

CHAPTER 18

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT POLICIES

The Township of Woolwich recognizes the importance of establishing a comprehensive program devoted to the on-going maintenance and improvement of both privately and municipally owned properties and facilities. This Chapter sets out the goals, objectives and policies to support *community improvement* planning in Woolwich Township and specifically shall apply to all Settlement Areas where *community improvement* areas have been identified.

All lands within an identified Settlement Area are considered eligible for *Community Improvement* Initiatives and eligible to be designated as a “*Community Improvement Project Area*”, pursuant to the provision of the Planning Act.

Community Improvement Project Areas may be established by Council and designated by By-law, in accordance with the provisions of the Planning Act, if the area satisfies the following sections.

18.1 COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT GOALS

- 18.1.1 To stabilize and preserve existing viable residential, commercial and mixed land use areas in the Township.
- 18.1.2 To ensure that municipally operated facilities and community services are provided at satisfactory standards consistent with the identified needs of all residents in the Township.
- 18.1.3 To utilize *community improvement* opportunities and techniques to bring cohesiveness to the Township’s planning, engineering and community services programs such that these services may be provided in an efficient and cost-effective manner.
- 18.1.4 To protect and enhance the historical attributes of the Township and to ensure that redevelopment activities do not impact *cultural heritage resources*.
- 18.1.5 To utilize *community improvement* initiatives as a stimulus for further investment and redevelopment by the private sector.
- 18.1.6 To maximize the benefits associated with *community improvement* projects with a rational and logical phasing and priority program to implement projects across the Township, as necessary.

18.2 COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVES

Residential

- 18.2.1 To encourage the rehabilitation and upgrading of existing housing stock to achieve and maintain a minimum standard of housing.
- 18.2.2 To upgrade municipal services, public utilities and social and recreational facilities.
- 18.2.3 To maintain the long-term viability of older, stable and predominantly residential neighbourhoods by encouraging the rehabilitation and upgrading of the housing stock within these areas.
- 18.2.4 To maintain and strengthen the character of residential neighbourhoods by signing and enforcing restricted parking areas along local streets.
- 18.2.5 To continue to develop open space areas and recreation facilities for use by local residents and the community at large.
- 18.2.6 To address a known or perceived environmental contamination.
- 18.2.7 To improve an area is in need of environmental, social or community economic development.
- 18.2.8 To provide opportunities for public sector investment in *affordable housing*.
- 18.2.9 To encourage and facilitate private sector investment in the provision of *affordable housing*.

Commercial

- 18.2.10 To minimize land use conflicts in the core areas by encouraging the continued development and improvement of the retail, service and commerce components of these areas.
- 18.2.11 To improve parking facilities and the flow of vehicular and pedestrian traffic in the core areas.
- 18.2.12 To encourage the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing commercial and institutional *developments* in the core areas.
- 18.2.13 To encourage the redevelopment of vacant or underutilized properties in the core areas in order to strengthen the local focus of business and commerce.

- 18.2.14 To improve the overall attractiveness of the core areas in terms of aesthetics and public amenities.
- 18.2.15 To upgrade municipal services, public utilities and social and recreational facilities.
- 18.2.16 To address a known or perceived environmental contamination.
- 18.2.17 To improve areas that are in need of environmental, social or community economic development.

Mixed-Use

- 18.2.18 To upgrade municipal services, public utilities and social and recreational facilities.
- 18.2.19 To develop open space areas and recreation facilities, as appropriate, for use by the community.
- 18.2.20 To recognize and encourage the role mixed land use areas play in the overall pattern of land use of the community as an area of transition or buffering between differing land uses.
- 18.2.21 To improve parking and cycling facilities and the flow of vehicular and pedestrian traffic in mixed land use areas.
- 18.2.22 To encourage redevelopment of vacant or underutilized properties in mixed land use areas to an appropriate and viable use.
- 18.2.23 To demonstrate leadership in the remediation, rehabilitation, adaptive re-use, and overall improvement of *brownfield* sites throughout the township.
- 18.2.24 To improve areas that are in need of environmental, social or community economic development.

Energy

- 18.2.25 To address improvements of energy efficiency.

18.3 CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT AREAS

- 18.3.1 Council may pass a by-law to designate part of, or the entire township, as a *Community Improvement Project Area* in accordance with Section 28 of the Planning Act. Within a designated *Community Improvement Project Area*, Council may prepare and adopt a *Community Improvement Plan* to achieve the goals and objectives of the Township's *community improvement* planning program.

- 18.3.2 The boundaries of a *Community Improvement Project Area* will be considered flexible and minor extensions may be permitted by specific By-laws designating *Community Improvement Project Areas*" without amendment to this Plan.
- 18.3.3 The preparation of a *Community Improvement Plan* will depend on the availability of Federal, Provincial, and Regional programs, and Township resources as well as on the relative need for physical improvements in the applicable *Community Improvement Project Area*.
- 18.3.4 *Community Improvement Plans* may be phased in accordance with the Township's financial capabilities and to establish a natural and logical sequence for improvement based on appropriate engineering and planning studies.
- 18.3.5 The Township will consider the following criteria in designating a *Community Improvement Project Area*:

Residential

- a) A significant portion of the residential buildings are in need of rehabilitation, which may include improving the energy efficiency;
- b) Deficiency of parkland or other identified recreational facility resources;
- c) Need for improvement to municipal services, including streets, roads, storm sewers, sanitary sewers, sidewalks, curbs and gutter, streetlights and watermains;
- d) An area with conflicting vehicular, cyclist and pedestrian traffic circulation and/or parking deficiencies;
- e) A stable existing pattern of residential land use;
- f) At least 50% of the total land area is residential; and
- g) An area containing a *significant cultural heritage-resource* or a land use or building which lends itself to community improvement.

Commercial

- a) Older areas of predominately commercial use, which are potentially stable and viable;
- b) A need for improvement to municipal services, including streets, roads, storm sewers, sanitary sewers, watermains, sidewalks, curbs and gutters and streetlights;
- c) An area with conflicting vehicular and pedestrian traffic circulation and/or parking deficiencies;
- d) A significant portion of the commercial buildings is in need of rehabilitation, which may include improving the energy efficiency;
- e) Identified land use conflicts resulting from non-compatible uses or underutilization of land, which can detract from the viability of the area; and

- f) An area containing a *significant cultural heritage resource* or a land use or building which lends itself to *community improvement*.

Mixed-Use

- a) Need for improvement to municipal services, including streets, roads, storm sewers, sanitary sewers, sidewalks, curbs and gutters, streetlights and watermains;
- b) Land use conflicts from non-compatible uses or underutilization of land, which can detract from the viability of the area;
- c) Deficiency of parkland or other identified recreational resource facilities
- d) An area with conflicting vehicular and pedestrian traffic circulation and/or parking deficiencies;
- e) A significant portion of the properties and structures in the area are in need of rehabilitation, which may include improving the energy efficiency;
- f) An area containing a *significant cultural heritage resource* or a land use or building which lends itself to *community improvement*; and
- g) Within any of the above areas, an area with soil contamination shall be considered for designation as a *Community Improvement Area*.

18.4 PHASING AND IMPLEMENTATION

18.4.1 *Development applications* will be evaluated considering the objectives of *Community Improvement Plan*.

18.4.2 The relative need for *Community Improvements Plans* will be considered in the preparation of annual municipal capital expenditure budgets.

18.4.3 An active program for informing property owners of the various forms of building and property rehabilitation assistance programs will be undertaken.

18.4.4 The use of flexible zoning techniques, as such opportunities are available under the Planning Act will be considered where such techniques would support *community improvement* objectives.

18.4.5 Opportunities to utilize Provincial, Federal and Regional programs, which contribute to *community improvement*, will be exercised.

18.4.6 For the purposes of carrying out a *Community Improvement Plan* that has come into effect, the Township may:

- a) Acquire land within the *Community Improvement Project Area* and clear, grade or otherwise prepare the land for *community improvement*;
- b) Construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on land that has been acquired by the Township;

- c) Sell, lease or otherwise dispose of land that has been acquired by the Township;
- d) Provide grants or loans to property and building owners within the *Community Improvement Project Area*;
- e) Enforce By-laws and policies dealing with property maintenance; and
- f) Encourage the private sector and the public to become involved with initiatives in *Community Improvement Project Areas*.

18.4.7 In accordance with the Planning Act, for furthering the *Community Improvement* goals and objectives and under such terms as Council considers appropriate, the Township may provide grants or loans to the Region for carrying out a *Regional Community Improvement Plan* that has come into effect or the Township may be in receipt of grants or loans from the Region for carrying out a *Township Community Improvement Plan*.

18.4.8 *Community Improvement Plans* and community development projects may be undertaken in conjunction with senior levels of government funding assistance programs and will be subject to the eligibility and implementation regulations of such programs and priorities and availability of municipal funding.

18.4.9 The Township must be satisfied that its participation in *Community Improvement* activities will be within the financial capabilities of the Township.

18.4.10 Where the Township is satisfied that a *Community Improvement Plan* has been carried out, it may, by Bylaw, dissolve the *Community Improvement Project Area* and Plan.

18.5 MAINTENANCE AND OCCUPANCY STANDARDS

18.5.1 The Township shall endeavour to keep in a fit and well-maintained condition all municipally owned properties and structures and to provide or maintain in good repair such municipal services as roads, sidewalks, and water and sewage facilities.

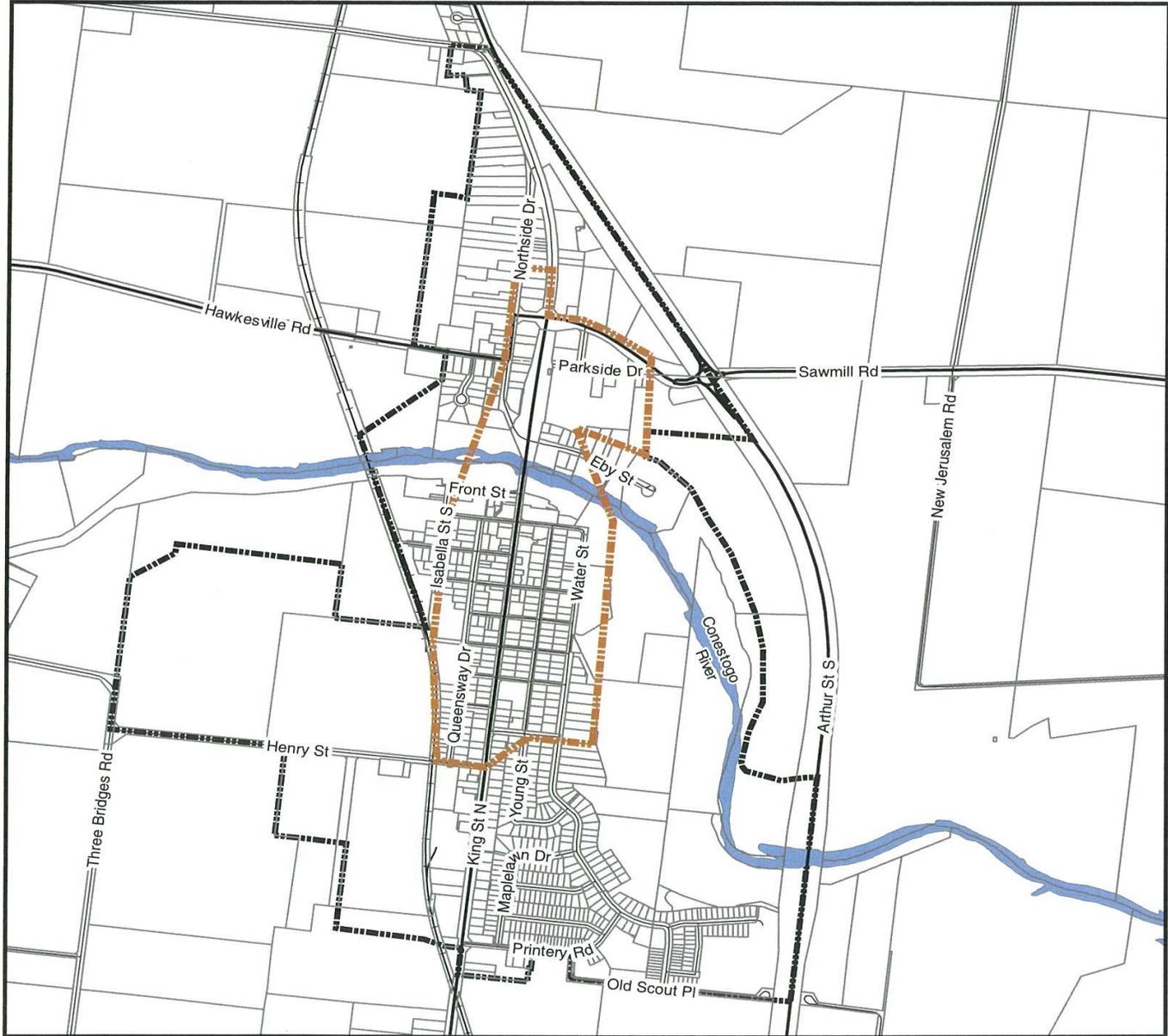
18.5.2 The Township will pass By-laws pursuant to the Planning Act to establish minimum standards of maintenance and occupancy and to *conserve*, sustain and protect existing and future development. The Maintenance and Occupancy By-law applicable to all property within the municipality may contain requirements with respect to:

- a) Garbage disposal and pest prevention;
- b) Structural maintenance, safety and cleanliness of buildings;
- c) Services to buildings, including plumbing, heating and electricity;
- d) Keeping properties free from rubbish, debris, weeds, abandoned or used vehicles, trailers, boats, barges, mechanical equipment or material;
- e) Maintaining yards, lands, parking and storage areas, fences, swimming pools, accessory buildings and signs; and
- f) Occupancy standards.

18.5.5 The Municipal Property Maintenance and Occupancy Standards By-law will be enforced in order to maintain minimum standards of occupancy for any class or type of building, structure or land use.

18.6 EXISTING COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT AREAS WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP

The Township, adopted by By-law, community improvement areas in St. Jacobs, Elmira, Breslau and West Montrose and respected boundary of these areas are shown in Map 18.1 (St. Jacobs), 18.2 Elmira, 18.3 (Breslau) and 18.4 (West Montrose). The applicable policies in this Chapter would apply to these community improvement areas.



MAP 18.1
Township of Woolwich
St Jacobs
Community Improvement Area

Legend

- Community Improvement Area
- Property Lines
- Provincial Highway
- Regional Road
- Township Road
- Private Lane
- Rail line
- Settlement Area Boundary

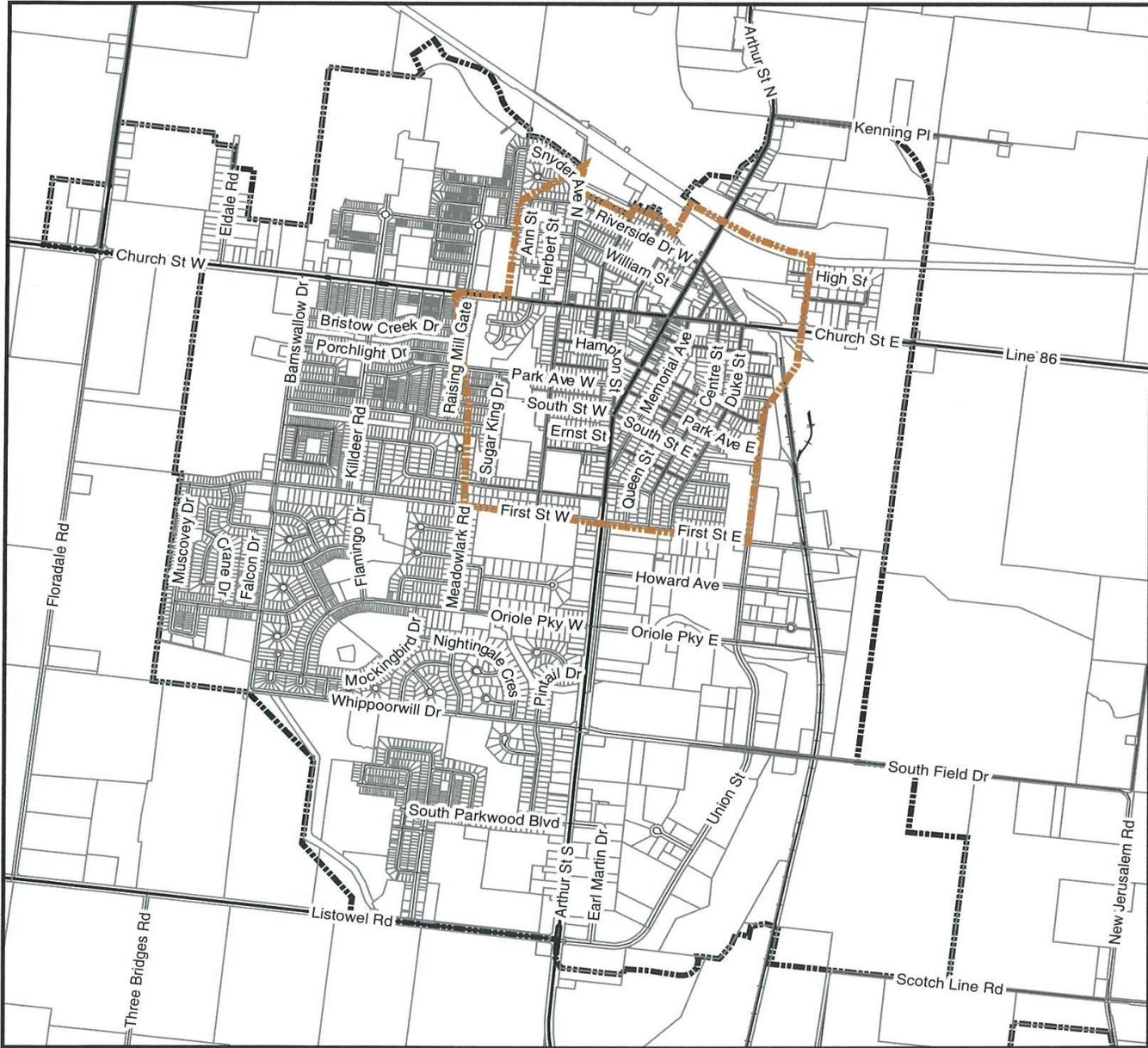
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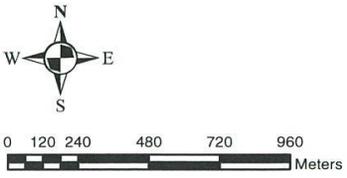
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MAP 18.2
Township of Woolwich
Elmira
Community Improvement
Area

Legend

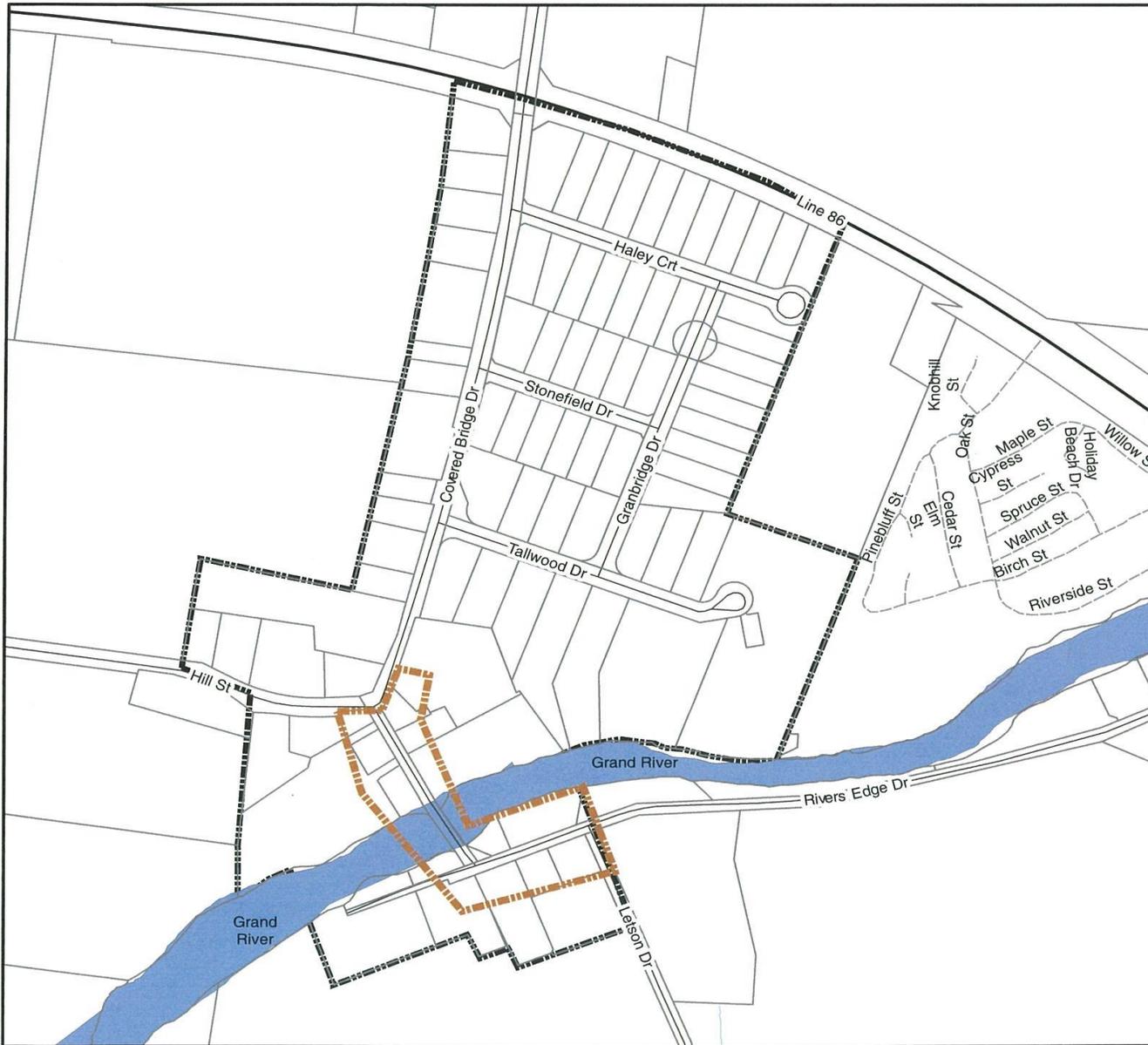
-  Community Improvement Area
-  Property Lines
-  Provincial Highway
-  Regional Road
-  Township Road
-  Private Lane
-  Rail line
-  Settlement Area Boundary



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**MAP 18.4
West Montrose
Community Improvement
Area
Legend**

- Community Improvement Area
- Property Lines
- Provincial Highway
- Regional Road
- Township Road
- Private Lane
- Rail line
- Settlement Area Boundary
- Township Boundary

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