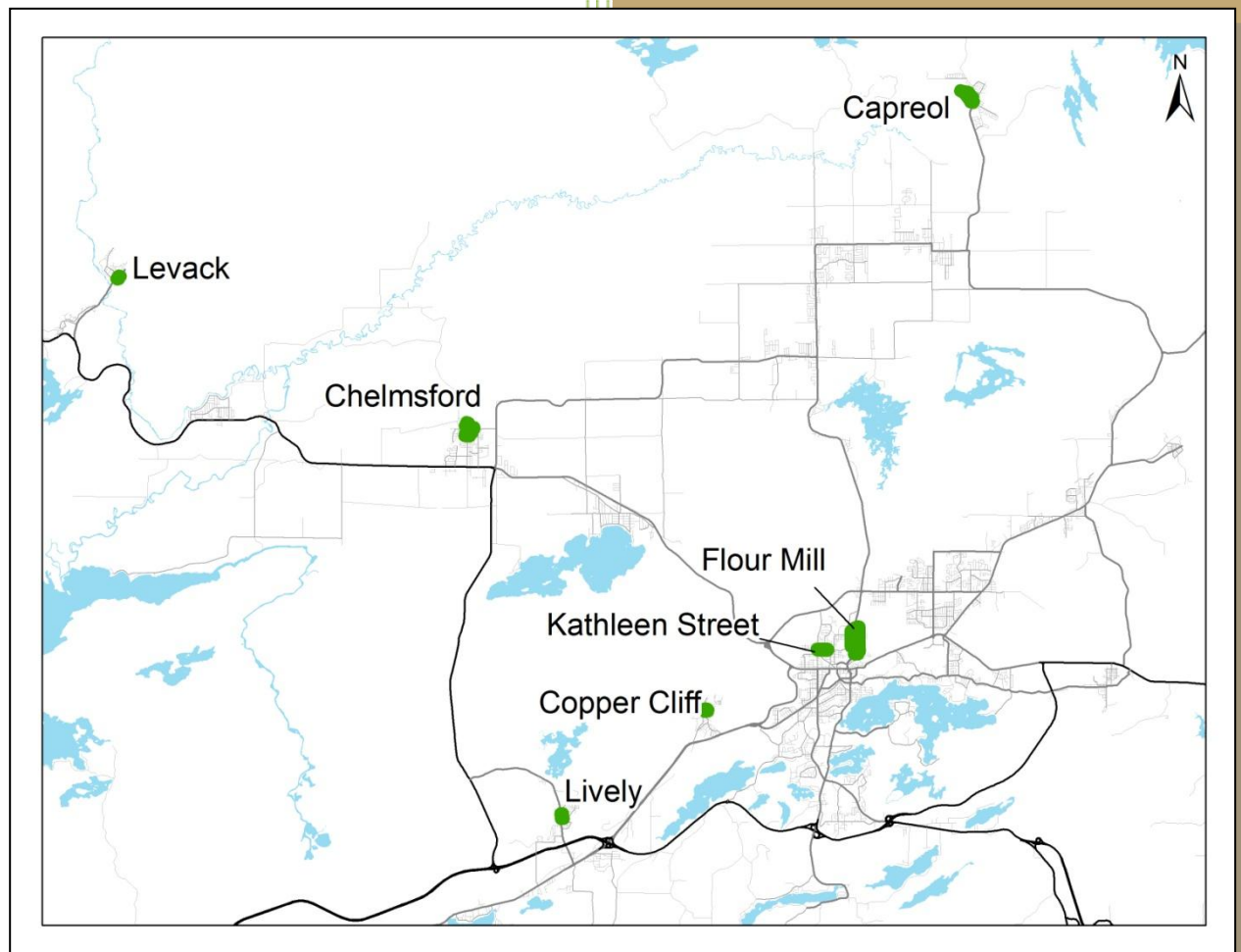


# Town Centre Community Improvement Plan



**City of Greater Sudbury**  
**Growth and Development**



## **1.0 PLAN BACKGROUND**

### **1.1 Introduction**

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

redevelopment led by the private sector and municipal community improvement initiatives.

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

### **1.2 Rationale**

The City of Greater Sudbury’s 2015-2018 Corporate Strategic Plan, *Greater Together*, sets out a number of priorities along with its implementation plan which serves as a roadmap of some of the larger, more resource-intensive and transformational projects to be undertaken. Through one of such projects, the City aims to “begin to realize the Nodes and Corridors Strategy, ensuring the Downtown is better connected to revitalized Town Centres, other strategic commercial and core areas by allowing for mixed uses, connecting citizens across Greater Sudbury, while providing excellent public transit.

The City’s Nodes and Corridor Strategy conforms to the requirements of the Province’s Growth Plan for Northern Ontario, which provides a strategic framework that guides decision-making and investment planning to strategic core areas in Northern Ontario until 2036. Town Centres, along with the City’s Regional Centres, have long been the strategic areas within our community and traditionally been the focus of investment in hard and soft infrastructure.

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

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

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

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

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

## **2.0 Official Plan Conformity**

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

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

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

## **3.0 Project Area Description**

The Community Improvement Plan Project Areas are shown on the attached Schedule ‘B’. These boundaries correspond to Town Centres and Mixed Use Commercial Areas identified in the City of Greater Sudbury Official Plan. These areas include sections of Capreol, Chelmsford, Levack, Flour Mill Business Improvement Area (BIA), Lively, Copper Cliff and Kathleen Street.

After an extensive evaluation process of several Town Centres and “Main Street” commercial areas in Greater Sudbury, the areas in Schedule ‘B’ have been identified by Council as having the maximum potential to achieve the CIP goals outlined in the Official Plan and benefit from the programs outlined in this plan. Specifically, these areas were found to be pedestrian friendly, have older mixed use building stock and are experiencing commercial and residential vacancy issues.

#### **4.0 Community Improvement Plan Programs**

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

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

In summary, the only tools available are either a grant or a loan. However there are many applications of this grant or loan which can be used on a case-by-case basis to encourage development or redevelopment within the project area. The City has developed the following programs:

- Tax Increment Equivalent Grant
- Planning and Building Fees Rebate (in the form of a grant)
- Project Development Study/Report Grant (business plan, soils study, etc.)
- Facade Improvement Grant (retention of facades)
- Residential Incentive Program (Per-Door Grant)
- Multi-Residential Interest-Free Loan Program

#### **4.1 Tax Increment Equivalent Grant**

The purpose of this program is to provide grants to the owner or tenant of an eligible property to help offset costs associated with its rehabilitation, reuse, redevelopment and development of the property, provided that the improvements to the property





result in an increase in assessment taxation.

The value of the grant provided is equal to the incremental increase in property assessment and municipal property tax resulting from the improvements. The grant is provided to the owner (registered or assessed), tenant or assigned third party, after the taxes have been paid in full.

The grants will be provided after the improvements to the property are complete and after the reassessment of the property by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation has demonstrated an increase in the assessed value of the property.

The pre and post improvement assessment and tax value will be used to calculate the incremental increase in municipal property tax revenue and the total value of the grant.

The maximum number of years that any individual application can benefit from is 5 years. In years one through three of the program, the grant to the property owner/tenant is equal to 100% of the tax increment. In years four and five, the grant decreases to 50% of the tax increment. The grant ceases thereafter.

Subject to Council approval, and where development is proposed on vacant property, includes ground-level retail and above-grade residential, the maximum number of years an application can benefit is 10 years. In this situation only, the grant to the property owner/tenant is equal to 100% of the tax increment in years one through four, and 50% of the tax increment in years five through ten. The grant ceases thereafter. To qualify for the 10-year incentive, the subject property must have been vacant on the date of adoption of this community improvement plan.

#### **4.2 Planning & Building Fees Rebate Program**

This program provides financial relief to property owners or tenants who undertake development or redevelopment projects within the Project Areas. The rebate applies to most municipal fees related to development or redevelopment. Under the program the applicant would pay all required fees up front and, if approved, the eligible fees would be rebated once the project was completed.



#### **4.3 Feasibility Studies**

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

#### **4.4 Facade Improvement Program**

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

#### **4.5 Residential Incentive Program**

The purpose of this limited-time program is to jump-start the residential markets in the Town Centres. The program will be limited in value and duration, and will be carefully monitored to allow for its retirement once a market is established in each of the Town Centres. The program offers a grant for the creation of new residential units.

#### **4.6 Multi-Residential Interest-Free Loan Program**

This program seeks to stimulate private sector investment in, and revitalization and rehabilitation of residential development within the Town Centres. The program offers financial assistance to projects that result in predominantly residential development.

#### **5.0 Urban Design Principles**

The purpose of these design principles is to help support a truly unique Town Centre by encouraging, over time, the improvement of the built form. It is anticipated that as building owners upgrade their buildings, the application of these design principles will contribute to the overall quality of the Town Centres. Should Urban Design Guidelines be adopted by the City in the future, such Guidelines will supercede the urban design principles set out below.

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



### **5.1 Design Principles**

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

### **6.0 Monitoring, Review and Amendment**

The Town Centre CIP will be monitored on an ongoing basis to track progress relative to its goals and objectives. The monitoring program could be structured around a number of indicators, as outlined below. Information on these indicators would be collected at the individual project level and aggregated. This aggregated information would be used as the basis for an annual report to Council. To the extent possible, these annual reports would also address the economic and social effectiveness of the CIP. It is envisaged that the annual reports would also be used to inform decisions relating to adjustments to the CIP, as well as any budget decisions relating to any of the financial incentive programs described herein.

Minor and Technical amendments (e.g. correcting typographical errors) may be made without Council approval. Major and substantive amendments may be made by amendment, subject to the statutory process under the Planning Act, which includes public consultation and Council approval. Notwithstanding this, the City may discontinue any of the programs contained in this

CIP without amendment. The addition of new programs not expressly referenced herein requires an amendment.

<b>PROGRAM</b>	<b>INDICATOR</b>
TIEG Program	Number of applications received Increase in assessment value of participating properties Estimate and actual amount of municipal tax assistance/grants provided Hectares/acres of land redeveloped Residential/Industrial/Commercial space (sq.ft) rehabilitated or constructed Residential units/sq.ft. rehabilitated or constructed Value of private sector investment leveraged
Planning and Building Fees Refund Program	Number, type and value of planning application fees refunded Number and value of demolition and building permit fees refunded Residential/Industrial/Commercial space (sq.ft.) rehabilitated or constructed Residential units/sq.ft. rehabilitated or constructed Value of building permit fees paid Value of building permits issued
Project Development Study	Number of applications received Value of total grants Value of private sector investment leveraged
Façade Improvement Programs	Number of applications received Value of total grants Value of private sector investment leveraged
Residential Incentive Programs	Number of applications received Number of new residential units created Value of total grants Value of private sector investment leveraged



## **SCHEDULE “A”**

### **CIP PROGRAM POLICIES AND REQUIREMENTS**

#### **General CIP Financial Program Application Processes**

Access to the financial programs are initiated by an application to the City through the Planning Services Division. Applications will be screened prior to acceptance. Applications not clearly meeting the program requirements will not be accepted. Acceptance of the application by the City does not imply approval, only Council may approve the applications and agreements.

Applications will be reviewed by City Staff on a first come, first served basis. Applications will be recommended for approval only if they meet the requirements specified herein and any other City requirements. City Staff will prepare a report on accepted applications to Council for consideration of their approval. Should Council approve, the agreement will be executed by the authorized City Staff and a copy provided to the owner of the approved eligible property.

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

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

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

#### **General Criteria Applying To All Programs**

- 1) The financial incentives described herein may be used in combination with any other program offered by the City or other level of government;
- 2) Approved grants/loans are applicable to the registered owner or assessed owner or tenants of land and buildings within the Community Improvement Plan areas identified on Schedules ‘B’ and are assignable to any third party to whom such an owner or tenant has assigned the right to receive the grant;
- 3) An application can only be received prior to the commencement of the improvement, rehabilitation or development;
- 4) If the property is sold in whole or in part, the registered owner is entitled to the program benefits. In addition, any outstanding payments owed to the City will be the responsibility of the current land owner regardless of who has made the original application;

- 5) All applications to programs under this CIP must be considered and resolution adopted by Council on a first come, first served basis and, as a condition of approval, may require the applicant and/or owner of the property to enter into agreements with the City. Depending on the nature of the program applied for, these agreements may be registered on the title of the applicable property. The agreement may be made with respect to terms, duration, default and termination provisions of the grant;
- 6) The subject property shall not be in a position of tax arrears at the time of application or get into a position of tax arrears post application or at any time receiving financial incentives under this program;
- 7) Any outstanding Order from the City Building Services Department or the City By-law Enforcement Department must be complied with prior to the consideration of any application or must be rectified through the proposed improvements;
- 8) Applications for programs will be submitted to staff and reviewed. If eligible, applications will be recommended to Council for approval on a first come, first serve basis; and
- 9) The total amount on loan at any one time for all CIP programs, with the exception of the Affordable Housing CIP, shall not exceed \$1,000,000.

#### **Tax Increment Equivalent Grant Program Requirements**

Each Tax grant will be commenced by an application to the City of Greater Sudbury. This application will allow staff an opportunity to ensure that the proposal meets the intent of the Tax Increment Financing Program. The program criteria are as follows:

1. Tax Increment Equivalent Grant Program applications must be accompanied by:
  - Photos in the required format depicting the current condition of the eligible property;
  - Plans, reports, estimates, contracts and other information in the required format necessary to understand the proposed development concept for the eligible property, and to ensure conformity with the Official Plan and the objectives of the CIP;
2. In years one through three, the approved grant will be equal to 100 % of the incremental increase in municipal property tax revenue associated with improvements to the eligible property. The grant decreases to 50% for years four and five. The grant will be provided every year for up to five years, after taxes have been paid in full each year;
3. Council may provide a ten-year tax increment equivalent grant program only in the following circumstances: 1) where the property to be developed was vacant on the date of adoption of this plan; 2) the development proposes ground-level retail; and 3) the development proposes above-ground residential. An approved grant will be equal to 100% of the incremental increase in municipal property tax revenue for years one through four, and 50% in years six through ten; and
4. Should the owner or tenant of the approved eligible property default on any condition in the by-law or agreement, the grants, plus interest, will become payable to the City in full.

**Planning & Building Fees Rebate Program Requirements**

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

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

Assistance will be made in the form of a rebate of the fees for planning approval, demolition or building permit. The total amount of incentive provided under the planning fee component of this program will not exceed \$25,000 annually. The maximum amount of incentive provided under the planning fee component of this program to any eligible property will not exceed \$5,000. Building permit fee rebates would be up to a maximum of \$100,000 annually. The maximum amount of incentive provided under the building fee component of this program to any approved eligible property will not exceed \$30,000., Rebates will be subject to the following:

1. It should be noted that although these fees are rebated within the project area, this does not mean that they are not required. Applicants are expected to adhere to the requirement of the respective application processes and will receive a grant where applicable. Fees are to be paid in advance and are to be reimbursed upon successful completion and approval of an application;
2. Fees associated with any outside agencies will be required to be paid and are not subject to a rebate, including, but not limited to the Sudbury and District Health Unit, Greater Sudbury Hydro, etc.;
3. An application to the Planning Services Division must be received and deemed to be eligible prior to the rebating of any fees;
4. This fees rebate program does not apply to any required performance securities (i.e., letters of Credit) posted by the proponent, required professional studies, to expenses incurred by the applicant as a result of an Ontario Municipal Board Hearing, or to any required newspaper notices; and
5. The project must be in conformity with all applicable City policies, including but not limited to zoning, heritage matters, site plan matters and matters of urban design as identified by the City of Greater Sudbury Official Plan.

**Feasibility Study Program Requirements**

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

**Façade Improvement Program Requirements**

1. A grant of 50% of the cost to improve a building's facade, to a maximum of \$15,000 is available. Payment will be made only upon the completion of the work. Signage and lighting improvements will only be considered as part of a comprehensive façade improvement project. The total amount of funding allocated to the signage and lighting component of a comprehensive façade improvement project will be limited to \$2,500;
2. Property owners must submit the required application to the City of Greater Sudbury and must receive written approval from the City prior to the commencing of any work related to the requested grant/loan;
3. The project must be deemed to be in conformity with all applicable City policies, including but not limited to matters of zoning, heritage matters, site plan matters and matters of urban design. Applications that are not deemed to be in conformity shall not be approved; and
4. Proposals must be consistent with the Design Principles expressed in Section 5.0..

**Residential Incentive Program (Per-Door Grant) Requirements**

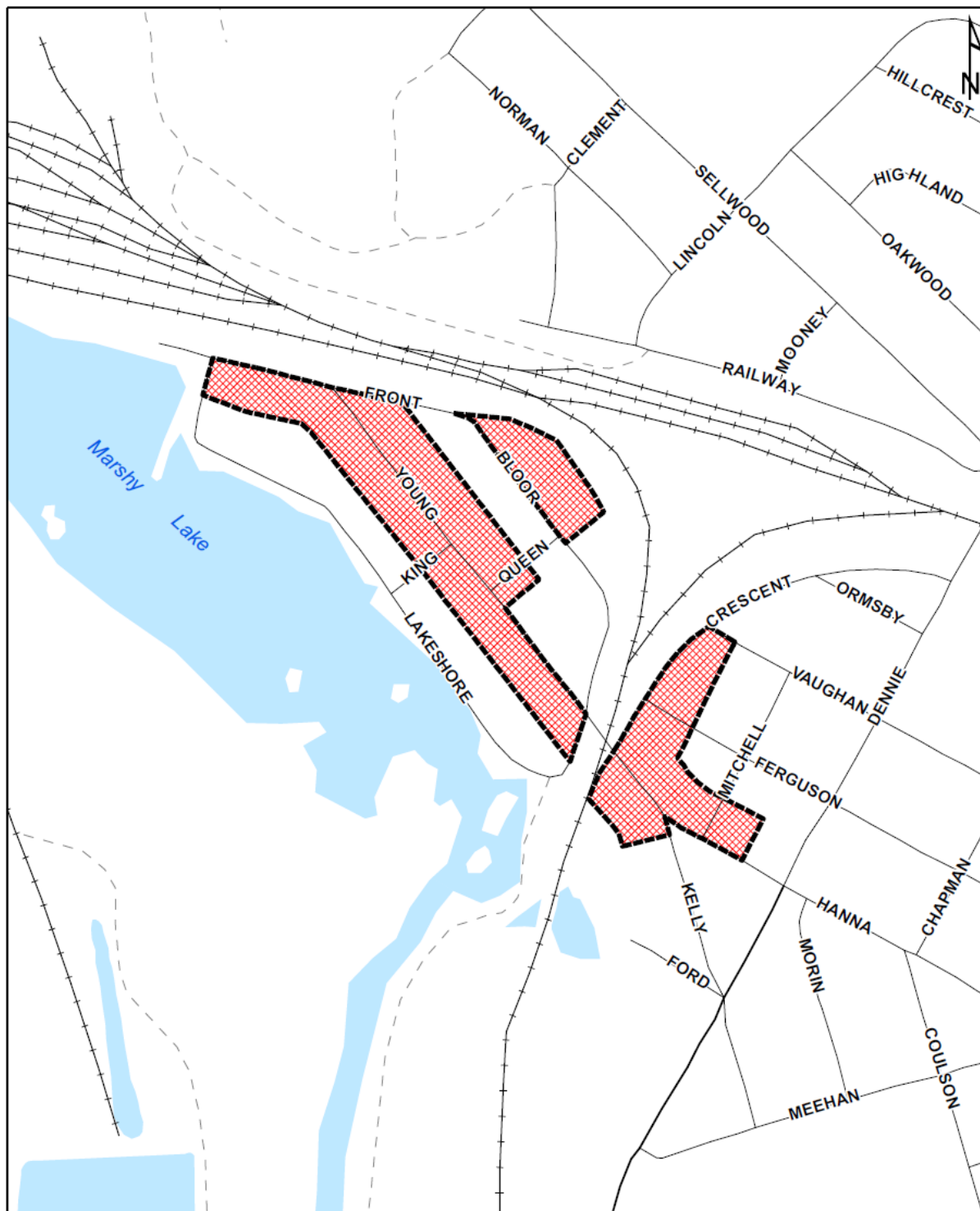
1. A grant of \$10 per sq foot of newly –created habitable residential space, or \$20,000 per dwelling unit, whichever is lesser, is available. Payment will be made only upon the occupancy permit being issued;
2. The total amount of incentive provided under this program will not exceed \$800,000 annually. The maximum amount of incentive provided under the program to any approved eligible property will not exceed \$200,000; and
3. This program will be retired 3 years after the adoption of this plan. Council may extend its initial implementation.

**Multi-Residential Interest-Free Loan Program Requirements**

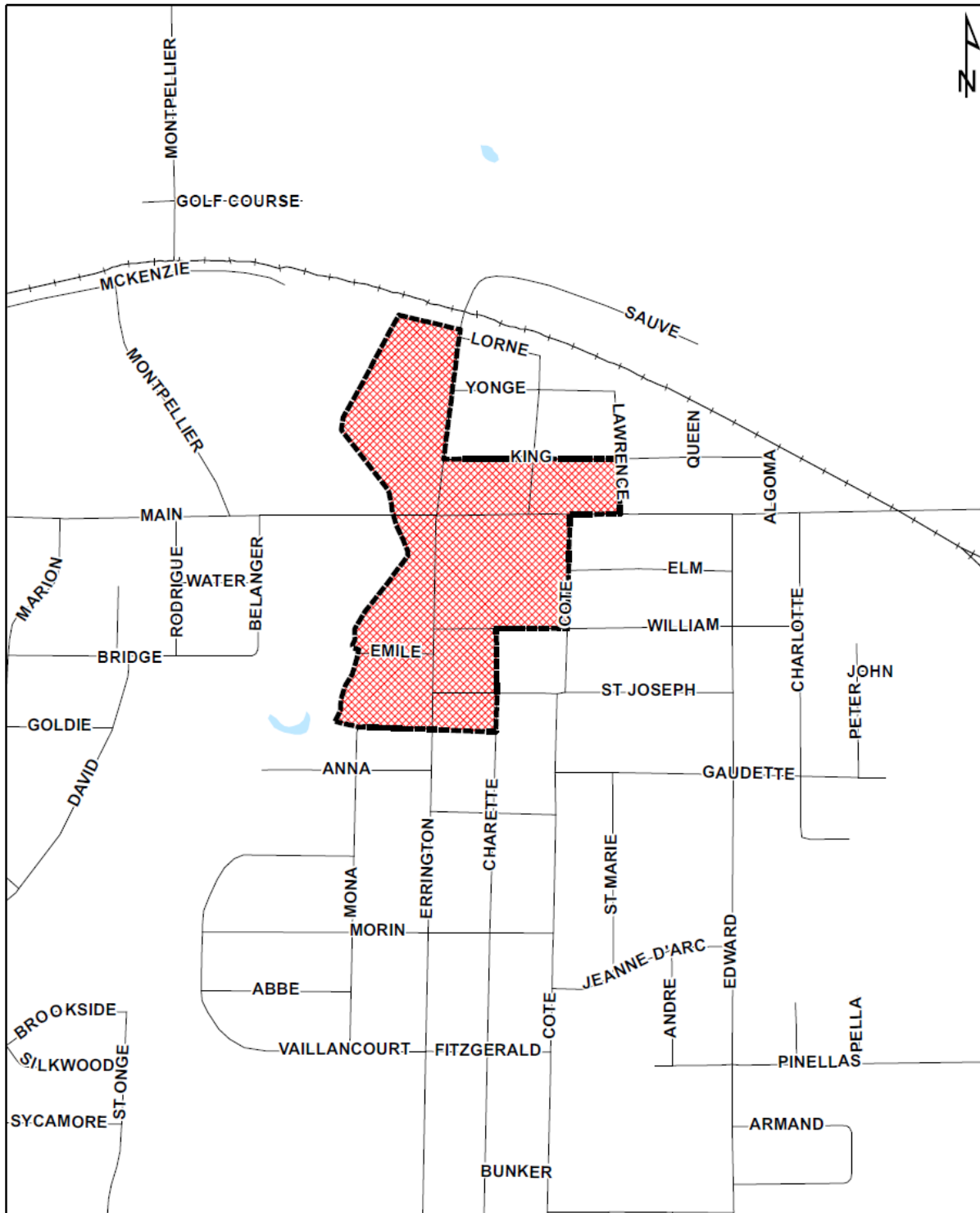
1. This program will provide interest-free loans of up to 25% of the project costs, to a maximum of \$250,000 to property owners who undertake:
  - a. The creation of a new multiple dwelling upon vacant land or parking areas; and/or,
  - b. A building addition containing at least four new dwelling units; and/or
  - c. The conversion of existing commercial, industrial, institutional space into a multiple dwelling;
2. A multiple dwelling must contain at least four dwelling units. Projects involving fewer than four dwelling units may be eligible for other grants offered through this community improvement plan;
3. The total amount on loan at any one time under all programs shall not exceed \$1,000,000;
4. If approved, the City’s funding will be advanced in three stages, upon completion of 60%, 80%, and substantial completion of the project;
5. Loan payments will commence six months following the substantial completion advance. Repayment of loans will be on a monthly basis, with the monthly amount to be calculated based on a five-year amortization period. Full repayment may be made at any time without penalty;
6. If, during the course of the work the scope of the work changes or actual costs are greater or lesser than the estimated costs, the City of Greater Sudbury reserves the right to increase or decrease the total amount of the loan associated with the Multi-Residential Interest-Free Loan Program;
7. Program commitments will expire if construction does not commence within 1 year of the City of Greater Sudbury’s approval. In the event of such an occurrence, applicants may reapply, and will be subject to Council approval and the availability of funding at the time;
8. Assistance granted under this program to a particular property is not transferable to any other property; and
9. The maximum loan is 25% of the Cost of Construction Budget prepared by an architect/engineer and addressed to the City of Greater Sudbury and dated within 6 months of the date of application.



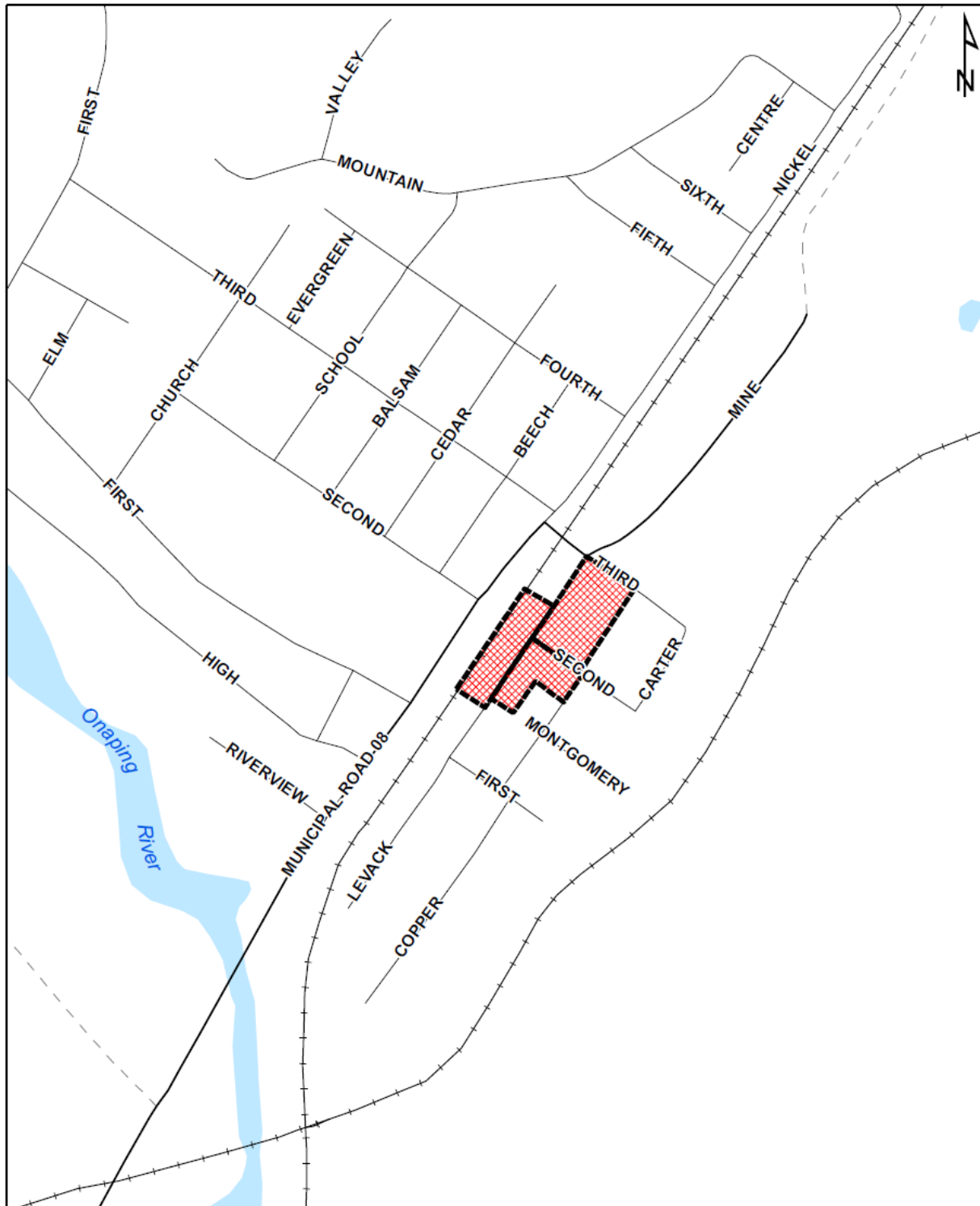
## Capreol Schedule B-1



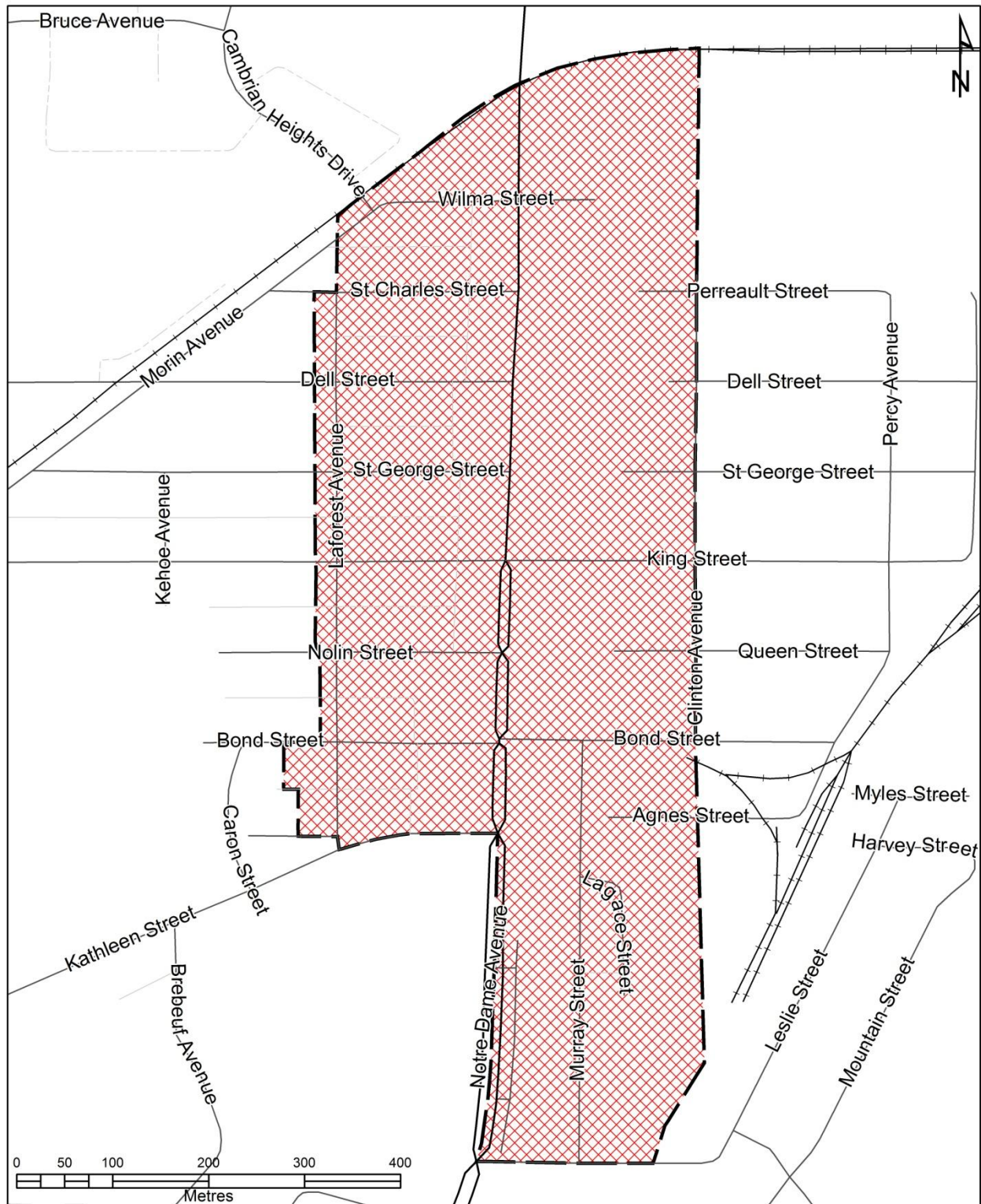
# Chelmsford Schedule B-2



## Levack Schedule B-3



# Flour Mill Schedule B-4



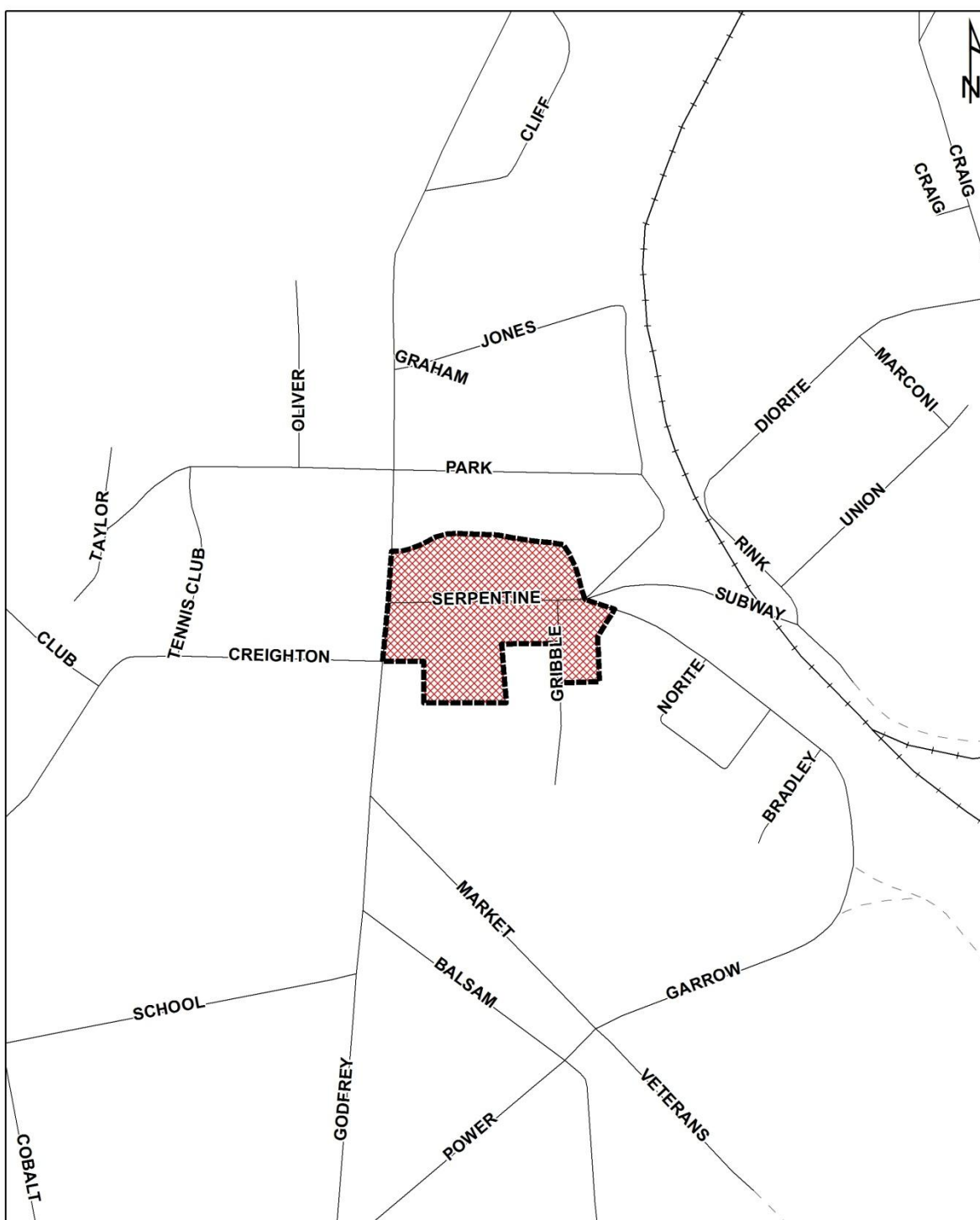


## Lively Schedule B-5





## Copper Cliff Schedule B-6



# Kathleen Street Schedule B-7

