

Downtown Target Area Guidelines

Overview

The City of North Bay recognizes the importance of the downtown core. The vitality of a downtown is often used as a means for evaluating the relative economic health of a community. It is essential to maintain a strong downtown core to portray a positive image of the community and its investors. The downtown is a key driver to North Bay's continued economic development, vitality, and high quality of life for residents.

As the City continues to maintain a diversified and resilient local economy, it must target investments into employment, housing, and the downtown core. Community Improvement Plans provide the municipality with tools under the [Planning Act](#) and [Municipal Act](#) to create opportunity in return for private sector investment and development in particular areas of the City. The boundaries of the Downtown Target Area are identified in [Schedule 'A'](#).

Goals and Objectives

The primary objective in the Downtown Target Area is the revitalization of the downtown core. The goals in the target area are:

- Create new, permanent jobs or full-time equivalent positions
- Support infill development
- Improve the physical condition of buildings while providing for new usable space
- Increase the number of residential units
- Increase the number of professional workers
- Maintain or increase property values
- Develop spaces or properties that are currently vacant or underutilized
- Attract shoppers
- Enhance the attractiveness and further develop the vision of the Downtown, as outlined in the [City of North Bay's Official Plan](#)
- Support the development of the Downtown as a demand generator and tourism destination
- Encourage development that complements the built form and commercial mix in the downtown, as outlined in the [City of North Bay's Official Plan](#)
- Support significant private sector investment

Applicable Incentive Programs

The Incentive Programs offered within the Downtown Target Area are:

1. Tax Increment Rebate
2. Municipal Fee Rebate
3. Development Charges Rebate
4. Professional Study Grant
5. Façade Improvement Grant
6. Building Improvement Grant
7. Public Art Grant
8. Sidewalk Patio Grant
9. Parking and Landscaping Grant
10. Parking and Transit Fee Rebate

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1. Tax Increment Rebate

Purpose: To provide financial incentives to stimulate new private sector investment by new and existing businesses and the intensification of residential units in the form of development, redevelopment, rehabilitation and/or adaptive reuse of buildings.

Description: Can provide an annual tax increment based grant of up to 100% in year 1, 75% in year 2, 50% in year 3 and 25% in year 4 following the completion and occupancy of a building that has been constructed or renovated.

Rebate Percentage	Year
100%	1
75%	2
50%	3
25%	4
0%	5

Eligible Costs: The incremental amount of the municipal portion of taxes paid by the applicant as a result of the development, redevelopment, rehabilitation and/or adaptive reuse of the site/project.

2. Municipal Fee Rebate

Purpose: To provide a rebate for the required municipal fees needed for a project that stimulates new private sector investment by new and existing businesses, intensification of residential units in the form of development, redevelopment, rehabilitation and/or adaptive reuse of buildings.

Description: Can provide a rebate of 100% of the municipal fees to a maximum of \$250,000 required for the development or redevelopment of a project. The eligible rebates include but may not be limited to;

- [Building & Demolition Permits](#)
- [Planning Act Applications¹](#)
- [Minor Variances](#) and [Consent to Sever \(severances\)](#)
- Encroachment Agreements
- [Sign Permits](#)

Eligible Costs: Up to 100% of the municipal fees identified above are eligible to be rebated back to successful applicants up to a maximum of \$250,000.

¹ Includes; Official Plan Amendments, Zoning By-law amendments, Draft Plans of Subdivision/Condominium, Consent, Minor Variance, Site Plan Control Agreements.

3. Development Charges Rebate

Purpose: To provide a rebate for the required development charges for a project that stimulates new private sector investment by new and existing businesses, intensification of residential units in the form of development, redevelopment, rehabilitation and/or adaptive reuse of buildings.

Description: Can provide a rebate of up to 100% of the required development charges up to a maximum of \$250,000.

Eligible Costs: Applicants can receive a 100% rebate on the required development charges up to a maximum of \$250,000.

4. Professional Study Grant

Purpose: To provide a financial incentive to offset the cost of hiring a professional engineer, architect and/or a qualified designer for the design of a project that stimulates new private sector investment by new and existing businesses, intensification of residential units in the form of development, redevelopment, rehabilitation and/or adaptive reuse of buildings.

Description: Can provide a grant equal to 75% of the cost to a maximum of \$5,000 to hire a professional engineer, architect and/or a qualified designer to develop plans and designs for projects.

Eligible Costs: Up to 75% of the costs to hire professional engineer, architect and/or a qualified building designer for up to a maximum of \$5,000.

5. Façade Improvement Grant

Purpose: To support applicants in obtaining the funds necessary for improving building façades. In order to maintain the character of the downtown, certain design criteria need to be fulfilled in order to receive funds for façade improvement proposals. The City's [Official Plan](#) encourages façade improvement within the downtown core².

Description: Can provide up to 50% funding to a maximum amount of \$15,000 when upgrading façades. Façade improvement proposals will be evaluated using the scoring method outlined in the [Façade Improvement Grant Application Package](#).

Please Note: It is strongly recommended that applicants provide professional design drawings for proposed façade improvements. Applicants may include their own drawings as part of their application but should be made aware that non-professional drawings are typically less detailed and leave more room for interpretation. As a result, applicants may risk losing committed dollars if the completed work does not conform with the drawings previously approved by the Growth Community Improvement Plan (GCIP) Review Team.

The costs associated with the development of drawings by a professional third party are not eligible under the Façade Improvement Grant Program but may be eligible for funding under the [Professional Study Grant Program](#).

² See Section 2.2.1.1.28 of the City's Official Plan.

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Eligible Costs: Examples of eligible façade improvements include but may not be limited to:

- Masonry cleaning
- Restoration
- Installation of storefront awnings
- Redesign of storefronts
- Installation of appropriate signage
- Replacement or repair of cornices, parapets and other architectural features

Please Note: Eligible costs include the cost of construction materials and labour.

6. Building Improvement Grant

Purpose: To support capital projects that will allow for the establishment of new businesses, the significant enhancement of existing businesses or the creation of new residential units.

Description: Can provide a grant of up to 50% funding to a maximum amount of \$30,000. This grant is only eligible when a building project includes a façade improvement component as outlined in the [Façade Improvement Grant Program](#) or when façade improvements have been completed within the 5 years prior to the application.

Façade improvements completed 5 years prior to a Building Improvement Grant Program application must conform with the requirements of the [Façade Improvement Grant Program](#). Consideration will be given to multi-tenant buildings and buildings that front on 2 municipal roads (for example, properties fronting on Main Street and Oak Street).

Eligible Costs: Eligible costs include third-party contractor fees and construction materials. Eligible projects include but may not be limited to:

- Structural repairs
- Fire safety projects
- Construction of new residential units and other major renovations
- Construction which results in the establishment of new useable space

7. Public Art Grant

Purpose: To help to promote uniqueness, sense of place, community spirit and vibrancy through the provision of art forms on both public and private properties.

Description: Can provide a grant of 50% of matching funds to a maximum of \$2,500 for eligible art pieces and displays on public and private property that are clearly visible to the public. The maximum grant per property is \$2,500 with a maximum of one application per property per year.

All art pieces and displays must be pre-approved by the City through the [Public Art Advisory Committee \(PAAC\)](#).

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Eligible Costs: Eligible costs include but may not be limited to:

- Materials
- Installation
- Lighting and landscaping that highlights the public art

Types of projects eligible for a grant under the Public Art Grant include but may not be limited to:

- Murals
- Sculptures
- Local heritage based art pieces and displays
- Interactive art pieces and displays
- Any other art piece approved by the [Public Art Advisory Committee \(PAAC\)](#).

8. Sidewalk Patio Grant

Purpose: To provide businesses with the opportunity to utilize publicly-owned sidewalks and on-street parking spaces in order to permit sidewalk patios.

Description: Can provide up to a 100% grant up to a maximum of \$1,000 to support professional fees associated with the design of the sidewalk patio and up to a 100% grant up to a maximum of \$1,000 to support eligible construction costs associated with the sidewalk patio.

Eligible Costs:

- Up to 100% to a maximum of \$1,000 to support professional fees associated with the design of the sidewalk patio
- Up to 100% to a maximum \$1,000 to support eligible construction costs associated with the sidewalk patio

9. Parking and Landscaping Grant

Purpose: To help revitalize existing parking lots and parking spaces in order to make them safer, more sustainable and visually appealing.

Description: Can provide a grant of 50% of matching funds with a maximum of up to \$5,000 for projects that make parking lots safer, more sustainable and visually appealing.

Applicants are required to include professional design drawings for proposed projects. The costs associated with the development of these drawings by a professional third party are not eligible under the Parking and Landscaping Grant Program but may be eligible for funding under the [Professional Study Grant Program](#).

Eligible Costs: The following types of costs are considered eligible for a grant under this program:

- Materials
- Installation & labour

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- Lighting & landscaping that improves the safety, visual appeal, and sustainability of the parking area

Projects that incorporate Low-Impact Development (LID) techniques will be given priority over those that do not. These projects could include but may not be limited to:

- Permeable pavements
- Rainwater harvesting
- Rain gardens
- Other types of water absorbent landscaping

10. Parking and Transit Fee Rebate

Purpose: To provide a grant for parking permits and transit passes for employees of new and/or expanding businesses and residents. The purpose is to further incentivize new employment opportunities and increase residential units within the Downtown Target Area.

Description: Can provide a grant for new and/or expanding eligible businesses in the downtown for up to a 50% grant on parking permit fees or monthly transit passes for a maximum of three (3) years. Net new residential units are eligible for a one (1) year grant of 50% on parking permits and monthly transit pass fees³.

Eligible Costs: Parking pass permit and monthly transit pass fees.

Contact Information

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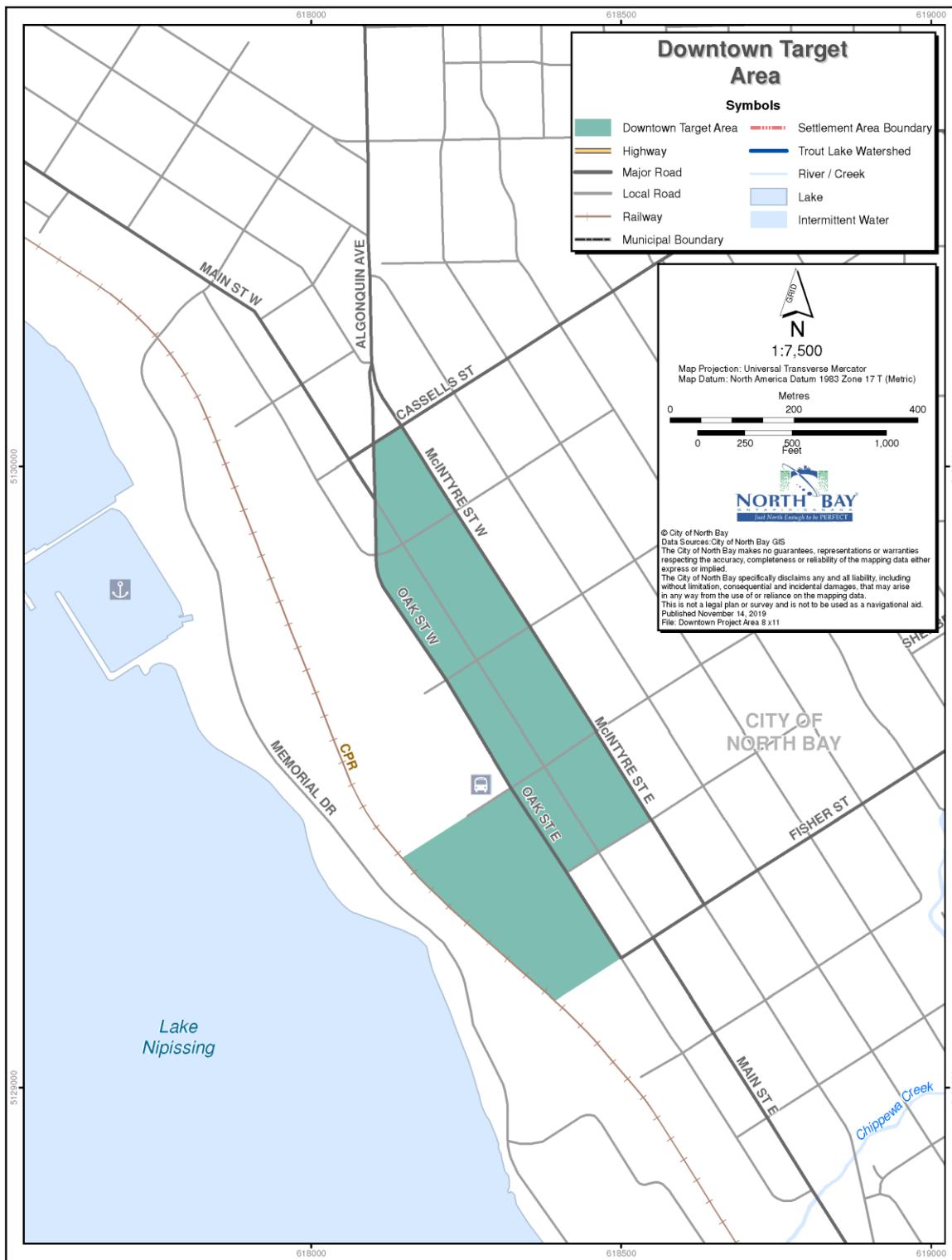
Or visit www.northbay.ca/gcip

³ Only two parking fee grants can be given per individual residential unit. Transit passes are limited to the number of individuals on the applicable lease.

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Schedule 'A' – Downtown Target Area



Appendix A – General Program Requirements

General GCIP requirements are as follows:

- a) In the Industrial Target Area, the proposed redevelopment, rehabilitation of an existing industrial building in a M1, M2, M3, M4, MBP, MR, MAP-A or MAP-G zone through Zoning By-law 2015-30, as amended, must include a minimum of a 25% increase in useable floor space or have a substantial increase in employment.
- b) An application for any financial incentive program contained in this CIP:
 - i) Can be made only for development, redevelopment, rehabilitation, and/or adaptive reuse of a building or property within the identified target areas of this CIP.
 - ii) Must be submitted to the City prior to the commencement of any works to which the incentive program will apply and prior to the application for a building permit.
 - iii) Must include plans, drawings, studies, reports, cost and/or other studies, details and information as may be required by the City to satisfy the City with respect to project eligibility, design, performance and conformity with the GCIP.
- c) Review and evaluation of an application and supporting materials against program eligibility requirements will be done by City staff and the Chair of Community Services (hereinafter “Review Team”), who will make the decision to approve, deny or defer the application.
- d) Eligibility will be based on the allocated funds to the GCIP, and the applications will be dealt with on a first come first serve basis. Applicants may receive partial funding, if the remaining funds cannot meet the request of the applicant.
- e) Applicants applying under this GCIP cannot apply for a tax increment grant program under any other applicable CIP or similar incentives.
- f) Properties located in multiple target areas can only apply for incentives in one target area for the lifetime of this plan.
- g) As a condition of approval, the applicant may be required to enter into a Grant Agreement with the City. This Agreement will specify the terms, duration and default provisions of the incentive to be provided. This Agreement is also subject to approval by Council or Council’s designate.
- h) The City reserves the right to audit the cost of any and all works that have been approved under any of the financial incentive programs, at the expense of the applicant.
- i) The City is not responsible for any costs incurred by an applicant in relation to any of the programs, including without limitation, costs incurred in anticipation of a grant.
- j) If the applicant is in default of any of the general or program specific requirements, or any other requirements of the City, the approved grant may be delayed, reduced or canceled, and the applicant may be required to repay part or all of the approved grant.

The Corporation of the City of North Bay

Growth Community Improvement Plan (GCIP)



- k) The applicant will have one (1) year from the time of approval of the application to submit the required information to receive their grant payment. The applicant may apply for an extension in writing; the Review Team has the authority on behalf of Council to grant extensions. Failure to meet the one (1) year requirement, and where no extensions have been given, the application will be deemed to have been denied and no grants will be given.
- l) The City may discontinue any of the programs contained in the CIP at any time, but applicants with approved grants will still receive said grant, subject to meeting the general and program specific requirements in the allotted time.
- m) Proposed land uses must be in conformity with the Official Plan, Zoning By-law and other planning requirements and approvals.
- n) All proposed works approved under the incentive programs shall conform to provincial laws and City guidelines, by-laws, policies, procedures, and standards.
- o) All works completed must comply with the description of the works as provided in the application form and contained in the grant agreement, if required, with any amendments as approved by the City.
- p) All construction and improvements made to buildings and/or land shall be made pursuant to a Building Permit, and/or other required permits, and constructed in accordance with the Ontario Building Code and all applicable zoning requirements and planning approvals.
- q) Where required by the City, outstanding work orders, and/or orders or requests to comply, and/or other charges from the City must be satisfactorily addressed prior to grant approval or payment.
- r) The property subject to GCIP application, and any other property and/or properties linked to the applicant and/or property owner(s), must be in good standing at the time of the application and throughout the entire length of the grant commitment, including but not limited to property taxes, status of Building Permit(s) etc.
- s) City staff, officials, and/or agents may inspect any property that is the subject of an application for any of the incentive programs offered by the City.
- t) The total of all grants and tax assistance provided in respect of the particular lands and buildings for which an applicant is making the application under the programs contained in this CIP and any other applicable CIPs shall not exceed the eligible costs of the improvements to those particular lands and buildings under all applicable CIPs.
- u) An approved application permits City Staff, Officials and/or agents of the City the right to announce approved financial grants once the work has commenced or as agreed upon by the City and the applicant.
- v) Proponent agrees to provide annual reporting documentation for the entirety of their tax increment period (four (4) years).