



Town of Cochrane

Final Draft Community Improvement Plan

STATUTORY PUBLIC MEETING

Wednesday, June 20, 2018

Fire Hall

23 Fifth Street, Cochrane, ON

7:00 pm

Presentation by:

Anita Sott, MCIP, RPP

Project Planner, WSP

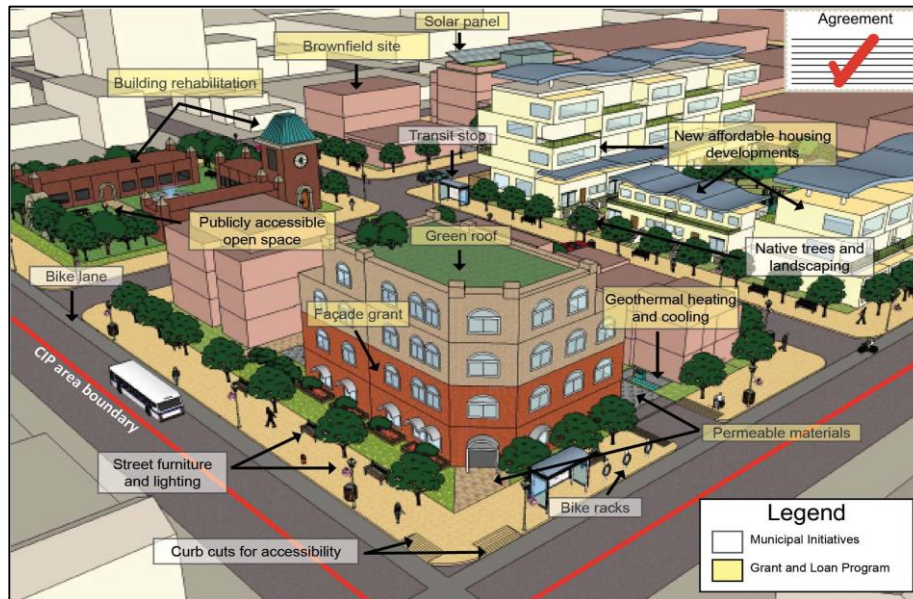


Outline

- What is a CIP?
- Project Process
- What is in a CIP?
- Community Engagement to Date
- Vision Statement and Goals
- Proposed CIP Project Area & Precinct Areas
- Proposed Incentive Programs
- Changes Made to Final Draft CIP
- Recommended Changes for Final CIP
- Next Steps

What is a CIP?

- Planning and economic development tool under the Ontario Municipal Act and Planning Act
- Establishes a framework to achieve a wide variety of goals tailored to the community
- Includes financial incentives through grants



What is a CIP?

- Provides many community benefits:
 - Stimulates private sector investment in targeted areas of the community
 - Promotes revitalization and place-making to attract tourism, business investment and economic development opportunities
 - Develops affordable housing
 - Promotes brownfield cleanup and redevelopment
 - Helps use existing community infrastructure effectively
 - Enhances streetscapes, building facades and signage

What is in a CIP?

- Planning Context and Policy Review
- Community Engagement
- Vision and Goals of the CIP
- Municipal Leadership Strategy
- Financial Incentive Programs
- Marketing Strategy
- Monitoring and Evaluation Program
- Amendments / Adjustments to the CIP

Project Process



- 1 January 2018 → Project Kick-off
- 2 March 2018 → CIP Working Group Visioning Workshop & Community / Business Surveys
- 3 March/April 2018 → Background Report & CIP Working Group Review
- 4 April/May 2018 → Draft CIP & CIP Working Group Review
- 5 May 28, 2018 → Public Open House
- 6 May 31, 2018 → Final Draft CIP
- 7 June 20, 2018 → Statutory Public Meeting (Planning Board)
- 8 June 26, 2018 → Final CIP & Council Adoption (+ 20 Day Appeal Period)
- 9 Marketing & Implementation

Visioning Workshop

- Held on March 8, 2018 with the CIP Working Group, members of the Economic Development Board and Planning Board, and the Mayor
- Mapping exercises – identified the CIP Project Area, and specific Precinct Areas where the proposed financial incentive programs apply
- Developed a vision statement and goals



Community Surveys

- 165 responses
- Input on CIP vision and priorities (e.g. Sixth Avenue, building facades, streetscapes)

CIP Incentive Program	Ranking		
	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Least Important
Redevelopment of the downtown area	56%	40%	4%
Redevelopment of former industrial or contaminated sites (“brownfields”)	31%	43%	26%
Enhancing streetscapes	63%	29%	9%
Improving building facades	47%	40%	13%
Ensuring effective delivery of municipal services	73%	25%	1%
Preserving the Town’s heritage and northern character	59%	31%	10%
Encouraging and supporting private-sector investment in the Town	60%	35%	5%
Encouraging and supporting affordable housing in the Town	66%	23%	11%

Business Survey

- 19 responses
- Why businesses choose to locate in Cochrane:
 - Location (e.g. people, lifestyle, amenities, natural resources)
 - Long-time resident or family business
 - Progressive community
- Challenges faced by business owners/operators include:
 - Attracting staff
 - Limited clientele / market, and regional competition (i.e. Timmins)
 - Cost of rent, utilities, and other services

CIP Vision Statement

The engagement results were combined to develop a Vision Statement for the CIP:

Cochrane will strive to be an inviting, diverse, and forward-thinking northern community that will support social and economic development.

Goals

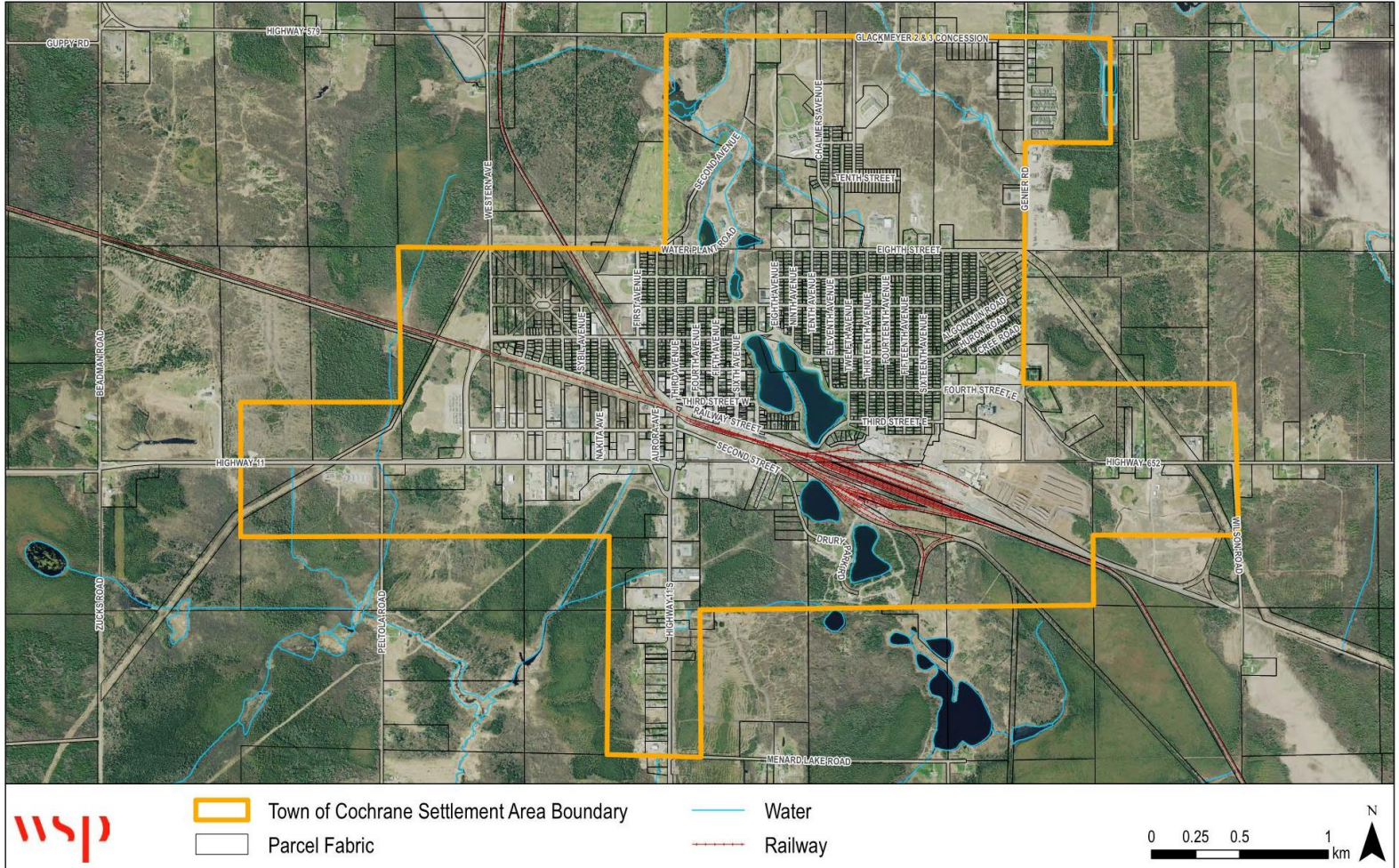
- Create an inviting, diverse, and progressive social and economic hub
- Signify the main entry points into Cochrane and the downtown through recognizable gateway features
- Focus on revitalizing Cochrane's downtown to create positive and lasting first impressions, particularly through building façade, streetscaping, accessibility improvements, and entrepreneurial activity
- Build pride in Cochrane's downtown, particularly Sixth Avenue, and promote it as a vibrant destination

Goals Continued

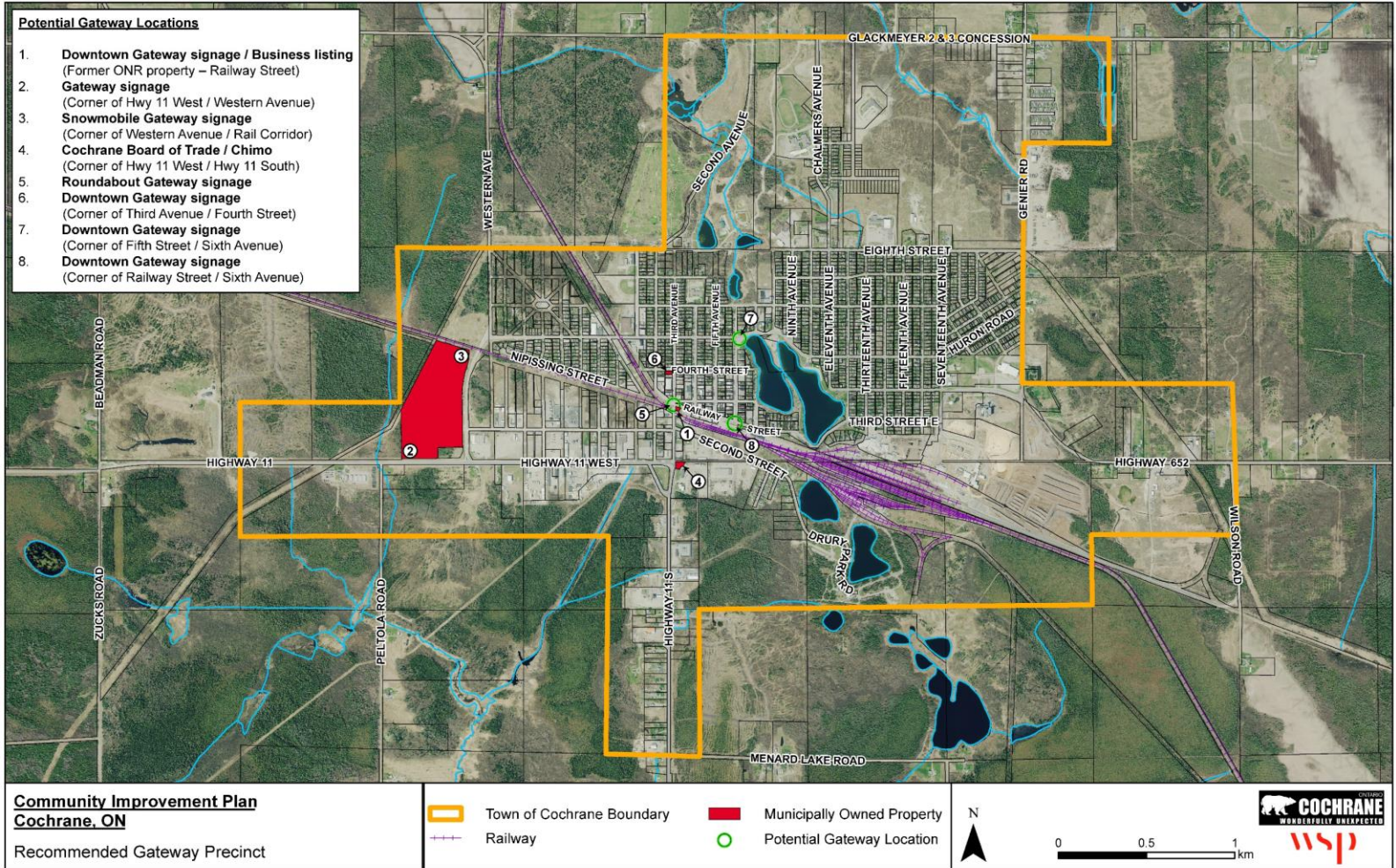
- Work to attract more service-based and retail businesses to the downtown core
- Work together to ignite, attract, and support entrepreneurial spirit among existing and prospective downtown businesses
- Leverage community improvements to retain existing and attract new businesses in the Town
- Pursue the implementation of community improvements through a combination of municipal leadership and private investment
- Redevelop brownfield sites throughout the Town

Proposed CIP Project Area

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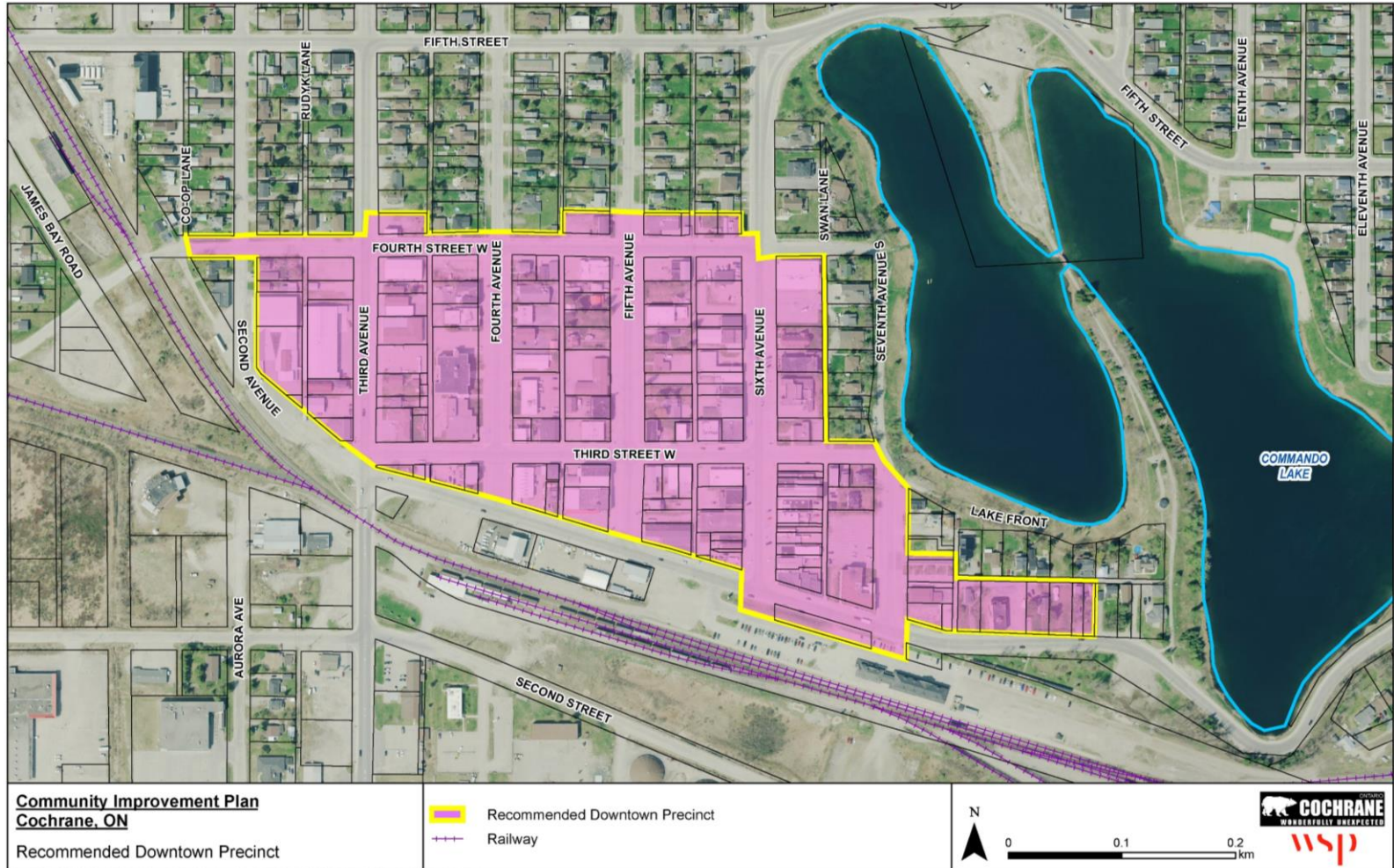


Proposed Gateway Precinct



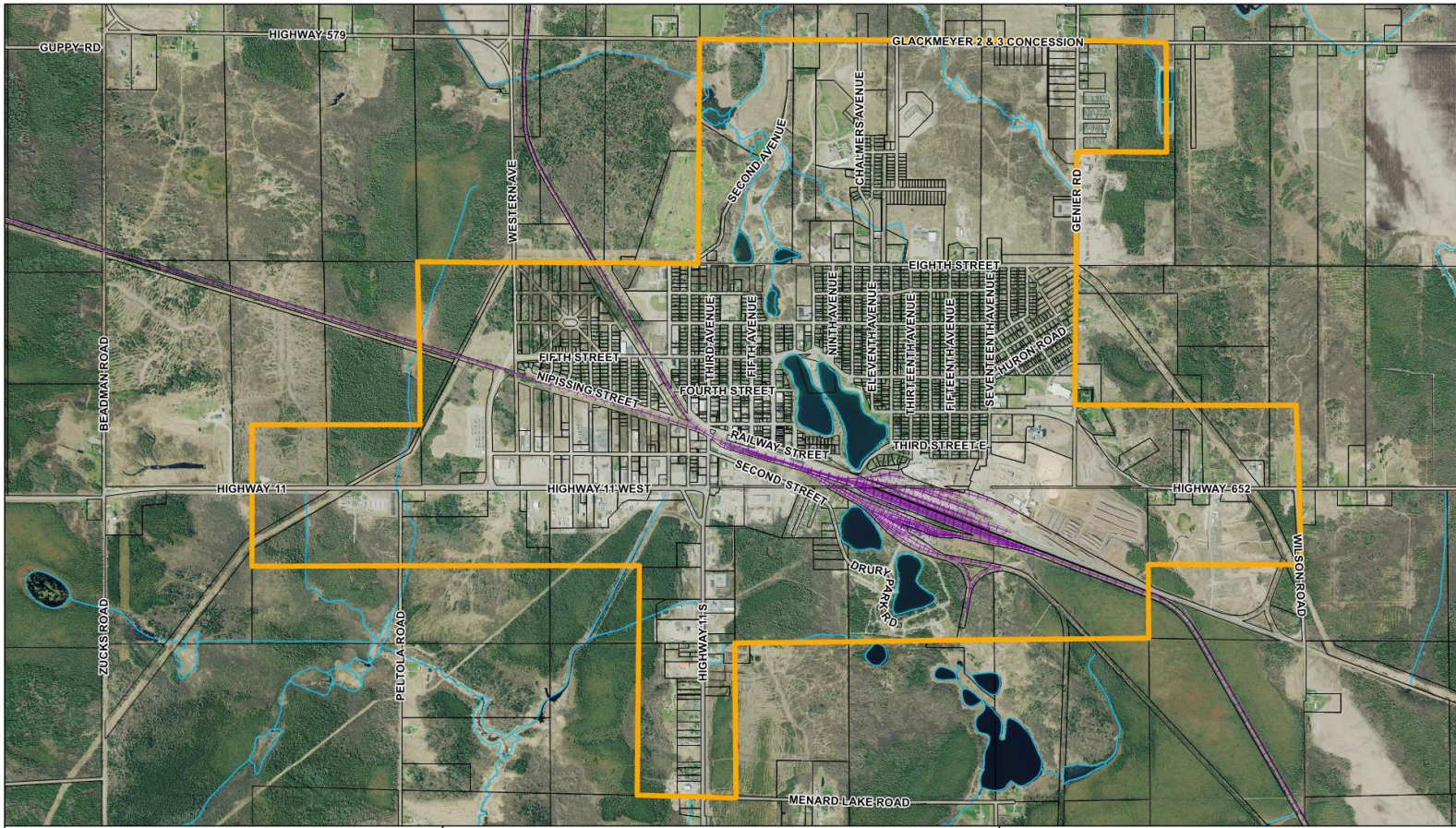
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Proposed Downtown Precinct






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Proposed Brownfields Redevelopment Precinct



Community Improvement Plan
Cochrane, ON
Recommended Brownfields Redevelopment Precinct

 Town of Cochrane Boundary
 Recommended Brownfields Redevelopment Precinct
 Railway



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Proposed CIP Incentive Programs

Draft CIP Section 7 (pgs. 50-66)

Accessibility Grant

- **Purpose:** Improve the accessibility of existing buildings in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, and promote improved access to commercial and institutional properties
- **Grant amount:** 50% of construction costs to a maximum of \$2,500
- **Eligible costs:**
 - Automatic doors
 - Wheelchair access ramps
 - Widening public entryways
 - Leveling or repairs to pathways/accesses and stairs
 - Other accessibility improvements, subject to Town approval



Customized portable ramps as an interim measure to improve accessibility
Image source: CBC News, Sudbury, July 5, 2017

Affordable Housing Study Grant

- **Purpose:** Promote the development of new affordable housing units in Cochrane through the funding of background and supporting studies
- **Grant amount:** 50% of eligible project costs, to a maximum of \$5,000
- **Eligible costs:**
 - Studies to support an affordable housing development for four (4) or more units in the Downtown Precinct, including on upper storeys of existing commercial buildings



Existing vacant hotel and redevelopment opportunity, Downtown Cochrane
Image source: WSP, 2018

Brownfield Property Tax Assistance Grant

- **Brownfield Sites:** Vacant or underutilized properties that are contaminated as a result of prior land use (e.g. former industrial or commercial sites such as factories or gas stations)
- **Purpose:** Encourage remediation, rehabilitation, and redevelopment of brownfield sites in the Town
- **Grant amount:** Deferment or cancellation of municipal and provincial portions of property taxes
- **Eligible costs:**
 - Environmental remediation costs
 - Placing clean fill and undertaking related grading
 - Environmental insurance premiums

Downtown Housing Grant

- **Purpose:** Encourage the provision of new residential units in Downtown Cochrane and improve the condition of existing residential units, on upper storeys of mixed use buildings
- **Grant amount:** 50% of the construction cost of each unit, for a maximum of 2 units and up to \$5,000 per unit
- **Eligible costs:**
 - Development of new residential units in the upper storey(s) of mixed use building in Downtown Precinct
 - Significant improvements in the condition/quality of one or more residential units in Downtown Precinct



Existing commercial properties on Sixth Avenue with potential for residential in the upper storeys
Image source: WSP, 2018

Environmental Site Assessment Grant

- **Purpose:** Promote completion of environmental studies by property owners to better understand the type of contamination and potential remediation costs for brownfield sites
- **Grant amount:** Up to 50% of the cost of an eligible study, to a maximum of \$3,000 per study and 2 studies per project / property
- **Eligible costs:**
 - Confirming and describing contamination at the site (Phase II ESA)
 - Surveying designated substances and hazardous materials at the site
 - Developing a plan to remove, treat or otherwise manage contamination found on the site

Façade Improvement Grant

- **Purpose:** Encourage aesthetic improvements to buildings and properties, and support continued maintenance of the Town's building stock
- **Grant amount:** 50% of construction costs to a maximum of \$5,000
- **Eligible costs at the front, rear, or exterior building facades include, among others:**
 - Restoration of façade brickwork, wood, masonry and metal cladding
 - Repair / replacement of windows, doors, exterior lighting, awnings
 - Mural painting or installation



Example of facades before and after improvements in Kenora
Image source: City of Kenora, 2017

Landscaping and Parking Area Improvement Grant

- **Purpose:** Encourage a more attractive and appealing pedestrian environment by improving the aesthetic appearance of private parking areas and landscaped areas
- **Grant amount:** 50% of construction costs to a maximum of \$5,000
- **Eligible costs include, among others:**
 - Professional landscaping and tree planting
 - Improvements to parking surfaces, fences, walkways, or seating
 - Installation of permeable paving surfaces and innovative stormwater management systems



Example of a bioswale for stormwater management
Image source: Aaron Volkening, Flickr

Planning and Building Fee Grant

- **Purpose:** Encourage infill development and redevelopment that is context-sensitive, attractive, and desirable
- **Grant amount:** Up to 100% of the cost of applicable application fees, to a maximum of \$1,500
- **Eligible costs:**
 - Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment, Minor Variance, and Site Plan applications, or Building Permit or Demolition Permit fees associated with:
 - Development of a vacant property or redevelopment of a property for commercial, office, or a mix of uses;
 - Major additions to a commercial or mixed use property;
 - Conversion of upper-storey space to residential units;
 - Other improvements as detailed in the CIP.

Retail Market Strategy Study Grant

- **Purpose:** Encourage the development of new retail businesses or the expansion of existing businesses in Downtown Cochrane, by providing financial assistance for market studies to support and inform retail opportunities
- **Grant amount:** 50% of study costs to a maximum of \$3,000 per study and 1 study per project / property
- **Eligible costs:**
 - Market studies to support the retail planning process for a new retail business or an expansion to an existing retail business in the Downtown Precinct

Signage Improvement Grant

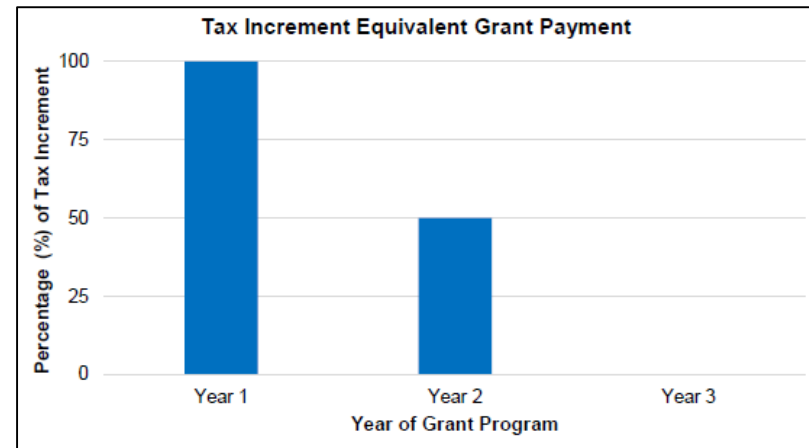
- **Purpose:** Promote new attractive and pedestrian-oriented signage that contributes to the visual identity and northern character of the Town
- **Grant amount:** 50% of construction costs to a maximum of \$2,500
- **Eligible costs:**
 - Replacement, repair, improvement or installation of façade signage, hanging or standalone business signs and associated lighting on commercial, office, institutional, mixed-use and industrial properties in the Downtown Precinct



Attractive signage on Sixth Avenue
Image source: WSP, 2018

Tax Increment Equivalent Grant

- **Purpose:** Encourage infill development and redevelopment by helping to offset resulting increases in municipal property taxes
- **Grant amount:** Up to 100% of the municipal tax increase resulting from the improvements and reassessment, and decreasing by 50% per year until it reaches 0%
- **Eligible costs include, among others:**
 - Development, redevelopment, or adaptive reuse for commercial, office, or mixed uses
 - Major additions to a commercial or mixed use property
 - Conversion of upper-storey space in a mixed use or commercial building to residential units



Municipal Leadership Strategy

- Public Policies:
 - Urban Design Guidelines, Streetscape Design Plan, and Parking Strategy
- Public Lands and Buildings:
 - Further enhancements / programming at Lake Commando
 - Active transportation infrastructure
 - Repurpose parking spaces along Sixth Avenue for temporary, seasonal bike racks, parkettes, café seating
- Infrastructure
 - Road repairs, repaving, and streetscaping improvements
- Gateway Signage
 - Signifying key entry points into Cochrane, and directional signage to Downtown and Lake Commando for motorists, snowmobilers, pedestrians, and cyclists
- Smartphone Application

Design Guidelines

- Recommended to provide guidance and to establish a standard for community improvements
 - Streetscapes
 - Built form
 - Building façade improvements
 - Building signage
 - Gateway / wayfinding / directional signage
 - Landscaping / parking areas



Concept Renderings

BEFORE



BEFORE



31



AFTER



AFTER

Concept Renderings

BEFORE



AFTER

Changes to Final Draft CIP made following Public Open House

- Acknowledgements Section updated to reflect that the CIP was initiated by the Economic Development Board
- Goal #3 (Section 5.2) updated to recognize promoting entrepreneurial activity
- Accessibility Grant (Section 7.1) updated to include institutional properties as eligible, and to clarify the purpose of the grant to achieve universal accessibility for all ages and mobilities
- Tax Increment Equivalent Grant (Section 7.11), Eligibility Criteria updated to delete that applicants may apply for the grant as well as other financial incentive programs. The grant can only be combined with the Brownfield Property Tax Assistance Grant.

Recommended Changes for Final CIP

- Based on comments received from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs on another CIP, recommend deleting the following under Section 8.3 General Eligibility Requirements:

13. The Town may consider initiating one or all the incentive programs retroactively.

- Under Section 8.8 Amendments to the CIP, clarify that amendments to the CIP made under Section 28(5) of the Planning Act require a Statutory Public Meeting and related notice requirements.

Next Steps

- Final CIP → June 22, 2018
- June 26, 2018 → Council Meeting for CIP adoption
- Following Council Adoption → Notice of Decision published and 20 Day Appeal Period
- Marketing and Implementation



Thank you!

If you have any questions / comments, contact:

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