



Report to Council

To: Mayor and Council Members
From: Edward Hilton, Economic Development Officer
Date: February 19, 2026
Subject: Community Improvement Plan Update from EDO Feb 2026

Recommendation:

That Council receive this report for information and endorse undertaking public consultation on the proposed updates to the Community Improvement Plan (CIP), operating under the working program name Local Investment Partnership Program (LIPP), as recommended by the CIP Committee;

And further that staff proceed with preparing consultation materials and a revised draft CIP for future consideration by Council.

Background:

The Township's Community Improvement Plan (CIP) is intended to support private sector investment, redevelopment, and economic activity within designated Community Improvement Project Areas. The CIP Committee provides advice to Council and staff on program performance, eligibility, and potential improvements to ensure the program remains effective, administratively feasible, and aligned with local economic conditions.

Since implementation, certain components of the CIP have seen limited uptake and have proven administratively complex relative to the scale of development activity within the Township. In response, the CIP Committee has reviewed the existing program structure and identified several proposed changes intended to simplify administration, improve clarity for applicants, and better align incentives with realistic development activity.

The Committee has recommended that these proposed changes be shared with the public and stakeholders for feedback prior to bringing a finalized revised CIP to Council for consideration.

Analysis:



The CIP Committee's proposed changes focus on simplifying program delivery, reducing administrative burden, and improving predictability for both applicants and staff. Key proposed changes include the following:

Removal of Loan Programs

The Committee is recommending the removal of loan-based incentives from the CIP. Loan programs require municipal reserves to be set aside and involve complex legal agreements, repayment tracking, and ongoing oversight. Between 2018 and 2025, no loan applications were received, indicating limited demand for this incentive within the Township.

Given modest development volumes and limited staffing resources, the administrative and legal costs associated with loan programs are considered disproportionate to their potential benefit. Applicants may instead access financing through traditional financial institutions or specialized agencies such as Community Futures organizations or the Business Development Bank of Canada, which offer financing and advisory support tailored to small businesses and entrepreneurs.

Removal of Tax Increment Equivalent for Rehabilitation and Redevelopment (TIERR) Grants

The Committee is also proposing the removal of TIERR grants. While effective in larger urban centres, TIERR programs require long-term tracking of property assessments, multi-year grant calculations, and compliance monitoring. For smaller-scale projects, this administrative complexity ties up staff time without delivering proportional economic benefit.

Removing TIERR would protect municipal revenues and allow the CIP to focus on simpler, more transparent grant programs. The Committee has noted that tax-based incentives could be reconsidered in the future through a separate, housing-focused Community Improvement Plan if Council so directs.

Transition to Fixed Intake Periods

It is recommended that the CIP move from a continuous intake model to two fixed intake periods per year. Fixed intake periods would improve administrative efficiency, allow applications to be evaluated comparatively, and provide clearer timelines for applicants and Council decision-making.

Eligibility for Proposed Property Changes



The Committee recommends clarifying that properties may be eligible if they are either an eligible property type at the time of application or are proposed to be converted to an eligible property type as part of a redevelopment project. This change would better support adaptive reuse and redevelopment projects.

Mandatory Pre-Consultation

A pre-consultation meeting with designated Township staff is recommended prior to submission of a CIP application. Pre-consultation would help ensure applicants understand program requirements, eligibility criteria, and submission expectations, reducing incomplete applications and improving processing efficiency.

CIP Committee Terms of Reference – Housekeeping Updates

In addition to program changes, staff are recommending housekeeping updates to the CIP Committee Terms of Reference, including:

- Clarifying committee composition
- Clarifying requirements for meeting minutes
- Clarifying reporting requirements to Council
- Clarifying meeting procedures and delegation processes
- Removing budget amounts from the Terms of Reference, as funding levels are determined annually through the operational budgeting process

These Terms of Reference updates would be brought forward to Council separately for approval and are not part of the CIP amendment itself.

Public Consultation

The CIP Committee has recommended that public consultation be undertaken to gather feedback from property owners, businesses, and other stakeholders on the proposed changes prior to finalizing a revised CIP for Council consideration. Feedback would be gathered through the Engage North Kawartha platform.

Financial Implications:

No financial budget changes to the CIP are being recommended at this time.



Township of North Kawartha

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Strategic and/or Other Plans:

Township of North Kawartha 2023-2026 Strategic Plan

Township of North Kawartha 2023–2026 Strategic Economic Development Plan

In Consultation With:

CIP Committee Members

Laura Stone, Planning Consultant

Connie Parent, Clerk

Attachment:

North Kawartha Draft CIP LIPP Feb 2026