financial Programs

- Planning and Building Permit Fee Grant
- Tax Increment Equivalency Grant
- Development Charge Rebate Program
- Additional Dwelling Unit Grant Program
- Commercial and Rental Housing Conversion and Expansion Grant





# Best Practices Review

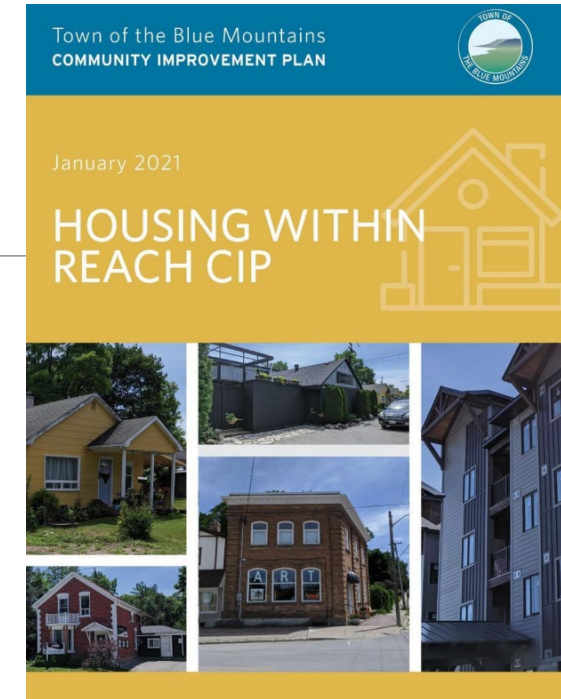
## Town of the Blue Mountains – Housing Within Reach (2021)

### Non-Financial Programs

- Marketing and Education
- Pre-Zoning
- Community Planning Permit System

### Financial Programs

- Attainable Housing Feasibility Grant Program
- Development Charges Grant Equivalent Program
- Tax Increment Equivalent Program (TIEG)
- Municipal Fees Grant or Loan Equivalent Program
- Downtown Apartment Rehabilitation or Conversion Program
- Additional Residential Unit Program
- Surplus Land Grant Program

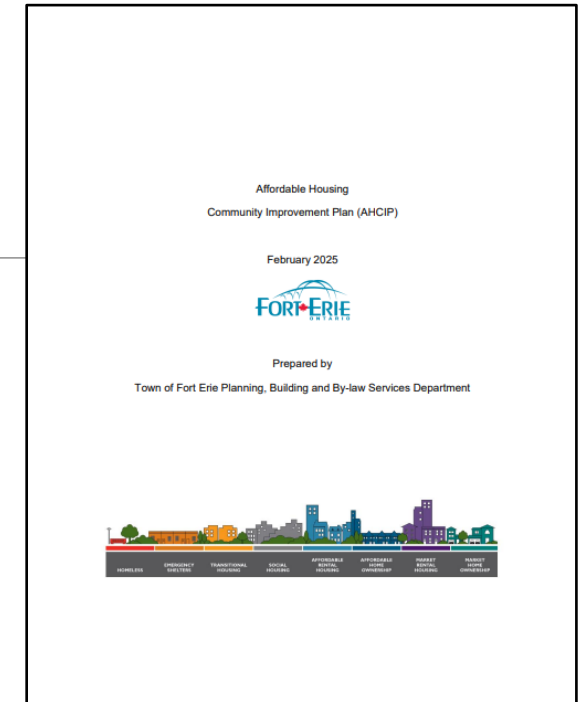


# Best Practices Review

## Town of Fort Erie – Affordable Housing CIP (2025)

### Financial Programs

- Affordable Housing Per Door Grant
- Affordable Housing Study Grant
- Additional Dwelling Unit Grant



# Vision

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**“To invest in the liveability of our community by providing the Township with a toolbox of incentive programs for affordable housing for people of all ages and stages, connecting people to amenities, and creating a more inclusive West Lincoln for all.”**



# Goals

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- Expand the Supply of Affordable Housing in Smithville
- Diversify Housing Options to Serve All Ages and Stages
- Reduce Barriers to Affordable and Attainable Housing Development
- Encourage Homeowner Participation in Housing Solutions
- Maximize the Impact of Municipal Funding

# Draft Programs for Council and Public Consideration

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The following programs are being presented for Council and Public review and consideration through a Public Open House and the Statutory Public Meeting under the Planning Act.

Programs, eligibility, requirements, and values are subject to change. Programs may be “turned on or off” through funding availability and program need throughout the lifespan of the Affordable Housing CIP.

# 1. Municipal Fee Grant Program

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*This program is being presented as draft for Council and Public consideration. Programs, eligibility and values are subject to change.*

A municipal fee grant program to reduce the upfront costs of creating affordable housing by providing a grant to cover municipal planning and building fees for eligible projects, encouraging homeowners, landlords, and developers to bring forward applications that add to the local housing supply.\*

**Eligible Costs:** Up to 100% of the costs incurred to seek approvals for affordable housing providers and non-profits to develop new affordable housing units, specifically Planning Application Fees and Building Permit Fees.

*\*Providing a grant to cover the costs of municipal fees does not ensure the project will be approved by the Township.*



## 2. Additional Residential Unit (ARU) Grant

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*This program is being presented as draft for Council and Public consideration. Programs, eligibility and values are subject to change.*

A grant to support the creation of new additional residential units such as basement suites, garden suites, or coach houses by assisting with eligible construction, finishing, or building code compliance costs, helping expand small-scale rental supply throughout the Township.

**Eligible Costs:** A portion of the costs incurred to construct or convert an ARU where permitted. This includes legalizing and/or bringing up to code existing basement ARUs.

### 3. Accessibility Top-Up Grant

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*This program is being presented as draft for Council and Public consideration. Programs, eligibility and values are subject to change.*

A top-up grant to incorporate a universal or barrier-free design within a new residential unit (e.g. apartment, ARU, secondary suite) receiving one of the other financial incentives in this CIP. The grant would be available to landowners for creating new housing units in a way that is designed for accessibility beyond the minimum standards of the Ontario Building Code. This grant would be provided to the applicant upon proof of completion of construction of the new accessible unit.

**Eligible Costs:** Up to \$3,000 of the costs incurred on design and construction of an accessible or barrier free unit.

## 4. Family-Sized/Seniors Unit Top-Up Grant

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*This program is being presented as draft for Council and Public consideration. Programs, eligibility and values are subject to change.*

A top-up grant that provides additional support to projects that create purpose-built family-sized or seniors' units, recognizing the growing need for multi-bedroom and attainable housing options.

**Eligible Costs:** Additional costs incurred for the construction of a family-sized\* or seniors' unit\*\*, as defined in this CIP.

**\*Family-Sized Unit** means a unit that is designed to accommodate a family, including multi-generational families, with a minimum of 3+ bedrooms.

**\*\*Seniors' Unit** means a unit specifically designed for older adults (ages 65+) with age-friendly and accessible features.



# 5. Home Upgrade Grant

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*This program is being presented as draft for Council and Public consideration. Programs, eligibility and values are subject to change.*

A grant to assist eligible homeowners with minor home upgrades when such improvements are necessary to accommodate new affordable units.

**Eligible Costs:** Costs incurred to upgrade home services to accommodate the addition of affordable dwelling units to existing residential homes. Upgrades could include upsizing water connections, improving electrical capacity, upgrading HVAC systems, or installing energy-efficient materials such as windows/doors, smart thermostats, and upgrading to energy star appliances.

# Non-Financial Incentive Programs

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*These programs are being presented as draft for Council and Public consideration. Programs, eligibility and values are subject to change.*

- Education and Capacity-Building Workshops
- Housing Concierge / Client Support Service
- Housing Reserve

# Implementation

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The Affordable Housing CIP is planned to be implemented over a five-year period, beginning in April 2026.

## **Delegated Authority for Funding Decisions**

- It is recommended that approval authority for CIP incentives be delegated to municipal staff.
- Under this approach, Council would establish the program framework, funding limits, and eligibility criteria through the adoption of the CIP.
- Once those parameters are in place, staff will be responsible for reviewing applications, determining eligibility, and issuing approvals.



# Niagara Region CIP Programs

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The West Lincoln CIP Programs will be designed to stack with any available regional incentive programs including:

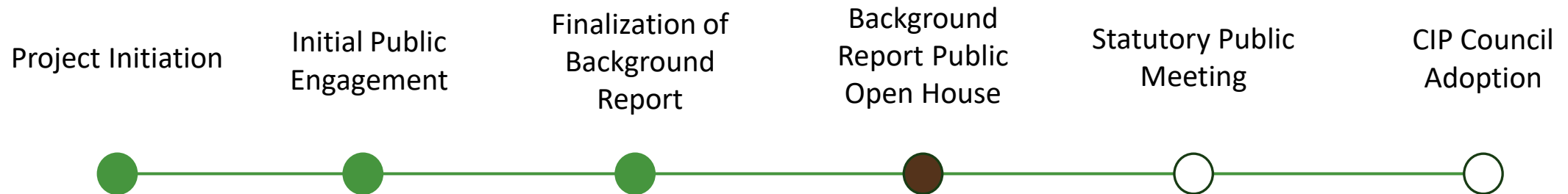
- New Niagara Region Purpose-Built Rental Programs (Launching April 2026)
- Niagara Renovates Program for Repairs and Accessibility (pending budget approval)
- Niagara Renovates Program for Multi-Unit Landlords (pending budget approval)
- Welcome Home Niagara Homeownership Program (pending budget approval)

# Next Steps

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# Thank You and Discussion

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- Scan the QR Code to fill out the survey online, or fill out a copy on your tables.
- Members of the project team will circulate to answer any questions.