



Report n°: ED2024-002

Date: 11/12/2024

Submitted by: Ali Riel, Manager of Economic Development and Tourism

Subject: Community Improvement Program (CIP) - Draft

### Nature/Goal

The purpose of this report is to provide Municipal Council with an overview of the work that has been completed as part of (RFP 2023-042) Community Improvement Plan (CIP) and to provide Council with the opportunity to review the draft of the new City of Clarence-Rockland Community Improvement Program.

### Directive/Previous policy

n/a

### Department's recommendation

**WHEREAS** Sierra Planning and Management was awarded a contract further to RFP 2023-042 for the creation of a new Community Improvement Program; and

**WHEREAS** the draft of the newly created City of Clarence-Rockland Community Improvement Plan is being presented to Council in Committee of the Whole on this 11<sup>th</sup> day of December 2024;

**WHEREAS** the draft of the City of Clarence-Rockland Community Improvement Plan will be presented at the statutory public meeting on January 15, 2025;

**THAT** the Committee of the Whole receives the draft Community Improvement Plan as information, pending the statutory public meeting on January 15, 2025, after which the finalized Community Improvement Plan will be presented to Council for approval at the February 12, 2025, meeting.

**ATTENDU QUE** Sierra Planning and Management a obtenu un contrat à la suite du processus de soumission 2023-042 pour la création d'un nouveau programme d'amélioration communautaire; et

**ATTENDU QUE** l'ébauche du nouveau plan d'amélioration communautaire de la Cité de Clarence-Rockland est présentée au Conseil en comité plénier en ce 11e jour de décembre 2024 ;

**ATTENDU QUE** le Plan d'améliorations communautaires de la Cité de Clarence-Rockland sera présenté lors de l'assemblée publique du 15 janvier 2025 ;

**QUE** le comité plénier reçoive l'ébauche du nouveau plan d'amélioration communautaire à titre d'information, lors de l'assemblée publique du 15 janvier 2025, après que le plan d'amélioration communautaire finalisé sera présenté au conseil pour approbation au réunion conseil le 12 février 2025.

### Background

In 2022, the City of Clarence-Rockland adopted a new Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan. The role of Economic Development for the City of Clarence-Rockland involves generating sustainable conditions for economic growth and enhancing the well-being of the community. The economic development strategy recognizes business service excellence as one of three strategic directions. A key priority of this strategic direction is to lead the way in business retention and expansion for the growth of the local economy.

As part of the 2023 budget, RFP (2023-042) was developed to move forward with the renewal of the city's Community Improvement Plan (CIP). The goal of this project was to identify community priority areas that would allow for and support development and revitalization, allowing the municipality to direct capital project investments in a strategic manner.

Following the City's established Request for Proposals process, Sierra Planning and Management (SPM) was awarded the contract for the Community Improvement Plan project.

### Discussion

The development of a new CIP program for the City of Clarence-Rockland will help to revitalize targeted areas and encourage community change in a coordinated manner. The new Community Improvement Program will:

- Build and expand upon the city's previous CIP program (2017-2022).
- Align with the city's strategic priorities.
- Support commercial core areas in Rockland and beyond.
- Explore the need and opportunity for support to rural areas.

Over the course of the project steps were taken to ensure that the new CIP program would be developed to produce opportunities for the municipality to provide incentive-based programs as an economic development tool.

The following tasks were completed, leading up to the creation of the draft of the newly developed CIP Program.

- Field review
- Background & policy review
- Best practice review
- Real estate market analysis
- Implementation of public engagement strategy

Through the implementation of the project's public engagement strategy there was opportunity for key stakeholders, the business community and residents to provide feedback that would assist in the creation of the new Community Improvement Program. The engagement process entailed:

- CIP website updates
- Municipal Council & staff interviews
- Online survey that received responses from:
  - 32 - Property owners
  - 13 - Tenant businesses
  - 5 - Developers
- Virtual stakeholder session that had 60 participants registered

As we are now in the home stretch of the development of the city's new CIP program the benefits of the CIP program are clear:

- To encourage private sector investment and strengthen the economic base.
- To leverage public investment to draw private sector investment for community benefit
- To help advance municipal priorities, plans and strategies (e.g. Economic Development and Tourism)
- Enhance the visual appearance of Community Improvement areas.
- To revitalize targeted areas and encourage community change in a coordinated manner.
- To redevelop brownfield sites.
- To ensure the maintenance of the existing building stock.
- To foster improvements and ensure high standards of site development throughout the City of Clarence-Rockland.

The new CIP will provide for a change to the CIP area from the city's previous Community Improvement Program and will now have a city-wide CIPA (Community Improvement Program Area). The CIP update will deliver new municipal assistance programs and will put fourth eight program streams:

- Façade Improvement Grant
- Signage Improvement Grant
- Landscaping Improvement Grant
- Building Renovation Grant
- Planning Application Grant
- Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) Grant
- Tax Increment Equivalent Grant (TIEG)
  - Stream A : Brownfield Remediation
  - Stream B : Commercial Core Development
- Development Charge (DC) Grant

Details of the new CIP program and the eight program streams, along with the expected outcomes of the program are provided with the supporting documents attached to this report.

#### Consultation

N/A

#### Recommendations or comments from committee/ other departments

N/A

#### Financial impact (expenses/material/etc.)

Staff have requested through the 2025 budget deliberations to move forward with contributions from the Economic Reserve Fund that will fund the launch for year one of the revitalized Community Improvement Program.

#### Legal implications

N/A

#### Risk management

N/A

## Strategic implications

With the creation of the Economic Development Advisory Committee the Economic Development Department continues to work towards supporting the following strategic directions of the City of Clarence-Rockland Strategic Plan (2024-2028):

### **BALANCED GROWTH**

Balance residential, commercial, and industrial growth with community values, expectations and quality of life.

- Leverage and integrate the City's authorities, plans and services to shape the growth of the municipality.
- Create opportunities for dialogue between the City, residents, and the private sector on major development initiatives.
- Support growth by evidence-based decision-making, regular progress monitoring and reporting.

This strategy ensures that residential, commercial, and industrial growth aligns with community values, expectations, and the overall quality of life. Leveraging the City's authorities, key plans, and policies, this approach emphasizes both a proactive role in managing the inevitable tensions that accompany growth, and the necessity of ensuring dialogue and collaboration among stakeholders.

### **COMMUNITY COHESION**

Strengthen community cohesion to ensure Clarence-Rockland remains desirable place to live, do business, and visit.

- Consistently engage the community to keep the pulse of its needs and aspirations.
- Promote active citizenship to strengthen attachment and contribution to the community.
- Foster the growth of community organizations that bring about positive impacts in the community.

This strategy aims to strengthen community bonds, ensuring Clarence-Rockland remains a desirable place to live, do business, and visit. The strategy emphasizes the City's role in fostering a strong sense of belonging among all citizens. This is achieved through consistent engagement, which will allow the City to keep abreast of citizens' needs and aspirations while promoting trust and participation, fostering the growth of community organizations through capacity development, in-kind assistance, and monetary support, and promotive active citizenship encouraging participation in public meetings, committees, and community fora.

### [Supporting documents](#)

PPT Clarence-Rockland CIP Draft (11-12-2024)

Clarence-Rockland CIP Draft (29-11-2024)