

# Brantford's Greyfields Revitalization Strategy



NOTE: This copy of the Greyfield's Revitalization Strategy and associated Greyfields Community Improvement Plan has been prepared for public review. In reading this document, you will see text in grey highlight and light blue highlight. Text in grey highlight identifies text that is proposed to be deleted while light-blue highlight indicates new text that is proposed to be added. Formatting has also been updated to align with accessibility requirements but these changes are not explicitly identified and do not impact the intent or function of the CIP.

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# City of Brantford Greyfields Community Improvement Plan

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## **Part A. The Preamble**

Part A is provided as background and contextual information in support of the Greyfields Revitalization Strategy. This Part does not constitute an operative component of the Greyfields Community Improvement Plan (CIP).

### **A.1 Community Improvement Plan Legislative and Policy Framework**

The Province of Ontario has established a legislative framework for the preparation of community improvement plans (CIPs), a tool used to support the revitalization of targeted areas through municipally driven programs and/or financial incentive based programs. This legislative framework is supported and implemented by Provincial and City of Brantford policies and plans. Any proposed CIP must conform to both the legislative and policy frameworks.

Similarly, both the Province and the City of Brantford have policies that support the redevelopment and revitalization of existing neighbourhoods, and provide direction on infill and intensification. Greyfields are a logical location to implement the policies described and in some cases, greyfield sites are specifically identified in the policies as an opportunity.

The following subsections outline the various components of the Provincial legislation and policies and the municipal policies as they relate to CIPs and to greyfield revitalization.

#### **A.1.1 Provincial Legislation**

The *Planning Act* and the *Municipal Act* provide direction and guidance on the establishment and implementation of CIPs, as follows:

##### **A.1.1.1 Planning Act**

The *Planning Act* governs how municipalities may plan and regulate the use of land and buildings, with Section 28 outlining the requirements for preparing and implementing Community Improvement Plans (CIPs).

These requirements include that the City's Official Plan must contain policies respecting the application of CIPs, that a Community Improvement Project Area is adopted by Council and that a Community Improvement Plan is prepared for the designated Community Improvement Project Area.

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In instances where a Community Improvement Project Area is in effect but there is no Community Improvement Plan in place, Council may:

- Acquire land within the project area;
- Hold land that has been acquired; and
- Clear, grade or otherwise prepare the land for community improvement activities (Section 28(3)).

When a CIP comes into effect, provided the Plan provides for the acquisition and improvement of land (subsection 28(3)), the municipality may construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on land acquired or held by the municipality in conformity with the policies of the CIP (subsection 28(6)). This enables the municipality to intervene directly and make improvements to property or to build new buildings and facilities.

Under subsection 28(7), the municipality may issue grants and loans to property owners and tenants to assist in paying for eligible costs. Eligible costs are broadly defined to include “costs related to environmental site assessment, environmental remediation, development, redevelopment, construction and reconstruction of lands and buildings for rehabilitation purposes or for the provision of energy efficient uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements or facilities” (Section 28(7.1)). Under no circumstance can the amount of a grant or loan exceed the eligible cost of the Community Improvement Plan project (Section 28(7.3)). The municipality may also enter into agreements concerning any issued grants or loans, and register the agreement against the title of the land (Section 28(11)).

Finally, once Council is satisfied that a Community Improvement Plan “has been carried out,” Council may pass a by-law to dissolve the Community Improvement Project Area, which renders any affected CIP non-applicable (subsection 28(13)).

### **A.1.1.2 Municipal Act, 2001**

The *Municipal Act, 2001* governs many procedures, tools and powers of municipalities. It prohibits municipalities from assisting any manufacturing business or other industrial or commercial enterprise through the granting of bonuses (subsection 106(1)). Prohibited actions outlined under subsection 106(2) include:

- Giving or lending any property of the municipality, including money;

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- Guaranteeing borrowing;
- Leasing or selling any property of the municipality at below fair market value; or
- Giving a total or partial exemption from any levy, charge or fee.

However, subsection 106(3) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* also provides an exception to the above where a municipality exercises powers under subsections 28(6), (7), or (7.2) of the Planning Act – i.e. a community improvement plan.

### **A.1.2 Provincial Policies and Plans** **Provincial Policy: the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024**

The Province of Ontario provides policy direction to be implemented by local municipalities through Provincial policies and plans. Those relevant to community improvement plans (CIPs) in the City of Brantford include:

#### **A.1.2.1 Provincial Policy Statement (2020)**

The Provincial Policy Statement (2020) (PPS), issued under Section 3 of the *Planning Act*,

outlines the Province's position with respect to land use planning and development. The new PPS came into effect on May 1, 2020, replacing the previous PPS 2014. Although the PPS does not explicitly reference CIPs, it supports the revitalization and rehabilitation of downtown areas, and recognizes the importance of downtowns and main street areas as a component of long-term economic prosperity (Section 1.7.1 d).

The PPS also does not make specific mention of greyfields but generally places a strong emphasis on intensification, describing principles that offer implicit support for greyfield revitalization. Section 1.1.3.1, for example, requires that settlement areas "shall be the focus of growth and development." Section 1.1.3.2 elaborates that land use patterns within settlement areas shall include several principles, including an efficient use of land and resources, efficient use of infrastructure and public service facilities and be supportive of active transportation and transit.

Section 1.1.3.3 requires planning authorities to identify appropriate locations for intensification and to promote opportunities for intensification and redevelopment, taking into account existing building stock and areas with

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existing and planned infrastructure that can accommodate projected needs. Section 1.1.3.5 directs planning authorities to implement minimum intensification targets, based on those established in Provincial Plans (i.e., A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, Office Consolidation 2020).

The PPS also contains policies related to housing, in Section 1.4, including a requirement to maintain the ability accommodate at least a 15-year supply of growth through intensification and redevelopment (1.4.1) and to provide for a range and mix of housing types and densities to meet projected market-based and affordable housing needs of current and future residents of the regional market area (1.4.3). Along with the new emphasis on market-based needs, another key change introduced in the PPS 2020 was the broadened definition of “housing options” which includes a wide range of housing types (e.g., tiny homes, additional residential units, etc.) and arrangements and forms (e.g., co-ownership, land lease, etc.)

### **A.1.2.2 A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Office Consolidation 2020)**

A Place to Grow, the new Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, came into effect on May 16, 2019, updating the previous 2017 Growth Plan. On August 28, 2020, following the approval of Amendment 1, the Office Consolidation 2020 came into effect

The Growth Plan outlines a policy framework for managing growth in the Greater Golden Horseshoe and generally encourages the development of complete communities, higher density development where appropriate, and intensification (Section 2.2.1). The Plan encourages cities to develop “a diverse mix of land uses, including residential and employment uses, and convenient access to local stores, services, and public service facilities” (Section 2.2.1.4). Greyfields – defined as uncontaminated, previously developed properties that may be underutilized, derelict or vacant - are specifically cited in the Growth Plan as a land type to which growth and intensification should be directed (Section 2.1). They are also seen as potential strategic growth areas that should be identified by municipalities as intensification- accommodating areas within their settlement areas.

As mentioned above, the PPS 2020 requires municipalities to establish intensification targets based on the Growth Plan and to “encourage intensification generally throughout the delineated built-up area.” In particular, municipalities within the Growth Plan area, including the City of Brantford,

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must direct a minimum of 50 percent of all residential development within the delineated built-up area by the time of the next Municipal Comprehensive Review (Section 2.2.2). The City's current Official Plan is based on the 40 percent target established through the 2006 Growth Plan and still applies, however. As a result of work completed through the City's Municipal Comprehensive Review (reflected in the new Council-adopted Official Plan), the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing approved an alternative target for Brantford of 45% until 2031, increasing to 50% after 2031.

A final key change introduced in the 2019 Growth Plan is that by the next Municipal Comprehensive Review, all new development (i.e., greenfield development) is required to achieve a minimum density target of at least 50 residents and jobs per hectare (Section 2.2.7.2. a)), a reduction from the 2017 Growth Plan target of 80 residents and jobs per hectare.

The Provincial Planning Statement (PPS), 2024 was issued under section 3 of the Planning Act and came into effect on October 20, 2024. It replaces both the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 and A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2019. The PPS outlines the Province's position with respect to land use planning and development. Although the PPS does not explicitly reference community improvement plans (CIPs), it encourages the identification of Strategic Growth Areas for growth and development (Section 2.4.1.1.).

The PPS also does not make specific mention of greyfields but generally places a strong emphasis on intensification, describing principles that offer implicit support for greyfield revitalization. Section 2.4.1.2, for example, requires that Strategic Growth Areas be planned "to support the achievement of complete communities, a range and mix of housing options, intensification and more mixed-use development to:

- a) Accommodate significant population and employment growth;
- b) Provide focal areas for education, commercial, recreational and cultural uses;
- c) To accommodate and support the transit network and provide connection points for inter- and intra-regional transit; and
- d) To support affordable, accessible, and equitable housing."

Section 2.4.1.3 e) elaborates that planning authorities "support redevelopment of commercially-designated retail lands (e.g., underutilized shopping malls and plazas), to support mixed-use residential.

Section 2.4.1 requires planning authorities to identify appropriate locations for intensification and to promote opportunities for intensification and redevelopment, taking

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into account existing building stock and areas with existing and planned infrastructure that can accommodate projected needs. Section 2.3.1.4 directs planning authorities to “establish and implement minimum targets for intensification and redevelopment within built-up areas, based on local conditions.” All new development (designated growth areas) are required to achieve a minimum density target of at least 50 residents and jobs per hectare (Section 2.3.1.5).

The PPS, 2024 also contains policies related to People and Homes, in Section 2.1, including a requirement to “maintain at all times the ability to accommodate residential growth for a minimum of 15 years through lands which are designated and available for residential development,” (2.1.4 a) and “to provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities required to meet projected requirements of current and future residents of the regional market area” (2.1.4). Along with the continued emphasis on market-based needs, the PPS, 2024 maintains the broadened definition of “housing options” which includes a wide range of housing types (e.g., tiny homes, additional residential units, etc.) and arrangements and forms (e.g., co-ownership, land lease, etc.)

The PPS, 2024 also contains policies with respect to cultural heritage in Section 4.6. Policy 4.6.1 states that protected heritage property (which includes amongst other criteria, property designated under Parts IV or V of the Ontario Heritage Act by a municipality) shall be conserved. The PPS, 2024 also encourages municipalities to develop and implement proactive strategies for conserving significant built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes (policy 4.6.4.b)).

### **A.1.3 Municipal Policy: the City of Brantford Official Plan**

The City of Brantford is explicit in its intent to use greyfields as a resource for community revitalization. The Official Plan also intends to ensure that a wide range of housing types are available across the City, including affordable housing. Applicable objectives of the Official Plan include to:

- Encourage the revitalization, redevelopment, reuse and/or conversion of greyfields, underutilized sites, or regeneration areas within which are included any combination of the following: brownfield sites, greyfield sites, underutilized sites, or sites within the City’s Urban Growth Centre. (6.2.13.1f)
- Ensure affordable housing is available to a population with diverse social, physical and economic needs. (6.2.3.1c)

Further, Section 15.2.2 directs that “a significant portion of new growth is to be directed to the built-up area of the City through intensification” and includes the development of greyfield sites as an example of intensification.



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Section 15.5 outlines policies related to Intensification Corridors, a key focus of the Greyfields Revitalization Strategy. More specifically, Section 15.5.2 establishes that these areas are to develop at transit-supportive forms and densities and “In particular, new mixed use, residential or institutional development is encouraged.”

Section 15.6 deals with Regeneration Areas. Though not a land use designation, Section 15.6.1 describes them as underutilized lands, which are in need of “renewed investment, redevelopment and/or reuse to achieve their maximum potential,” specifically including greyfields. Section 15.6.3 further recognizes the unique circumstances of the City’s Regeneration Areas and requires the development of a unique strategy for each, such as this Greyfields Revitalization Strategy. Among the factors to be considered in the development of such a strategy, per Section 15.6.4, is that “the lands require flexibility in permitted land uses” to assist in stimulating or creating new employment opportunities, restoration and reuse of existing buildings and rejuvenation of under-utilized land through new development.

With regards to Community Improvement Plans, Section 16 of the Official Plan contains enabling policies for Community Improvement areas including, in Section 16.1 – General:

*“The City shall encourage community improvement through the preservation, rehabilitation, renewal, and redevelopment, where appropriate, of certain areas of the City in order to improve the safety and quality of buildings, structures, and facilities.”*

Further, Section 16.2 - Community Improvement Policy Area, establishes that all lands within the built boundary are eligible for inclusion in a CIP and that Council may pass a by-law designating CIP Project Areas and approving CIPs “to establish the detailed objectives and policies concerning the improvement of these specific areas.”

Section 16.3, Community Improvement Policy Areas, provides more detailed criteria for the selection of CIP Project Areas including inadequacy of municipal services (16.3.1.2) and constraints to community improvement, such as incompatible land uses (16.3.1.3).

Criteria for commercial CIPs are contained in Section 16.3.3:

- 1) There is a large proportion of commercial land uses within the area;
- 2) A substantial portion of the commercial buildings within the area do not meet the City’s maintenance and occupancy standards;
- 3) A substantial portion of the commercial buildings within the area require interior or exterior renovation in order to function as contemporary commercial operations.

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- Encourage a mix and range of market-based housing types, styles, tenures and affordability characteristics to meet the needs of a growing and diverse population (3.1b).
- Have new development that conserves cultural heritage resources, and wherever possible incorporate such resources into new development in ways that conserves the integrity of resources (3.4.g.).
- Provide the community services, amenities and infrastructure that will attract population and employment growth (5.1.1a. viii.).
- Promote economic revitalization within the context of historic preservation, recognizing the potential for adaptive re-use, redevelopment and intensification within the Downtown Urban Growth Centre (5.3.1a. ii.).
- Provide an effective framework for the provision of higher density, mixed-use development that will support an efficient and integrated transit system. These Strategic Growth Areas serve and connect areas of the City that provide different community functions, and will therefore be different in terms of character, scale, mix of uses, and potential to accommodate future growth (4.3.c.).
- Attract investment in institutional uses, including post-secondary educational facilities, regionally-focused public services, as well as a full range of commercial, recreational, cultural and entertainment uses (5.3.1a. iv.).

Section 6.3 outlines the intent and development policies for brownfield and greyfield Sites. The City encourages and promotes the redevelopment of greyfield sites and supports opportunities for intensification that may also serve as catalysts for neighbourhood revitalization and improvement.

With regards to Community Improvement Plans, Sections 3.4.f. vi., 3.5.b. and 6.3.e. encourages the use of Community Improvement Plans in accordance with the *Ontario Heritage Act*, the *Municipal Act* or *Planning Act* to encourage the conservation, restoration and reuse of heritage resources and to assist with the implementation of sustainable development design standards and to promote the remediation and redevelopment of brownfield/greyfield properties.

## A.2 Defining Greyfields in Brantford

While identified in the City's Official Plan, greyfields are not specifically defined. The traditional definition of greyfields was developed by the Congress for New Urbanism in a 2001 paper:

*“Retail properties that require significant public and private-sector intervention to stem decline. More familiar are brownfields (contaminated urban development sites) and greenfields (undeveloped rural land). By contrast, greyfields are developed sites that are economically and physically ripe for major redevelopment.”*

Greyfields, as defined in the American context, traditionally focused on underutilized or “dead” regional malls or other large sites. Over the course of time, the term has come to more broadly include a range of declining or abandoned commercial uses in need of revitalization. There is no formal or agreed-upon Canadian definition of greyfields but part of the early work of the Greyfields Revitalization Strategy was to define the term for the Brantford context.

The development of the Greyfields Revitalization Strategy was an iterative process through which greyfield and at-risk sites were identified. As further discussed in Section A.3, an inventory was developed by assessing locations where commercial uses are concentrated and identifying commonalities among their characteristics. Through this process, the inventory was narrowed down and the definition of greyfields in the local context refined so the identification was premised on properties meeting at least some of the following criteria:

- The site is a former or existing commercial use, light industrial use (particularly industrial malls and office uses), mixed use building (some combination of commercial, office, residential or institutional uses) or institutional use;
- The site or and building are vacant or there are clear signs that the building is at risk of becoming vacant (e.g., the majority of the space appears to be unoccupied or there is a history of vacancy);
- The site exhibits some degree of neglect, ranging from derelict/abandoned to a relative lack of regular maintenance and landscaping, or there is a reason to believe the building is in a poor state of repair;
- The site is characterized by a significant amount of vacant space or parking areas that are not well utilized; and
- The site is unlikely to be a brownfield as a result of a prior industrial use, based on information available about prior land use and history.

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Considering and addressing the issue of greyfields has been a long-term project for the City. In 2012, the City established the Colborne Street East Revitalization Task Force which investigated the economic factors resulting in vacant and underutilized properties including, and in proximity to, the former Canadian Tire property. One of the recommendations from this Task Force was that the City undertake a city-wide Greyfields Revitalization Strategy.

The negative impacts associated with greyfields sites are not limited to the sites themselves. Vacant and underutilized greyfield properties discourage investment and commercial activity on adjacent lands and can be detrimental to the local community including non-commercial land uses.

Challenges associated with site access, parcel size, commercial land use fragmentation and changing travel patterns and commercial-retail shopping preferences can also result in these lands sitting vacant or underutilized. Obstacles frequently associated with redeveloping greyfields include costs associated with demolition or renovation of existing buildings and the cost of site redesign and construction. As a result, greyfield sites typically have higher front-end costs for redevelopment in comparison to vacant or greenfield sites, and are often reliant on longer-term market trends to support their redevelopment.

When the market supports the revitalization or redevelopment of greyfield sites without intervention, it is not uncommon to see vacant or tired-looking commercial properties revitalized with building and site improvements to support new commercial uses. Alternatively, where the market can support the wholesale redevelopment of a greyfield site it often can only manage this through the use of the site for new, mixed use and typically more intense development. In these cases, the mix of new commercial uses with new residences, offices, or other compatible uses draws from and generates new traffic to the existing community, supporting local economic activity.

When the growth and development of a community is not sufficient to support the redevelopment and revitalization of greyfield sites, intervention by the municipality can catalyze positive change through incentive programs and direct municipal engagement in public realm improvements. As part of a revitalization strategy, this intervention by the municipality can take advantage of the various opportunities presented by greyfield sites.

Given that they are typically located along major thoroughfares, with high visibility and traffic, and adjacent to or embedded within established neighbourhoods, greyfield sites can help support local intensification objectives. While greyfields may not currently be positioned for continued commercial success, through considered approaches to revitalization or appropriate redevelopment, greyfields sites can once again support the

local community and be a source of economic activity or can transform to serve the needs of the growing City while reinforcing the existing neighbourhood.

### A.3 Greyfields Inventory and Analysis

As required by section 16.4.1 of the **previous City of Brantford** Official Plan, an inventory was prepared of greyfield sites as the first step in the development of the Greyfields Revitalization Strategy and to “assist Council in evaluating the requirements for community improvements.”

The inventory was undertaken in 2018 to identify not only sites that meet one or more of the greyfield criteria described in Section A.2 of this Preamble, but also to identify sites “at risk” of becoming greyfields, and the areas in which identified greyfield and at-risk sites are concentrated. This task was accomplished by:

- Cataloguing prominent and/or already identified sites in Brantford (e.g., the former Canadian Tire lands on Colborne Street East) and building upon work already undertaken by the City;
- Screening out properties beyond the built boundary and concentrating on identified Intensification Corridors and the Urban Growth Centre;
- Screening out properties that are not zoned for commercial, mixed, institutional or light industrial uses, such as those zoned for residential and industrial use;
- Reviewing aerial imagery to assist in identifying underutilized lands and potential lot consolidations and redevelopment opportunities;
- Reviewing Google Streetview and other current imagery, supplemented by ground- truthing via a driving tour, to identify specific derelict and underutilized sites that meet the identified criteria; and
- Analyzing data provided by the City (e.g., vacancy history).

Following discussion and consultation with the City on the draft inventory, a decision was made to exclude the bulk of properties within the Urban Growth Centre as a separate Downtown CIP **is proposed** **has been adopted** to assist with downtown revitalization.

The outcome of the analysis of this inventory was the identification of five Target Greyfield Revitalization Areas, as illustrated in **Appendix A**. These are:

- Charing Cross Street: This commercial strip developed in the 1960s and has served as an important connection for vehicular traffic between King George Road and West Street. Existing development along Charing Cross is generally

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two storeys in height or lower. Houses with commercial uses are interspersed with strip plazas with parking along the street frontage;

- Colborne Street West: Located just across the Grand River from Downtown, this target area has an inconsistent streetscape that shifts from main street-style buildings to plazas with large parking lots. While there is some redevelopment occurring, this area is still dominated by auto-oriented uses and includes a variety of vacant and underutilized lots and buildings;
- Erie Avenue Gateway: Older main street-style commercial buildings front Erie Avenue as it transitions between the adjacent Lower Downtown and nearby industrial and residential areas. Erie Avenue is the historic and current southern gateway to both the Downtown and the City;
- Colborne Street East: Anchored by several large vacant and underutilized sites, including the former Canadian Tire lands, this target area represents the largest cluster of greyfields in the City. The road pattern in this area shifts with the traffic split at Dalhousie Street, with the buildings to the east of the split generally set further back from the street with larger parking lots, while to the west, are other auto-oriented commercial uses; and
- Colborne Street East Gateway: This target area is the historic gateway to Brantford from the east prior to the opening of Highway 403. The shift in travel patterns has left behind many motels and other auto-oriented uses alongside mature residential neighbourhoods, with several vacant lots interspersed.

While these Target Greyfield Revitalization Areas have many similarities, such as being located on major thoroughfares, they have been identified as clusters of greyfields and at-risk sites for varying criteria. While each will benefit from revitalization activities, the approaches to support these activities will need to consider the differing character and context of these areas.

### **A.4 Benefits of Greyfield Revitalization**

The redevelopment of greyfield sites is fundamental to the City achieving its intensification goals and thereby the achievement of the broader goals espoused in the Official Plan and Provincial policy. As part of the development of the Greyfields Revitalization Strategy, a review was undertaken of case studies and best practices, revealing the following potential benefits to undertaking this task.

- 1) With an increased focus on intensification, both in terms of commercial and residential (and mixed use) development, underutilized and/or vacant lands are a crucial source of lands within the built boundary.

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- 2) As greyfield sites are typically located along major thoroughfares, they generally offer superior access to transit and other transportation infrastructure compared to greenfield development sites.
- 3) Similarly, greyfield sites are often fully serviced and have an advantage over greenfield development in that they offer access to existing infrastructure, including water and wastewater, roads and utilities that may be used far more efficiently than by extending new infrastructure to newly built or developing communities. They thereby present the means to achieve an even broader range of policy goals, including the promotion of development that is not auto-oriented.
- 4) Housing affordability is another related policy goal that may be addressed, as greyfield sites present an opportunity for diversification of the City's housing stock through the creation of townhouses, multiple-unit rental housing, and affordable rental housing units. Further, new housing integrated into existing communities can utilize existing schools, community centres, and related facilities, decreasing the need for new services to be offered or facilities constructed.
- 5) Provincial and municipal policies place an emphasis on developing complete communities with a mix of uses. Much existing development is more homogenous and features a separation of uses between, for example, commercial and residential uses, with the expectation that use of an automobile allows for access between them. The introduction of residential uses as part of mixed use development into commercial areas that have declined as travel and market trends have shifted offers the opportunity both to revitalize those areas and to better support the existing communities.
- 6) Through leveraging investment in greyfield sites and properties, and through undertaking a Community Improvement Plan, the City can improve its tax base by attracting new businesses and residents and thereby increasing property assessment values. This is particularly significant given the negative impact greyfields sites can have on surrounding properties, and by corollary, the positive effects that can emanate from incremental redevelopment and revitalization of greyfield sites.
- 7) Whether discussing individual vacant sites, older buildings in need of rehabilitation or larger holes within the urban fabric that offer the potential for transformative projects, a properly targeted suite of programs can break down the barriers and level the playing field for desirable development which creates local improvements with City-wide impacts.

## A.5 Levelling the Playing Field for Greyfields

Greyfield sites are disadvantaged in attracting investment relative to unbuilt vacant lots and greenfield properties. Some of the challenges that must be addressed to facilitate and attract desirable revitalization and redevelopment include:

- 1) Land values on greyfield sites are generally higher than those for vacant land on the urban fringe, as greyfields are generally more centrally located and on highly travelled corridors.
- 2) Ownership is often fragmented which presents challenges for lot consolidation or comprehensive redevelopment.
- 3) Individual parcels may have limited access, irregular shapes or may be otherwise constrained.
- 4) Existing buildings, structures or surface features (e.g., old parking areas) add an extra layer of demolition costs before redevelopment can begin. It is also possible that some greyfield sites may be brownfield sites, former gas stations or dry cleaners for example, and thus may require study and potential rehabilitation of contaminated soil and/or groundwater.
- 5) Upgrades or replacement of infrastructure on site may be required to support reuse and intensification.
- 6) As they are located within existing communities and neighbourhoods, revitalization or redevelopment requires the need to appropriately address the surrounding context, both in terms of impacts on adjacent uses and through the need to engage members of the public to ensure the impact of new development is understood and accepted.
- 7) In comparison with greenfield development, the planning approval process for greyfields sites can be more onerous and can be perceived to have more “red tape.”
- 8) There are a broad range of unique circumstances and potential outcomes for greyfield sites, ranging from older buildings that would benefit from superficial improvements, to larger sites that can house transformative new development. Incentive programs need to be properly designed, flexible and targeted to address the specific needs of various landowners and tenants.
- 9) Though Brantford is subject to the PPS, 2024 the Growth Plan, and the intensification targets in the Official Plan, not every municipality can rely on surging growth to drive intensification. This is recognized by the updated Growth Plan PPS, 2024, which establishes reduced density and intensification targets



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based on an understanding that not every part of the region is expected to grow and intensify at the same rate. As a result, the revitalization goals must be in synchronization with the reality of market demands, and while the City may have ambitious long-term goals, the realities and appropriateness of various forms of redevelopment must be taken into account in order to maximize success. A pragmatic, well-informed and targeted implementation strategy can ensure that desirable revitalization is realized.

### **A.6 Municipal Budget for Greyfield Activities**

Funding for the financial incentive programs contained within the Greyfields Community Improvement Plan will be considered and approved on an annual basis by City Council. City Council will consider greyfield revitalization priorities annually in terms of which programs they fund and at what level of funding.

### **A.7 Greyfields Revitalization Strategy Public Engagement**

The development of the Greyfields Revitalization Strategy and CIP has been informed by a cooperative effort between the City of Brantford and the consulting team of WSP and urbanMetrics. Given the importance of the CIP to meet the needs of property owners and tenants who access the financial incentive programs, it was important to consult with the community, obtain their feedback and integrate it into the CIP.

An initial Public Information Centre (PIC) was scheduled for November 15, 2018, to receive feedback on the proposed Target Greyfield Revitalization Areas and potential incentive programs. Due to inclement weather, an abridged version of the PIC was conducted and a full meeting was rescheduled and held on January 31, 2019.

The meeting included information boards outlining the reasons for the development of the Strategy, maps of the proposed Target Greyfield Revitalization Areas and examples of other greyfield approaches and incentive programs, and offered opportunities to provide input and feedback on the materials presented. WSP also presented the work undertaken to date, the goals for the Greyfields Revitalization Strategy, and next steps.

Municipal planning staff also held an information meeting with the Brantford Home Builders' Association, on November 21, 2018, to collect stakeholder input. The Home Builders' Association sent a follow-up letter dated March 19, 2019, offering further input on the work undertaken to date.

A second PIC was held on October 23, 2019, which included a presentation of the recommended CIP to solicit feedback on the recommended Greyfields Revitalization Strategy including the financial incentive programs. The meeting also included

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information boards outlining the details of the financial incentive programs in the proposed CIP.

This feedback was all incorporated into the final draft of the Greyfields Community Improvement Plan which was the subject of a Statutory Public Meeting before City Council on February 9, 2021. Following direction from Brantford City Council on February 23, 2021, the draft CIP was revised to include options for further incentivizing affordable housing units. On May 13, 2021, the revised Draft Greyfields CIP (May 2021 version) was released for a final public and agency commenting period. The February 2020 and May 2021 versions of the Draft Greyfields Community Improvement Plan were also circulated to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for review and comment, as required by the Planning Act.

The Greyfield Community Improvement Plan was amended in March 2025 to include an additional year of funding for the adaptive re-use of historic properties with cultural heritage value into new uses as part of the Property Tax Increment- Based Grant. The draft was the subject of a Statutory Public Meeting before City Council on March 25, 2025, following the direction from Brantford City Council on November 26, 2024 from Report 2024-444. This amendment also addresses the changes brought forward from the province in regards to the new Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 which replaces both the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 and A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2019.

## **Part B. Greyfields Community Improvement Plan**

Part B of this Greyfields Revitalization Strategy constitutes the Greyfields Community Improvement Plan (“CIP”)

### **B.1 Community Improvement Project Area**

A Community Improvement Project Area is an area of the City defined by by-law, to which the Community Improvement Plan (“CIP”) applies. For convenience purposes, the boundary of the Greyfields Community Improvement Project Area is attached in Appendix B to this Greyfields Revitalization Strategy. Readers should always consult with the City to ensure that they are reviewing the Community Improvement Project Area as designated under the most recent by-law.

A Community Improvement Project Area must be defined and enacted by by-law for the programs, policies and strategies of this CIP to be activated, utilized and implemented. Council may amend the Community Improvement Project Area through the passing of a new Community Improvement Project Area By-law that would replace the current Community Improvement Project Area By-law.

Modifications to the Community Improvement Project Area could occur due to a number of circumstances including, but not limited to:

- A desire by Council to focus the Community Improvement Plan on a smaller area, to concentrate revitalization activities and their benefits, and/or to focus limited implementation resources; or
- To reflect a change in the built boundary or municipal boundaries of the City of Brantford.

Council may dissolve the Community Improvement Project Area by by-law should they determine that the objectives of the Plan have been achieved. Dissolving the Community Improvement Project Area will render the Plan inoperable.

### **B.2 Vision and Goals**

The Greyfields CIP is intended to facilitate improvements to greyfields within the built boundary of the City, and more specifically within the individual Target Greyfield Revitalization Areas. The following subsections provide both a general vision for greyfield revitalization in Brantford as well as goals specific to each of the Target Greyfield Revitalization Areas, against which the City and revitalization proponents can benchmark the beneficial impact of proposed projects.

## **B.2.1 The Vision for Greyfields Revitalization in Brantford**

The primary goal of the Greyfields CIP is to facilitate the improvement and revitalization of existing commercial greyfield properties or their transformation into intensification corridor-appropriate, mixed use developments. Achieving this goal is the first step in achieving a broader, long-term vision for greyfields in the City of Brantford.

The long-term vision for greyfields in the City of Brantford has two key components reflecting the two main opportunities for greyfield revitalization. These are:

- The vision for larger greyfield sites with greater redevelopment potential is that they will be redeveloped as intensified, mixed-use developments. These transformative projects will replace the obsolete commercial buildings or vacant lots with a mix of contemporary at-grade commercial uses that are integrated into new mixed-use buildings with residential or non-residential uses above, and include a variety of types and tenures of residential uses, including affordable units. These sites will play a new role in their neighbourhoods, supporting existing or new commercial uses with new residents and employees, and shift the character of these areas towards being complete communities with easy local access to a greater range of commercial amenities, in a more walkable and transit-supportive environment.
- The vision for former greyfield sites with limited redevelopment potential is that they will be revitalized as attractive, thriving commercial properties that attract both local pedestrians and commerce, while continuing their role in serving the travelling public as commercial destinations. These sites will have refreshed façades, improved quality and quantity of landscaping and be more welcoming to and accommodating of pedestrian connectivity. In those instances where the built form of these greyfields was conducive to mixed uses, the residential or non-residential components of these buildings will be improved to meet contemporary needs and safety requirements.

An additional goal of the Greyfields CIP is to facilitate the adaptive reuse of historic properties with cultural heritage value. These properties are also at risk of becoming underutilized, and with that, irreversible loss to community history. The achievement of this goal will be handled predominantly through transformative projects on sites with greater redevelopment potential. Acknowledging that adaptive reuse projects are bespoke and deal with site-specific factors, the City may take a more flexible approach when providing assistance and vary program requirements from the “baseline” established for non-historic revitalization projects.

## City of Brantford Greyfields Community Improvement Plan

From the adoption of this CIP, these long-term visions will start to be achieved in an incremental manner as individual greyfield revitalization projects are completed. These early projects will shift perceptions about the opportunities represented by greyfield sites, and catalyze additional revitalization projects.

In totality, the revitalization initiatives will work towards achieving a number of local and Citywide objectives, including maintaining vibrant commercial uses, creating new forms and tenures of housing, promoting walkability and transit mobility and limiting the need for new infrastructure while supporting mixed use intensification, diversifying the City's revenue base, while infusing new vitality and sense of place into the City's Intensification Corridors, its historic neighbourhoods and traditional commercial communities.

### **B.2.2 Target Greyfield Revitalization Area Goals**

While there are greyfield sites **and historical properties** located throughout Brantford, special attention is required to promote revitalization of the five Target Greyfield Revitalization Areas. Mapped in Appendix A, each of these areas has its own unique context and characteristics, however, the primary goals for these areas can be grouped reflecting the major opportunities for greyfield revitalization as described in the two vision statements, with some area-specific secondary goals based on their unique character.

Given the different characteristics of the Colborne Street West and Colborne Street East Target Greyfield Revitalization Areas, there are two primary goals for these areas. These are both to revitalize the existing commercial community and better integrate these uses into their adjacent communities, and for the larger greyfield sites to be redeveloped as intensified, mixed use developments, integrated into the local community. The secondary goals for these areas are:

- Colborne Street West: To create a more pedestrian-friendly character and built form to reinforce this area as a livable, mixed use node, which is recognized as having a unique and distinct character that capitalizes on its proximity to the west bank of the Grand River.
- Colborne Street East: To redevelop the large, vacant and under-utilized greyfields to serve as the focal points for a revitalized community of intensified, mixed use developments, while supporting the new and existing commercial uses through an increased local population. While locally walkable, these redevelopment nodes will be transit supportive and will include new amenities to serve the existing and new residents.

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Building upon the vision for former greyfield sites that have more limited redevelopment potential, the primary goal for the Charing Cross Street, the Erie Avenue Gateway, and the Colborne Street East Gateway Target Areas is to revitalize the existing commercial community and better integrate these uses into their adjacent communities. The secondary goals for these areas are:

- Charing Cross Street: To create a more pedestrian-friendly, livable, green and less automobile-oriented commercial street frontage, occupied by well-maintained properties used by locals and the travelling public.
- Erie Avenue Gateway: To revitalize the main street-style buildings on Erie Avenue to support pedestrian-friendly local community commercial uses. This revitalized corridor will highlight the historic charm of Erie Avenue and act as a gateway to future redevelopment in the adjacent Lower Downtown, activating this corridor and reintegrating these historically distinct areas.
- Colborne Street East Gateway: To enhance the commercial community by improving the commercial properties and their street frontages, and improving the amenities for local residents while also recognizing that this corridor maintains its role as a gateway to the City and caters to the travelling public from outside the City.

### B.3 Financial Incentive Programs

The following three subsections describe the financial incentive programs offered through the Greyfields Community Improvement Plan. These programs, summarized in Table 1, support the redevelopment or rehabilitation of greyfield sites (and in certain cases, historic properties with cultural heritage value) through private sector greyfield revitalization initiatives. These incentives are a key tool to stimulate reinvestment in greyfield sites and achieve the vision and goals described in Section B.2 of this CIP and in the City of Brantford Official Plan. Eligibility for some of the programs is tied to the varying needs of the Target Greyfield Revitalization Areas, and is ; exact eligibility criteria are outlined in the details of each program. Table 1 summarizes the various programs, the full eligibility criteria of which details are provided in Sections B.3.1, B.3.2, B.3.3 and B.3.4. A Glossary of Terms is attached as Appendix C to assist in interpreting this Plan.

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Table 1 - Summary of Greyfield CIP Grant Programs

Program	Purpose	Eligibility	Maximum Grant
<p>Property Tax Increment-Based Grant (B.3.2)</p>	<p>To promote transformative redevelopment of greyfield properties that will result in an increase in the assessed value of these properties, and to incentivize mixed use, multi-storey infill and redevelopment where these uses are contemplated by the Official Plan.</p> <p>This program may also be used to facilitate the adaptive reuse of historic properties with cultural heritage value into new uses. When used for this purpose, projects may be mixed-use or single-use (e.g. residential-only, or commercial-only) but must still result in an increase in the assessed value of the property.</p>	<p>Properties classified as greyfields within the Community Improvement Project Area may be eligible at the discretion of City Council, subject to criteria in Section B.3.2.</p>	<p>The grant is equivalent to up to 80% of the increase in municipal property taxes resulting from the revitalization project in post-redevelopment years 1 to 5, 60% in years 6 and 7, 40% in year 8, and 20% in years 9 and 10. Depending on the provision of affordable housing units, the grant may be enhanced up to 100% of the increase in municipal property taxes in post-redevelopment years 1 to 10, as outlined in Table 2 in Section B.3.2.</p> <p>Where the project includes adaptive reuse of a historic property with cultural heritage value, an additional year of funding (to 11 years total) is also possible, as outlined in B.3.2.</p>

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Program	Purpose	Eligibility	Maximum Grant
Commercial Façade, Landscaping and Connectivity Improvement Grant (B.3.3)	To support the rehabilitation and improvement of existing commercial or mixed use properties and support their ongoing use by improving their aesthetic appeal and function.	Must be located in a Target Greyfield Revitalization Area, be commercially zoned and have commercial or mixed use buildings with commercial uses at grade.	Up to \$15,000 or 50% of the total eligible costs, whichever is less.
Mixed Use Building Improvement Grant (B.3.4)	To support the conversion of: existing commercial or vacant upper-storey space into a residential, office or other permitted use that constitutes mixed use; and/or the conversion of at-grade residential units in commercial buildings back to commercial use; or conversion of part of a dwelling to a commercial use creating a mixed use building. This will help achieve the maintenance and active use of main street-style, multi-storey buildings as well as commercially zoned lands. Mixed use is defined in Appendix C to the CIP.	Must be located in a Target Greyfield Revitalization Area. Any existing commercial building with upper-storey space is eligible for the conversion to a mixed use building with at-grade commercial uses and upper-storey residential, office or other permitted use that constitutes mixed use. Similarly, any existing commercial building with at-grade residential units is eligible for the conversion of this space back to commercial uses.  Lastly, any commercially zoned dwelling is eligible for conversion of part of the dwelling to a commercial use to	The maximum grant shall be the lesser of \$10,000 per commercial or residential unit or 50% of eligible costs, up to a maximum of the lesser of \$30,000 or 50% of eligible costs for the entire project on one lot.



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Program	Purpose	Eligibility	Maximum Grant
		create a mixed use building.	

**B.3.1 General Eligibility Criteria**

To be considered eligible for any of the three grant programs outlined in this CIP, all proposed improvements shall be in accordance with the following general eligibility criteria:

**1. Located in the Community Improvement Project Area.**

The subject property shall be located within the current Community Improvement Project Area, as confirmed by the City. For convenience purposes, the Community Improvement Project Area is attached to this CIP as Appendix B.

**2. No municipal arrears.**

The subject lot(s) shall not have any municipal fee, development charges or property tax arrears at the time of application and throughout the duration of the grant commitment.

**3. Total eligible costs less than \$10,000 will not be eligible.**

The City will not accept, process or approve an application where the total eligible costs are less than \$10,000.

**4. Consistency with the Plan’s intent.**

Proposed projects shall generally contribute to and be consistent with achieving the vision and guiding principles as outlined in Section B.2 of this Plan.

**5. Combination of grant programs.**

Combination of the Commercial Façade, Landscape and Connectivity Grant with the Mixed Use Building Improvement Grant is permitted, provided that all other eligibility requirements are met. The Property Tax Increment-Based Grant shall not be combined with any other program in this CIP.

**6. Eligible types of applicants.**

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Eligible applicants shall include owners and tenants. Where a tenant is an applicant, the owner shall provide written consent. In these cases, the Financial Incentive Program Agreement shall be signed by both the tenant and the owner. Notwithstanding this provision, only the owner shall be permitted to apply for a Property Tax Increment- Based Grant.

### **7. Agreements are non-transferable.**

The signed Financial Incentive Program Agreement and related grants are non-transferable.

### **8. Project must represent an improvement.**

Proposed projects must represent an improvement over existing conditions, and not simply represent a typical lifecycle replacement of materials, paving or structures. Maintenance-related works and repairs are not eligible. The works must represent a positive change over the existing conditions, subject to the sole discretion of the City. The Urban Design Manual and any other urban design guidelines that the City may develop or adopt will be used to inform the design and determination of whether the proposed project represents an improvement over the existing condition. Additionally, where an existing property is in a good state of repair, the City shall have discretion to refuse an application that does not result in a significant enhancement to the property.

### **9. Compliance with Official Plan, Zoning, etc.**

Existing and proposed land uses, buildings and structures shall be in conformity with the Official Plan, Zoning By-law, and any other applicable municipal by-laws. Any proposed works shall also be subject to any required Building Permit, or other required permits or approvals from other approval authorities.

Notwithstanding this requirement, it is recognized that this Plan contemplates grants for projects that may require planning or building approvals, meaning that the proposed works may not fully comply with the current applicable requirements. In these cases, and at the City's sole discretion, the applicant shall be required to meet or formally pre-consult with the City in advance of submitting an application for a grant. The City may accept an application for incentives prior to the completion of any planning or building approvals. However, the City shall only approve an application for a financial incentive when any applicable planning approvals are finalized, inclusive of any applicable appeal period.

### **10. Completed works to be consistent with the approved application.**

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Where a project has been approved for grant funding, the completed works shall be consistent with the stated description and supporting materials as included in the grant application and as approved by the City. This requirement and project description shall be set forth in the Financial Incentive Program Agreement.

Supporting materials required by the City may include:

- Drawings/elevations/plans/sketches/renderings of the planned improvements to compare against before and after photographs;
- Multiple itemized quotes from contractors/suppliers to compare against the final invoice from the selected contractor/supplier
- Proof of payment of contractors/suppliers;
- Occupancy permits; or
- Any other information needed to confirm completion of the project in accordance with the approved application and the Financial Incentive Program Agreement.

The City will also undertake a site visit to confirm compliance with this requirement. Where the completed works are not consistent with the stated description, the applicant may be considered to have defaulted on the requirements of the agreement, and the City, at its sole discretion, may opt not to remit payment for the grant in accordance with the terms of the Financial Incentive Program Agreement.

### **11. Eligibility where there is a history of CIP funding.**

The City shall only accept an application for financial incentives under this Plan where there is no history of funding from this Plan or from another CIP. However, a site that has previously received funding from the Brownfield Sites Community Improvement Plan may be eligible for funding under this CIP provided there is no duplication of eligible costs.

Should it be determined that a site subject to an application under the Greyfields CIP is ultimately determined to be a brownfield site, if funding is sought for remediation expenses, an application under the Brownfield Sites CIP will be required. Remediation expenses are not eligible for reimbursement under the Greyfields CIP.

### **12. No duplication of eligible project costs.**

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In no case shall eligible project costs be counted more than once in any application, including where the applicant has applied for multiple grant programs.

### **13. Eligibility where improvement works have been initiated prior to approval.**

Improvement works should be initiated after approval of a grant application and execution of the Financial Incentive Program Agreement. However, at the City's sole discretion, improvement works that have been initiated prior to the approval of an application and/or the execution of the Financial Incentive Program Agreement may be considered eligible and these expenses may be included in the calculation of the maximum grant. Projects completed in their entirety prior to approval of an application are not eligible for the grant program

### **14. Total maximum grant.**

In no case shall the total amount of the approved grant exceed 50% of the eligible costs, except in the case of the Property Tax Increment-Based Grant.

### **15. Grants subject to funding availability.**

Availability of grants is subject to funding availability. Applicants should confirm the current availability of funding with the City prior to making an application.

### **16. Government not eligible.**

No government or government agency shall be eligible to apply for any grant under this Plan. The intent of this plan is to focus incentives on private property owners and tenants.

## **B.3.2 Property Tax Increment-Based Grant Program**

### **B.3.2.1 Program Purpose and Objective**

The purpose of the Property Tax Increment-Based Grant is to promote major, transformative redevelopment of greyfield properties that will result in an increase in the assessed value of these properties. This program intends to incentivize mixed use, multi-storey infill and redevelopment where these uses are contemplated by the Official Plan or where there is an approved Official Plan Amendment, and where it may be considered transformative change for a greyfield site within the context of this CIP. The Property Tax Increment-Based Grant functions as a stand-alone grant, and cannot be combined with

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any other grant program of this CIP, as stated in the general eligibility criteria under Section B.3.1.

The primary objective of the Property Tax Increment-Based Grant is to promote major redevelopment and reinvestment that will take significant steps towards achieving the City's intensification objectives and the vision of the CIP. Another objective is to encourage the provision of affordable housing units. Additional objectives are to encourage the provision of affordable housing units, and to encourage the adaptive reuse of properties with cultural heritage value in redevelopment projects.

The City may consider the application of this program anywhere in the Community Improvement Project Area, subject to the eligibility criteria listed below. On top of its potential applicability across the Community Improvement Project Area, this program is intended to play a key role in the improvement of the Colborne Street West and Colborne Street East Target Greyfield Revitalization Areas.

### **B.3.2.2 Eligible Costs**

Redevelopment of a property for intensified mixed uses (as defined in this Plan) including demolition, substantial alteration of an existing building/structure or site, site preparation/planning and construction.

Costs that may be counted towards the calculation of a potential grant value include relevant costs related to the redevelopment of a property for intensified standalone residential uses or mixed uses (as defined in this Plan) including demolition, substantial alteration of an existing building/structure or site, site preparation/planning and construction. This includes costs for:

- materials;
- labour; and
- fees related to the professional services that are necessary for the applicant to prepare and submit a complete grant application (e.g., an architect, engineer or land use planner), up to a maximum of 15% of the total eligible costs. For greater clarity, projects which adaptively reuse a property with cultural heritage value can include fees related to heritage consultants as an eligible cost.

**B.3.2.3 Three Streams of Grants**

Grants under the program will be provided through one of three streams applicable to the type of proposed project:

- 1) Revitalization Project – a redevelopment that results in an increase in the assessed value of a subject property and that includes the creation of residential units;
- 2) Affordable Housing Revitalization Project – Tier 1 – a Revitalization Project that includes a minimum of 20% of Affordable Housing rental units, as defined in this Plan, which have a rent charge for each unit size which is equal to or less than 80% of the most recently released Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) average market rent (AMR) for the City of Brantford and County of Brant for that unit size, or 80% of an alternate average market rent approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. The Affordable Housing rental units must be governed by a Municipal Housing Facilities Agreement with the City of Brantford, to ensure the units continue to be maintained as affordable for a minimum of 20 years, and must be participating in a federal and/or provincial housing program; or
- 3) Affordable Housing Revitalization Project – Tier 2 – a Revitalization Project that includes:
  - a) a minimum of 10% of Affordable Housing rental units, as defined in this Plan, which have a rent charge for each unit size which is equal to or less than 80% of the most recently released CMHC AMR for the City of Brantford and County of Brant for that unit size, or 80% of an alternate average market rent approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing; and
  - b) a minimum of 10% of Affordable Housing rental units, as defined in this Plan, which have a rent charge for each unit size which is equal to or less than 60% of the CMHC AMR for the City of Brantford and County of Brant for that unit size, or 60% of an alternate average market rent approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

The Affordable Housing rental units must be governed by a Municipal Housing Facilities Agreement with the City of Brantford, to ensure the units continue to be maintained as affordable for a minimum of 20 years, and must be participating in a federal and/or provincial housing program.

Those projects which include the adaptive reuse of a property with cultural heritage value will be reviewed through the streams above, with additional incentives as detailed in subsection B.3.2.4.

**B.3.2.4 Maximum Grant**

The Property Tax Increment-Based Grant shall be calculated from the increase in municipal property taxes resulting from the improvement project. The amount of the grant shall be calculated in the first year post-redevelopment based on the current (pre-redevelopment) tax assessment, and the payment schedule shall be outlined in the Financial Incentive Program Agreement. The program will expire in accordance with the terms of the Financial Incentive Program Agreement, which shall be at the sole discretion of the City. The maximum grant value for Revitalization Projects, Affordable Housing Revitalization Projects – Tier 1, and Affordable Housing Revitalization Projects – Tier 2 is identified in Table 2. The maximum grant value shall not exceed eligible costs.

Table 2 - Summary of Property Tax Increment-Based Grant Incentive for properties with and without cultural heritage value.

	<b>Revitalization Projects</b>	<b>Affordable Housing Revitalization Projects – Tier 1</b>	<b>Affordable Housing Revitalization Projects – Tier 2</b>
Project without adaptive re-use of a property with cultural heritage value	The grant is equivalent to up to: 80% of the increase in municipal property taxes in years 1 to 5, 60% in years 6 and 7, 40% in year 8, and 20% in years 9 and 10.	The grant is equivalent to up to: 90% of the increase in municipal property taxes in years 1 to 5, 70% in years 6 and 7, 50% in year 8, and 30% in years 9 and 10.	The grant is equivalent to up to 100% of the increase in municipal property taxes in years 1 to 10.
Project with the adaptive reuse of a	The grant is equivalent to up to:	The grant is equivalent to up to:	The grant is equivalent to up to 100% of the increase in municipal property

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property of cultural heritage value	80% of the increase in municipal property taxes in years 1 to 6, 60% in years 7 and 8, 40% in year 9, and 20% in years 10 and 11.	90% of the increase in municipal property taxes in years 1 to 6, 70% in years 7 and 8, 50% in year 9, and 30% in years 10 and 11.	taxes in years 1 to 11.
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**B.3.2.5 Grant Payment**

The duration and payment of the grant shall be set out in the Financial Incentive Program Agreement on a case-by-case basis, at the sole discretion of the City and in accordance with the Maximum Grant policies noted above. This grant will only be paid upon full payment of taxes.

Where a project adaptively reuses a property with cultural heritage value, the subject property must be designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act* prior to the issuance of the first payment.

**B.3.2.6 Property Tax Increment-Based Grant Eligibility Criteria**

1) Eligible properties and projects must:

A. Be either:

i. A former or existing commercial or mixed use building that is defined as a greyfield in the local context by meeting at least one of the following criteria:

1. The site and/or building are vacant or there are clear signs that the building is at risk of becoming vacant (e.g., the majority of the space appears to be unoccupied or there is a history of vacancy); or
2. The site exhibits some degree of neglect, ranging from derelict/abandoned to a relative lack of regular maintenance and landscaping, or there is a reason to believe the building is in a poor state of repair; or



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3. The site is characterized by a significant amount of vacant space or parking areas that are not well utilized; **or**

**ii. A property with cultural heritage value that can be, or is already, designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.**

B. Have final approval for any planning approvals required to implement the proposed redevelopment (e.g., official plan amendment, zoning by-law amendment, minor variance, etc.);

C. Have project scope aligned with the eligible costs;

D. Result in an increased assessed value for the property; and

E. Represent a transformative change that achieves the intent of the City's intensification and mixed use objectives while maintaining appropriate land use and built form relationships to existing adjacent uses, in the opinion of the City. **Projects involving adaptive reuse of a property with cultural heritage value may be accepted even if the project is for a single use (i.e. all commercial, or all residential).**

2) **General Eligibility Criteria:** The general eligibility criteria of Section B.3.1 shall apply.

3) **Combination with Other Grant Programs:** This program shall not be combined with any other grant program in this CIP.

4) **Design Criteria:** Proposed projects shall be consistent with the Urban Design Manual and any other urban design guideline that the City may develop or adopt.

**5) Retention of cultural heritage value and heritage attributes:** In addition to other eligibility criteria, and for greater clarity, where a project includes the adaptive reuse of a building with cultural heritage value and the project has been approved for grant funding, the completed works shall not result in a substantial loss of cultural heritage value. It is understood that some alteration and removal of heritage attributes may be necessary to facilitate the project, but on conclusion the project must maintain sufficient cultural heritage value to be designated pursuant to the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

### **B.3.3 Commercial Façade, Landscaping and Connectivity Improvement Grant**

#### **B.3.3.1 Program Purpose and Objective**

The purpose of the Commercial Façade, Landscaping and Connectivity Improvement Grant is to support the rehabilitation and improvement of existing commercial or mixed use properties along Intensification Corridors, or in historic neighbourhoods and traditional commercial communities where the opportunity for wholesale redevelopment and intensification is limited either by site constraints or market conditions. The intent of this grant is to support the ongoing use of these properties for commercial or mixed use purposes by improving their aesthetic appeal and site function, recognizing that their historic building and site designs may place these properties at a disadvantage relative to more contemporary developments. More specifically, this program is intended to support the improvement of:

- Commercial façades that front upon a public right-of-way;
- Private properties' frontages along the public right-of-way including hard landscaping, such as permanent planters, and site amenities available for public or private use. These improvements will create a more attractive streetscape, improve pedestrian comfort, and provide new amenities to add vitality and interest, but will not extend into the municipal right-of-way; and
- Pedestrian connectivity into or through sites where the existing built form caters primarily to automobiles to enhance walkability and barrier free access to, from and between existing uses and destinations

#### **B.3.3.2 Eligible Costs**

Eligible costs under this program are set out below, and depend on the nature of the work

- 1) Commercial Façade Improvements
  - a. Accessibility improvements such as installations of ramps or improvement of accessible doorways;
  - b. Repair, replacement, restoration and/or enhancement of existing façade materials, such as masonry, brickwork, siding, stucco and plaster;

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- c. Improvements to architectural detailing including cornices, permanent signage, entryway articulation, exterior façade-facing lighting, and similar improvements that add to the architectural interest of the façade; and
- d. Installation of new awnings and canopies provided as part of the storefront.

### 2) Landscaping Improvements

- a. Landscaping improvements within the front yard or exterior side yard, or between a parking area and the public sidewalk, which in the City's opinion represents a significant positive aesthetic improvement for the site and the streetscape, including:
  - i. Permanent elements and hardware associated with the landscape design, such as permanent planters and lighting, ornamental fencing or other decorative hard landscape elements. Privacy fences, as well as soft landscaping (e.g., trees, flowers, and other plantings) are not eligible;
  - ii. Works related to grading and site preparation for a landscape design;
  - iii. Publicly accessible seating areas; and
  - iv. Lighting used to improve publicly accessible seating areas.
- b. The improvement or addition of an outdoor patio (i.e., seating area) used in association with a restaurant, provided that:
  - i. The outdoor patio is located in the front yard or an exterior side yard; and
  - ii. The eligible costs will only relate to permanent elements of the outdoor patio, such as fencing, gateways, lighting, paving and curbing, hard landscaping elements and any seating elements that are permanently installed.
- c. The installation of new bicycle parking, provided that:

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- i. The bicycle parking is publicly accessible, in a well-lit, hard surfaced area in proximity to the main entrance of the building and located within the front yard or exterior side yard; and
- ii. The eligible costs will only relate to permanent elements of the bicycle parking, such as bicycle racks, bicycle parking surface, security lighting, bicycle shelter, permanent bicycle parking signage, or a publicly accessible bicycle repair station.

### 3) Public Realm-to-Private Property Pedestrian Connectivity Improvements

- a. Walkways to better connect the public right-of-way sidewalk to the main building entrance(s);
- b. Lighting used to improve publicly accessible walkways;
- c. Building entryway leveling or widening; and
- d. Improved barrier-free connectivity between the sidewalk and the building entrance including ramps, crosswalks, and tactile devices.

#### **B.3.3.3 Maximum Grant**

The maximum grant for the Commercial Façade, Landscaping and Connectivity Improvements Grant is \$15,000 or 50% of the total eligible costs, whichever is less. Only the portions of the façade and hard landscaping that is subject to the improvements and that faces a public right-of-way will be included in the calculation of maximum grant value. The breakdown of the grant elements will be at the discretion of the City based on project needs. An example of a maximum \$15,000 grant breakdown is \$7,500 for façade, \$5,000 for landscaping and \$2,500 for connectivity improvement projects.

#### **B.3.3.4 Grant Payment**

The grant shall be paid as a one-time amount upon completion of construction, to the satisfaction of the City and in accordance with the Financial Incentive Program Agreement

#### **B.3.3.5 Commercial Façade, Landscaping and Connectivity Improvement Grant Eligibility Criteria**

- 1) Eligible Greyfield Properties:

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- a. Only properties that are within the Target Greyfield Revitalization Areas are eligible. Properties must be commercially zoned. Commercial buildings with ground-floor residential uses and residential buildings on commercially zoned properties are not eligible.
  - b. Façades that are in a state of good repair, as determined by the City, may not be eligible for a grant related to façade improvements.
  - c. Only façades and hard landscaping which face a public right-of-way are eligible.
  - d. Only improvements related to publicly visible portions of the façade (i.e., improvements within the front yard or exterior side yard) are eligible.
  - e. The City shall determine whether an applicant will be required to complete façade, landscaping and connectivity improvements as part of a single improvement project. This determination will consider whether all improvements are collectively required to significantly benefit the aesthetics and function of the property.
  - f. Only buildings and sites that were developed prior to adoption of the Greyfields Community Improvement Plan are eligible. New developments are not eligible.
- 2) General Eligibility Criteria: The general eligibility criteria of Section B.3.1 shall apply.
  - 3) Design Criteria: The Urban Design Manual and any urban design guideline that the City may develop or adopt will be used to inform the design and redesign of façades, landscaping and connectivity improvements.

### **B.3.4 Mixed-Use Building Improvement Grant**

#### **B.3.4.1 Program Purpose and Objective**

The purpose of the Mixed Use Building Improvement Grant is to support the conversion of:

- 1) Existing commercial or vacant upper-storey space into a residential, office or other permitted use that constitutes mixed use;

## City of Brantford Greyfields Community Improvement Plan

- 2) Ground-floor residential uses in commercial buildings back to commercial uses; and
- 3) Any commercially zoned dwelling to a mixed use building

This grant is particularly targeted to support the maintenance and active use of main street- style, multi-storey buildings within the Target Greyfield Revitalization Areas. While limited in number in the Target Greyfield Revitalization Areas, these buildings represent a unique character resource which should ideally be maintained in active use.

The intent of the grant is to incentivize interior renovations to existing buildings that are required for Building Code, Fire Code or Property Standards By-law compliance to ensure the safety and usability of these buildings. This grant may be combined with the Commercial Façade, Landscaping and Connectivity Improvement Grant (Section B.3.2), to assist with aesthetic improvements to the exterior of the building and site

### **B.3.4.2 Eligible Costs**

- 1) Works related to the conversion: of an upper-storey commercial or vacant use to a mixed use building, with at-grade commercial uses and upper-storey residential, office or other use that constitutes mixed use; and/or works related to the conversion of ground-floor residential uses back to commercial uses; or works related to the conversion of part of a commercially zoned residential dwelling to a mixed use building. The specific eligible works include:
  - a. Accessibility improvements such as installations of ramps or improvement of accessible doorways;
  - b. Installation or upgrades to fire or noise protection elements or materials (e.g., signage, alarms, sprinklers or fire resistance/retardant materials, sound deadening materials) as may be required to bring the proposed use into compliance with the Ontario Building Code, Property Standards By-law and/or the Fire Code;
  - c. Installation of ventilation or HVAC requirements as may be required for the new use to be brought into compliance with the Ontario Building Code, Property Standards By-law and/or the Fire Code; and

## City of Brantford Greyfields Community Improvement Plan

- d. Upgrades to electrical, plumbing, structural or other similar required improvements to bring the building space into compliance with the Ontario Building Code, Property Standards By-law and/or the Fire Code.

### 2) For clarity, the following works are not eligible:

- a. Works that do not relate to bringing the proposed use into compliance with the Ontario Building Code, Property Standards By-law and/or the Fire Code;
- b. Non-permanent or moveable aspects used by the business, such as appliances, furnishings, signage and light fixtures
- c. Decorative and finishing elements and materials, including painting, finished flooring surfaces, shelving, counters/bar surfaces, drywall or similar elements;
- d. Replacement or repair of roof shingles; and
- e. Lifecycle replacements of any aged building components as would normally be required to be replaced (improvements are to represent an upgrade to meet a higher standard of the Ontario Building Code, or to meet a standard of the Ontario Building Code that was previously not applicable).

#### **B.3.4.3 Maximum Grant**

The maximum grant shall be the lesser of \$10,000 per commercial or residential unit or 50% of eligible costs, up to a maximum of the lesser of \$30,000 or 50% of eligible costs for the entire project on one lot

#### **B.3.4.4 Grant Payment**

The grant shall be paid as a one-time amount upon completion of construction, and clearance of any subsequent required City inspections, to the satisfaction of the City and in accordance with the Financial Incentive Program Agreement.

#### **B.3.4.5 Commercial Façade, Landscaping and Connectivity Improvement Grant Eligibility Criteria**

- 1) Eligible Properties and Buildings:

## City of Brantford Greyfields Community Improvement Plan

- a. Only properties within the Target Greyfield Revitalization Areas are eligible, and only where mixed use, as defined in Appendix C to the CIP, is proposed.
  - b. Any existing building with upper-storey space is eligible for the conversion to a mixed use building, with at-grade commercial uses and upper-storey residential, office or other permitted use that constitutes mixed use.
  - c. Any existing commercial building with ground-floor residential uses is eligible for conversion back to commercial uses.
  - d. Any commercially zoned residential dwelling is eligible for conversion of part of the residential space to commercial space to create a mixed use building.
- 2) General Eligibility Criteria: The general eligibility criteria of Section B.3.1 shall apply.
- 3) Design Criteria: Generally, the eligible costs of this program will impact the interior of the building, or structural elements which are not visible. However, applicants are encouraged to package internal building works with external building and site works to help contribute to the aesthetic improvement of the streetscape. Applicants are encouraged to apply separately for the Commercial Façade, Landscaping and Connectivity Improvement grant as may be applicable. The Urban Design Manual and any other urban design guidelines that the City may develop or adopt will be used to inform design and redesign of facades, landscaping and connectivity improvements.



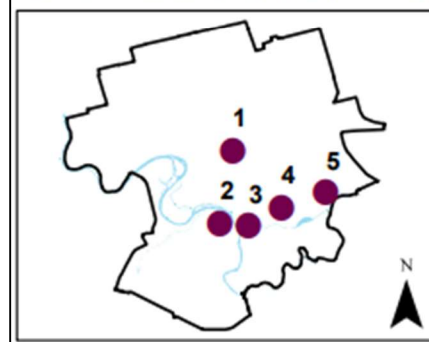
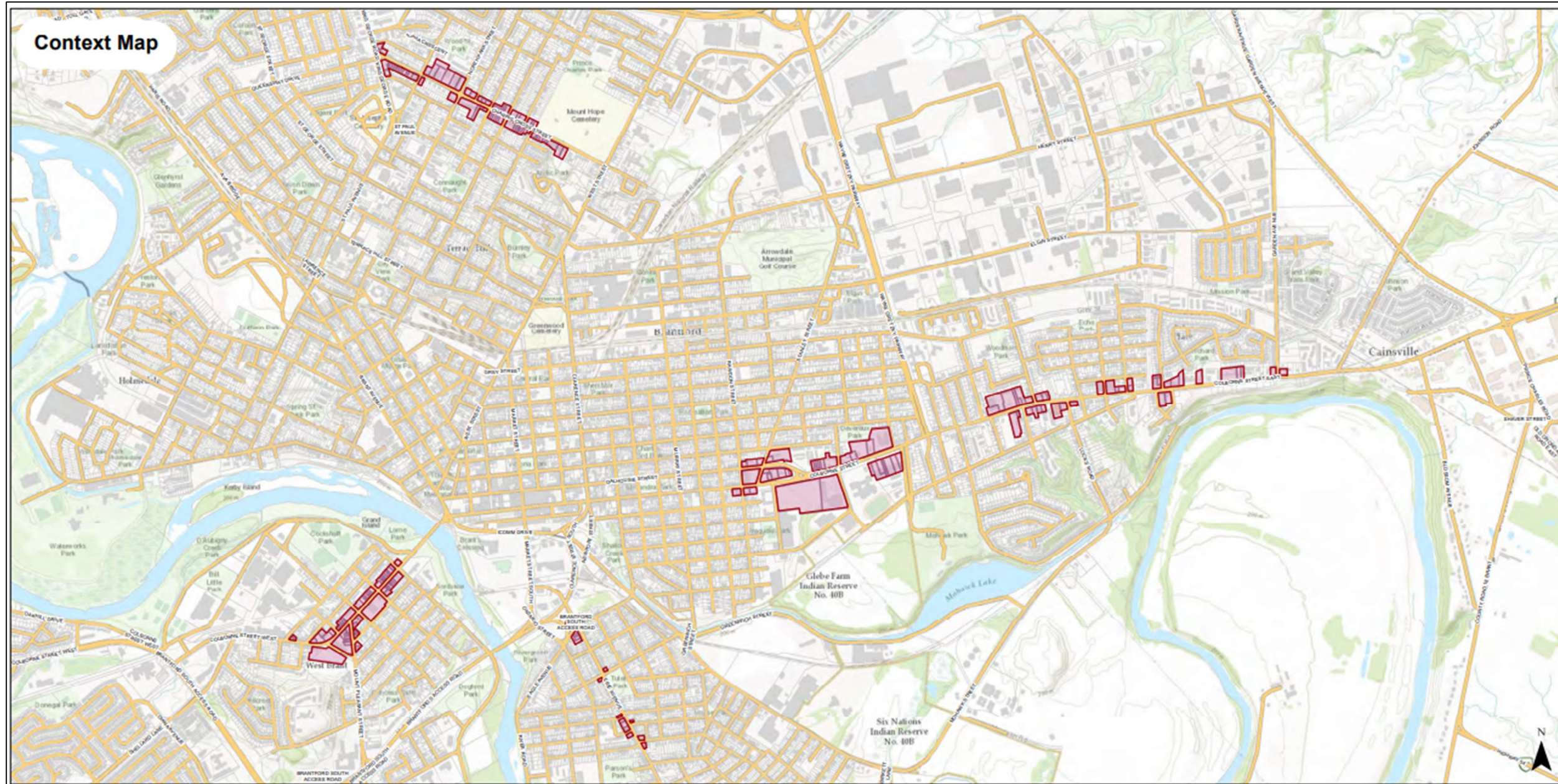
# Appendix A – Target Greyfield Revitalization Areas



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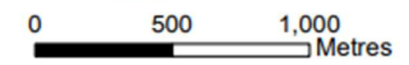


# Context Map



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**BRANTFORD**

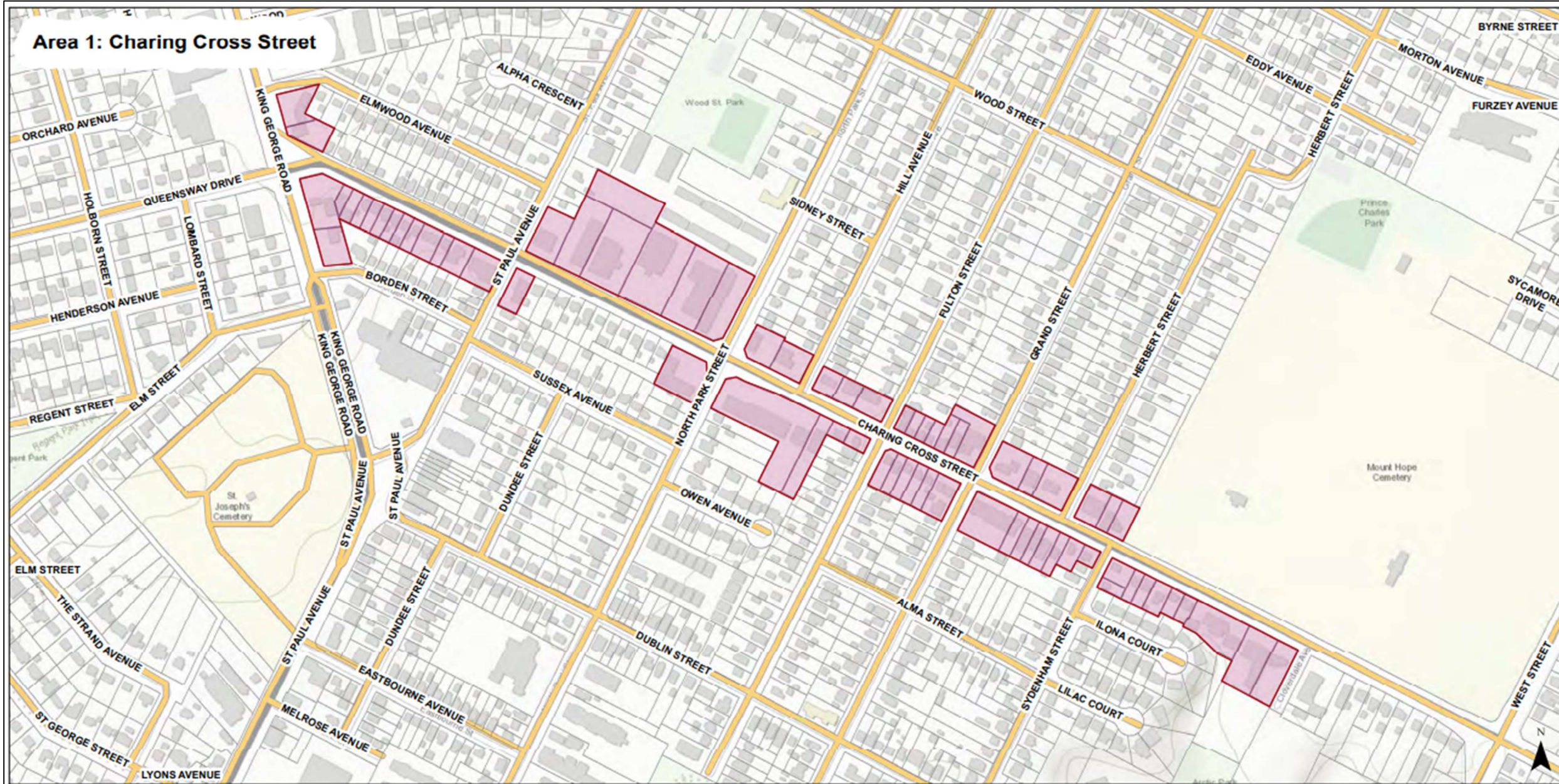
Target Greyfield Revitalization Area




Source Layer Credits: Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, Swiremap, Intermap, P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GEBCO, IGN, Kaiser NL, CNR/Survey, Esri, Swire, NPS, Esri, China (Hong Kong), (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

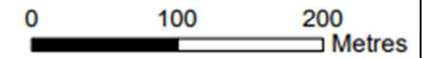


Area 1: Charing Cross Street



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**BRANTFORD**

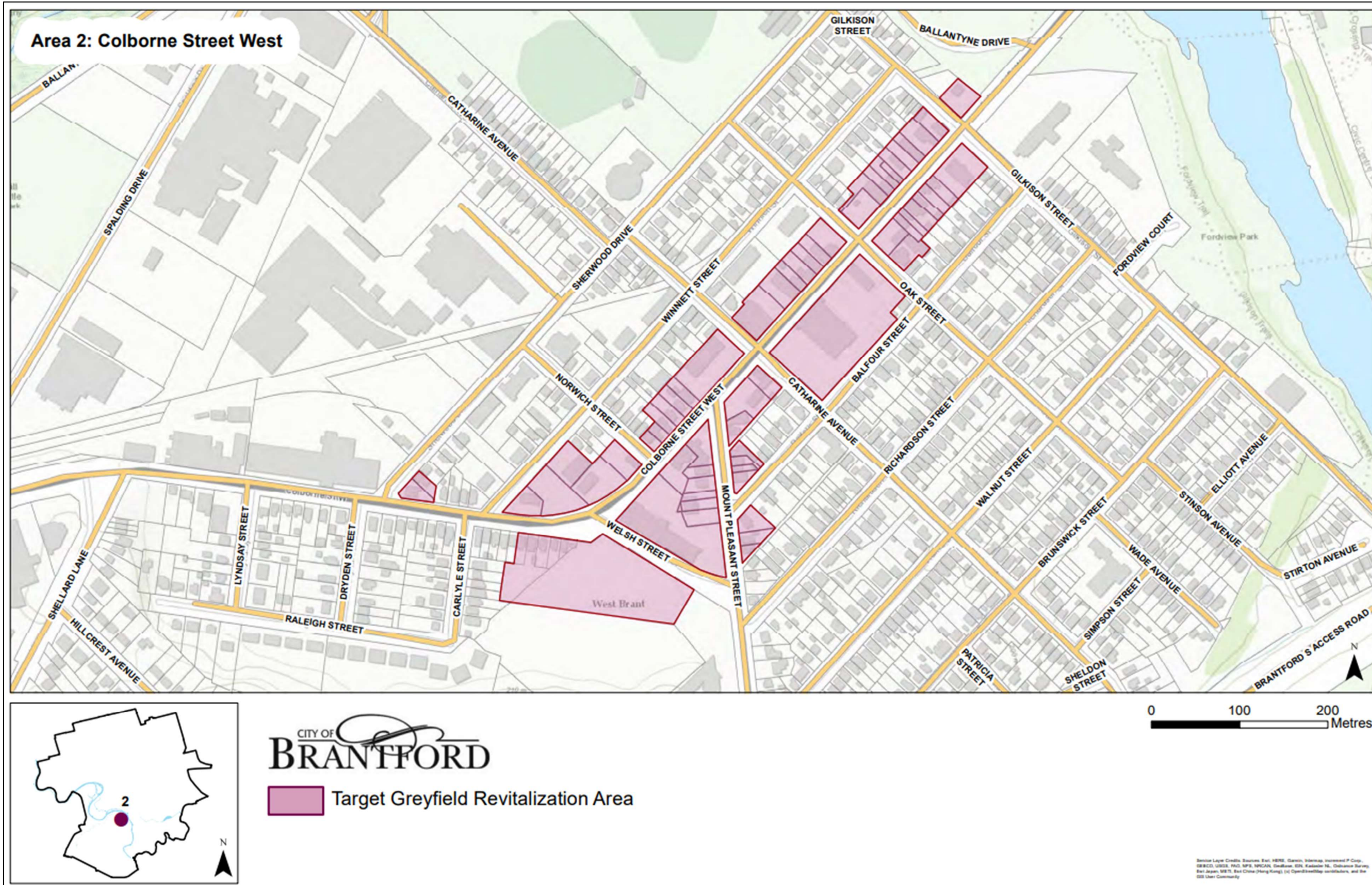
 Target Greyfield Revitalization Area



Basemap Layer Credits: Esri.com, HERE, Garmin, Swiremap, Intermap, P Corp, GEBCO, USGS, NOAA, IGN, CNIGL, Esri, DeLorme, GeoEye, IGN, Kartchner, N, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Swiremap, and the © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the © Esri User Community.

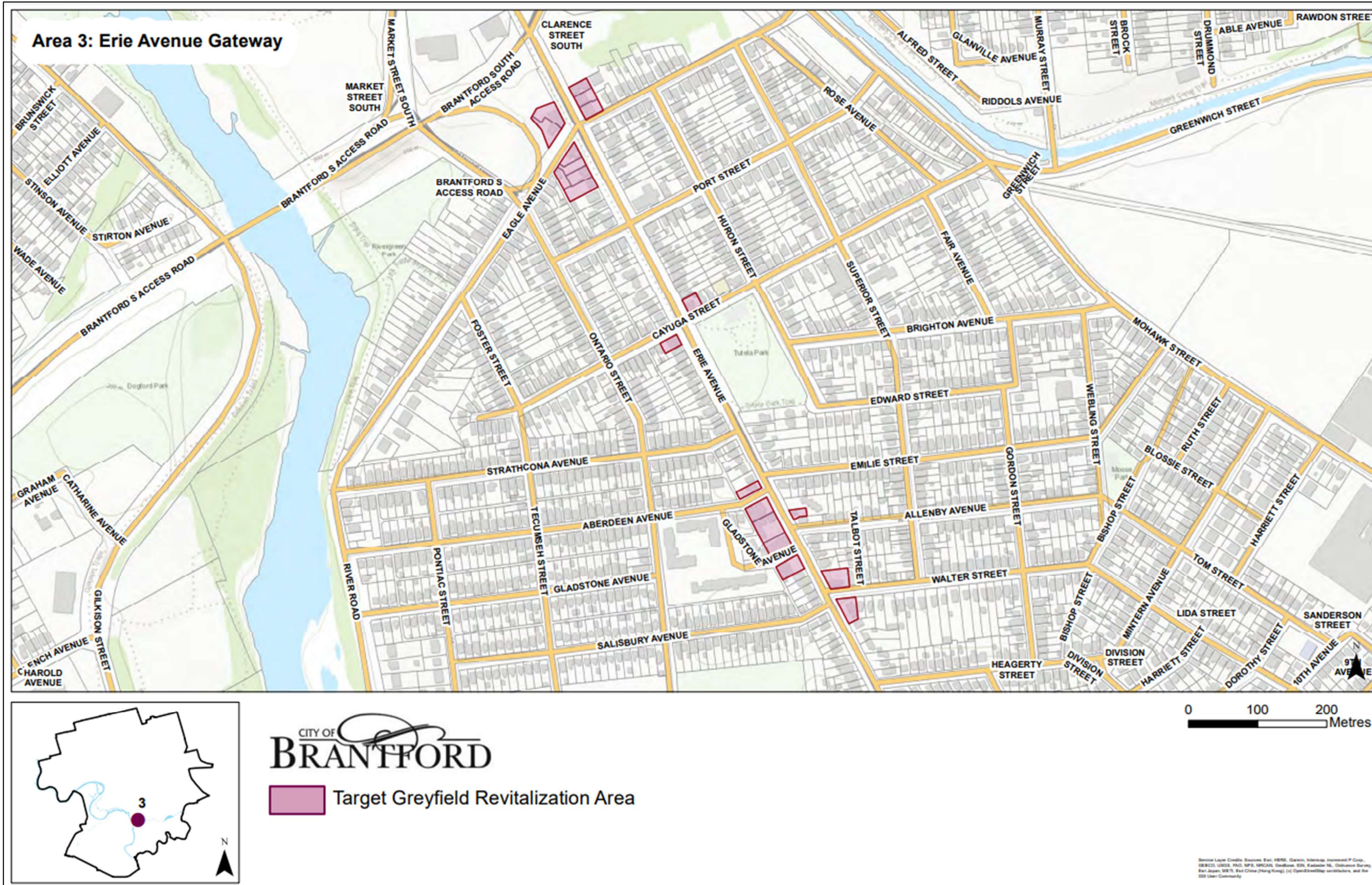


Area 2: Colborne Street West



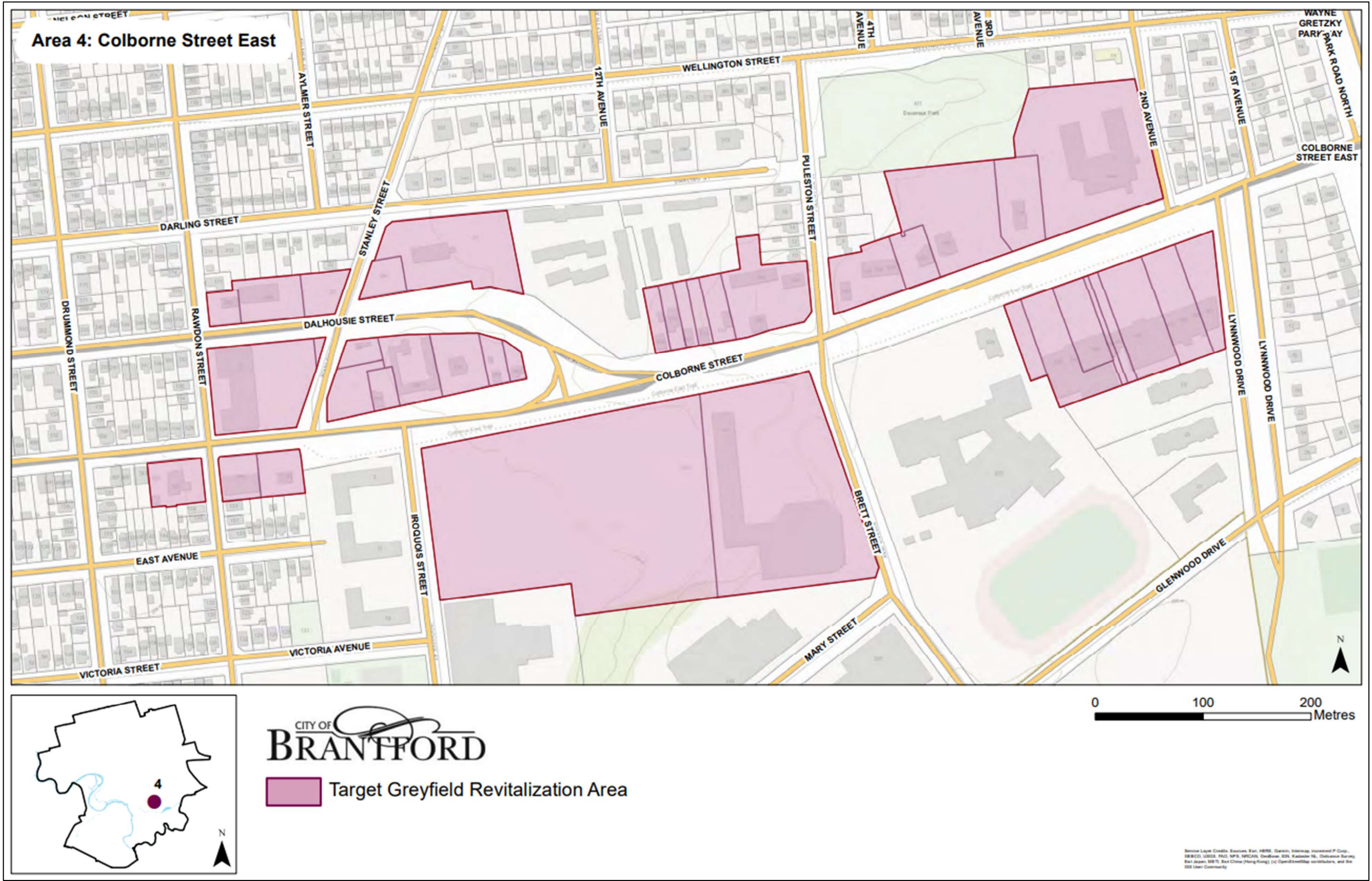


Area 3: Erie Avenue Gateway



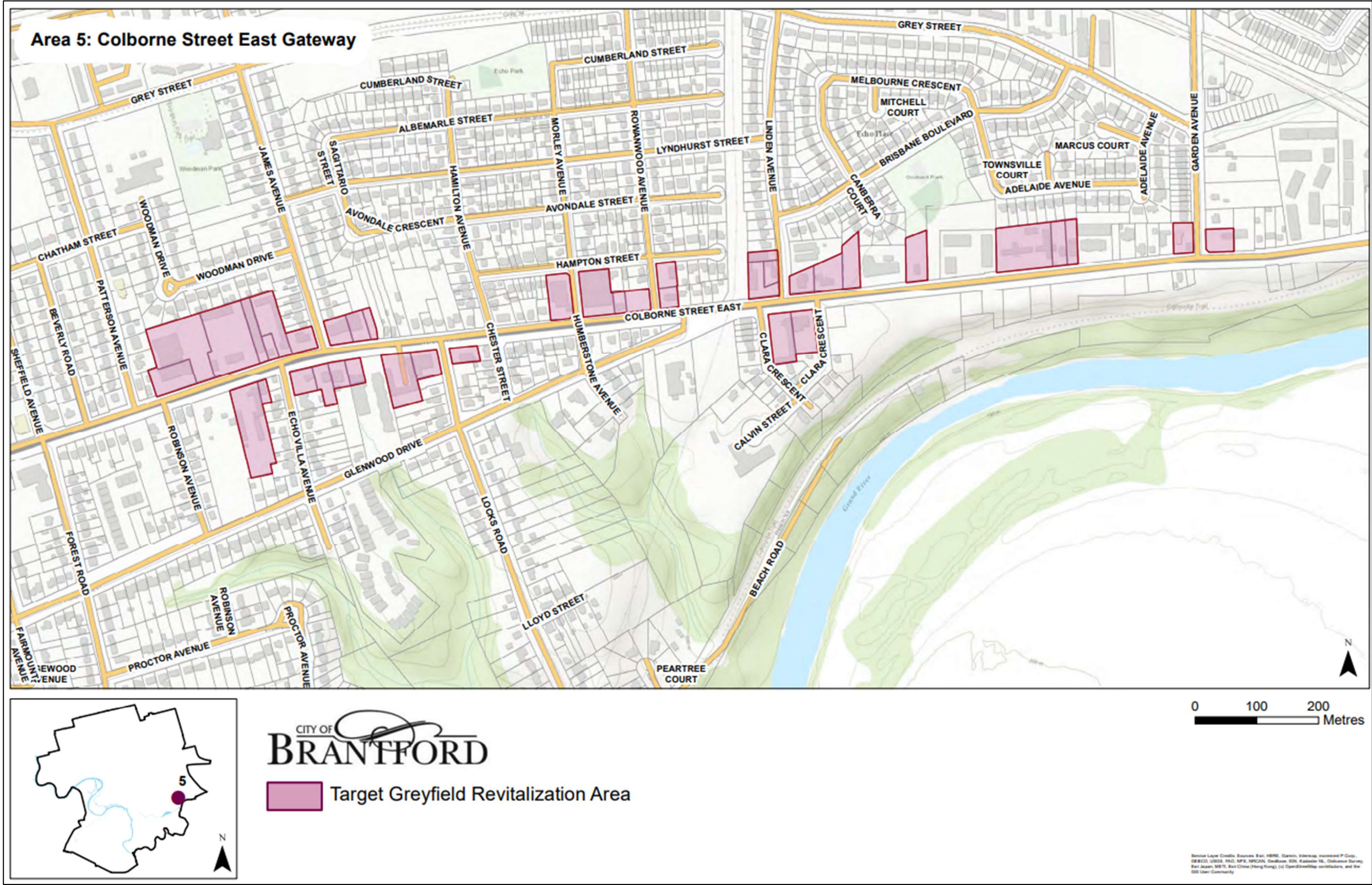


Area 4: Colborne Street East





**Area 5: Colborne Street East Gateway**





# Appendix B – Greyfields Community Improvement Project Area





## Appendix C – Glossary of Terms

The following definitions are provided to assist in the interpretation of this Plan. The City shall have the sole discretion in interpreting the provisions and meaning of words used in this Plan.

**Affordable Housing** shall have the same meaning as defined in the City of Brantford's Municipal Housing Facilities By-law 162-2003, as amended, or any successor thereto. For greater clarity, Affordable Housing rental units shall be governed by a Municipal Housing Facility Agreement.

**Applicant** means a property owner, tenant, or agent acting on behalf of a property owner or tenant, who has applied for or is intending to apply for one or more of the grant programs outlined in this Plan.

**Commercial use** shall have the same meaning as defined in the City of Brantford's Comprehensive Zoning By-law 160-90, as amended, or any successor thereto.

**Community Improvement Plan (CIP)** means this Plan, as adopted in accordance with Section 28(4) of the *Planning Act*.

**Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA)** means the currently designated Greyfields Community Improvement Project Area, as adopted by a by-law of Council in accordance with Section 28(2) of the *Planning Act*. For convenience purposes, the CIPA is attached to this Plan as Appendix B.

**Eligible costs** mean the costs that may be counted towards the calculation of a potential grant value. The eligible costs for each grant program are listed under Section B.3. Unless otherwise stated, eligible costs are deemed to include relevant costs related to:

- materials;
- labour; and
- fees related to the professional services that are necessary for the applicant to prepare and submit a complete grant application (e.g., an architect, engineer or land use planner), up to a maximum of 15% of the total eligible costs.

**Exterior side yard** shall have the same meaning as defined in the City of Brantford's Comprehensive Zoning By-law 160-90, as amended, or any successor thereto.

## City of Brantford Greyfields Community Improvement Plan

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**Financial Incentive Program Agreement** means an agreement executed between the City and an applicant, to outline the terms and conditions for payment of an approved grant, and prepared in accordance with the policies of this Plan.

**Front yard** shall have the same meaning as defined in the City of Brantford's Comprehensive Zoning By-law 160-90, as amended, or any successor thereto.

**Heritage Attribute** shall have the same meaning as in the *Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. O.18*, as amended from time to time.

**Mixed use** shall have the same meaning as defined in the City of Brantford's Comprehensive Zoning By-law 160-90, as amended, or any successor thereto, but shall not include a building or buildings which contain only a mixture of residential use and commercial parking.

**Municipal Housing Facility Agreement** shall have the same meaning as defined in the City of Brantford's Municipal Housing Facilities By-law 162-2003, as amended, or any successor thereto.

**Residential use** shall have the same meaning as defined in the City of Brantford's Comprehensive Zoning By-law 160-90, as amended, or any successor thereto.