

A photograph of a city street in Edmonton, Alberta. In the foreground, a brick building with a blue, cartoonish monster sculpture on its roof stands out. The monster is blue with yellow eyes, a pink mouth, and green horns. Behind it, several modern glass skyscrapers rise against a cloudy sky. A blue banner with the word 'Edmonton' is in the top right corner.

Edmonton

ATTAINABLE HOUSING INCENTIVE

PROGRAM GUIDE

edmonton.ca/downtown

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INTRODUCTION



The Attainable Housing Program will incentivize the redevelopment of new, attainable residential units in downtown Edmonton. This program will result in more people living downtown, who will support activity and vibrancy throughout the day and week. It will also ensure the delivery of housing units with rental rates that are attainable for downtown residents for 10 years, tied to the median renter income for Edmonton.

Having a greater downtown residential population will increase local retail demand, vibrancy, and perceptions of safety and security.

For a 10-year period, the Attainable Housing Program will provide an annual grant payment to participating projects. The amount will be calculated as a percentage of municipal property tax uplift, rebated annually.

This program will be reviewed annually and grant payments will not be made beyond 2044. Annual program reviews may include changes to project prioritization criteria, changes to funding levels. Program funding is subject to Council approval.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

1. Reduced vacant land: Stimulate development in targeted or underdeveloped areas downtown to increase the overall residential population.
2. Vibrancy and Activation: Increase the number of residents to boost local retail demand, vibrancy, and improve perceptions of safety.
3. Attainable Rents: Ensure a defined portion of new housing units are delivered with rental rates that are based on median renter income.
4. New Housing Supply: Incentivize the creation of net new, non-replacement housing units.
5. Long-term increase in property tax revenue and Community Revitalization Levy revenue.



In addition to these overall program objectives, additional prioritization considerations will be included in the annual application form.

What is attainable housing?

Affordable and attainable are distinctly different terms, and their precise meanings can vary across different jurisdictions and contexts. The intent for this Program is to ensure that funding is provided for units with rents based on the median income level which may not meet definitions of affordability.

Attainable Housing

The City of Edmonton’s Affordable Housing Strategy (2023-2026) identifies a Housing Spectrum that describes the broad range of sectors in the housing system, as illustrated below.



The units supported by this program would fall in the “Private Rental” category.

The Affordable Housing Strategy states that housing is affordable for a household when it costs less than 30% of before-tax income. The primary focus of the Affordable Housing Strategy is to provide housing that is affordable for long-term occupancy by households who earn less than median income for their household size. These units are below average market cost and typically require subsidization to be affordable.

This program serves a different purpose, and defines Attainable Housing as a one-bedroom unit that is rented for a maximum of 30% of the median renter income for the City of Edmonton (calculated by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation -CMHC).

This definition was used as it aligns with CMHC's definition of "affordable" in their MLI Select program. As of 2025 in Edmonton, this translates to a maximum monthly rent of \$1,665.

Maximum monthly rents for other unit sizes to qualify as attainable in this program are proportionate to the maximum one-bedroom rent.

- Studio units are rented for a maximum of 85% of the one-bedroom maximum
- Two-bedroom units are rented for a maximum of 125% of the one-bedroom maximum
- Units with three or more bedrooms are rented for a maximum of 140% of the one-bedroom maximum.

As of 2025, This is slightly below market rates of new studio and one-bedroom units currently being delivered in CMHC's Downtown zone (Table 1).

The City of Edmonton's Affordable Housing Investment Plan (AHIP) targets a rent of 80% or less of the average monthly rental rate for Edmonton. These rates are affordable for individuals and families earning less than the median renter income. However the amount of financial assistance offered through AHIP is commensurately larger.

Table 1: Comparison of current rental rates

Unit Size	Maximum Rent, Apartments 2026 (AHIP)	Maximum Rent (Downtown Attainable Housing) as of 2026	Average Rent, October 2025 (CMHC Downtown Neighbourhood)	Average Rent, buildings completed since July 2022 (CMHC Downtown Zone)
Studio	\$886	\$1415	\$1219	\$1426
One Bedroom	\$1028	\$1665	\$1401	\$1773
Two Bedroom	\$1265	\$2081	\$1915	\$2335
Three+ Bedroom	\$1420	\$2331	\$2451	\$3374

APPLICATION PROCESS: SUMMARY

Application Intake

Application forms will be made available on the program website.

Applications may be submitted at any time once the program is open.

Evaluation

Applications will be assessed against the program's criteria. Applications that meet all criteria may be recommended for approval, subject to funding availability. Decisions made by the City are final and cannot be appealed.

Funding is limited. Applications will be reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis. More information may be requested in order to ensure application completeness and alignment with the program objectives.

Conditional Grant Approval

Following evaluation, selected projects will receive conditional grant approval from the program manager. This is pending fulfillment of any final documentation or regulatory requirements. Conditional approval means an applicant may qualify for a grant and will then be required to enter into a Grant Funding Agreement with the City. Public announcements of successful projects will be made after agreements are executed.

The first Applicants to meet all criteria and fully execute a grant funding agreement will be considered to be first in the program. When the total approved budget has been committed, no further applications will be approved.

Construction

Applicants must provide a projected construction timeline. The City will monitor project progress and may require periodic updates to ensure alignment with program goals. Construction on the project must be complete within four years of commencement.



ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for a grant, projects must meet the following minimum mandatory criteria:

Dwelling (zoning bylaw definition):

Dwelling means a self-contained unit consisting of 1 or more rooms used as a bedroom, bathroom, living room, and kitchen.

Qualifying Units:

Units will be considered attainable if they are rented for no more than 30% of the median renter income for Edmonton for a one-bedroom unit.

- 15% less for studios
- 25% more for 2 bedrooms
- 40% more for 3 or more bedrooms

Bedrooms:

Qualifying units must meet maximum rental rates, which are determined by number of bedrooms.

Each bedroom must be at least 7.5 square metres or 80 square feet in size and be fully enclosed by walls so as to be separate from the rest of the unit.

Note that this definition is only for the purposes of determining maximum rental rates under this program.

- Projects must be located within the program boundary (Schedule A)
- Projects must involve the construction of a new building. *Conversions of existing space are not eligible. Renovated or replacement units are not eligible.*
- Qualifying units must make up at least 25% of the total units in a building.
- Qualifying units will be rental units *and* will meet rental rates for 10 years.
Qualifying units must be rented for no more than the attainable rental rates (see Table 2 below).
- Cost estimates will be required for each qualifying unit, as well as the construction costs of the entire development.
- Projects must demonstrate financial need and certify that the program changed their development decision to proceed with the project or include qualifying attainable units.
- The applicant must demonstrate competence and expertise to show they can complete the proposed development, including financial viability.
- Projects must demonstrate a viable path to obtaining a building permit within 18 months of submitting an application.

Projects will **not** be considered for funding if:

- Construction is already underway when the application is submitted.
- Building permit applications have been submitted for the project, in advance of receiving conditional grant approval.

The application form will require applicants to demonstrate how their projects meet the above mandatory criteria, as well as other criteria that may be used for prioritizing applications.

Table 2: Attainable Rental Rate (Maximum)

Qualifying units must meet attainable rental rates based on the [median renter income for Edmonton](#) (calculated by Canada Mortgage and Housing). The maximum rental rates will be calculated based on the proportion of median renter income and are subject to change when CMHC publishes new figures. The 2026 Equivalent Rates are provided for information.

Unit Type	Maximum Rental Rates	2026 Equivalent Rates
Studio	25.5% median renter income (30% median renter income reduced by 15%)	\$1,415
One Bedroom	30% median renter income	\$1,665
Two Bedroom	37.5% median renter income (30% median renter income increased by 25%)	\$2,081
Three (or more) Bedrooms	42% median renter income (30% median renter income increased by 40%)	\$2,331

DETAILED APPLICATION AND APPROVAL PROCESS

Full details of the approval and application process will be published annually on the program website and in the application form.

Application Procedure

Applicants may apply for the grant by filling in a grant application form and submitting it to the City. The following required information and supporting documentation are to be provided in the grant application and are listed here for reference:

Applicant Information

- Name and contact information; *including Statutory Declaration*
- Applicant information (the owners of the project), *including Corporate Registry Search, Personal Property Registry Search and Bankruptcy Search*

Land Information

- Site Address and Zoning, *including whether the existing zoning supports the proposed development*
- Legal description, *including Land Title showing current ownership and all encumbrances registered on proposed development lands. The Applicant must have fee simple ownership of the proposed development lands.*
- Any existing development issued
- Any existing Environmental Site Assessments

Project Information

- Schedule, including:
 - Anticipated timeline for obtaining development and building permits
 - The date construction is likely to commence;
 - The date construction is anticipated to be completed;
- Anticipated construction and operating costs;
- Financing information
- Other grant or incentive programs that the project is receiving, has applied for, or intends to apply for.
- A declaration and explanation as to why the project would not have proceeded had a grant not been available

- Letters of support (if available)

Development information, including:

- Description of the proposed development, including any overall design principles and considerations such as accessibility, sustainability, open space or amenities, *including any preliminary drawings available*
- Details of the **qualifying units** that will be created, including;
 - Unit configuration, including the number of bedrooms and whether they are accessible
 - Size of each unit (square footage/m2)
 - Maximum rental rates (maintained for the duration of the agreement)
 - Any additional features that will be provided to the tenant and included in the rental rates, such as utilities, furnishings, storage, etc.
- Details of any other housing units that will be created, including;
 - Unit configuration, including the number of bedrooms and whether they are accessible
 - Size of each unit (square footage/m2)
- Details of any buildings that will be demolished in order for construction to proceed, including number of units and current rental rates.
- Size and information about retail or other commercial areas.
- Other specific criteria that may be identified by the City.

During the evaluation process, the City may require an Applicant to provide additional information.

Limited Funding

Funding will be allocated to projects as long as the program has remaining budget available, based on estimated tax uplift calculated at the time of application.

Conditional Grant Approval

Once the application has been reviewed, the City may grant conditional approval that an Applicant may qualify for a grant. This conditional grant approval will be provided jointly by the City of Edmonton Economic Investment Services Branch and the Assessment and Taxation Branch.

In deciding whether to approve a grant, the following factors may be taken into account:

- The eligibility criteria for the grant;
- Whether there are any tax arrears associated with the applicant or property;
- Whether there are any development compliance issues or safety code issues associated with the project;
- Whether the Applicant is involved in any litigation with the City;
- Whether the Applicant is involved in any litigation relating to the project, including foreclosures or builders' liens;
- Whether the Applicant or an entity related to the Applicant is in bankruptcy or receivership;
- Whether any properties owned by the Applicant or a related entity are the subject of foreclosures;
- Whether the Applicant has received some other form of grant or financial assistance from the City or another order of government and there is a dispute about whether the applicant is abiding by the terms of that grant or other financial assistance;
- Whether the Applicant has received another form of grant or other financial assistance that has the effect of cancelling taxation or providing an incentive to build.

Grant Funding Agreement

Once condition approval has been granted, and prior to receiving a grant, an Applicant will be required to enter into a grant funding agreement with the City.

The grant funding agreement shall outline how grants shall be calculated and paid, and indicate any conditions on the grant. The grant funding agreement will also provide that grants may be required to be repaid to the City if the agreement is breached, a condition of the grant is not met, or the applicant has provided inaccurate information when applying for the grant. Grants will not be issued if a grant funding agreement has not been finalized and signed. The City Manager or a delegate of the City Manager may enter into the grant funding agreement on behalf of the City as long as there is sufficient funding. The individual representing the Applicant must have signing authority to enter into the agreement, and will be required to sign a statutory declaration.

Conditions of Funding

Assignment of a Grant Funding Agreement: In the event that a property sells, or is otherwise transferred to a new owner who is planning on proceeding with the construction, a request to assign the grant funding agreement may be made to the City. The City may approve or refuse the transfer of the grant funding agreement. In the event that a transfer is refused, no additional grants shall be paid on the property if the property has been transferred.

Changes in Design: Applicants must request approval from the City for any changes in design after the agreement is signed. Significant changes may result in re-evaluation and potential ineligibility.

Commencement of Construction: The project must begin construction within one year of the date of the agreement. Once begun, construction will progress on a continuous basis. Extended pauses in construction activity (greater than 3 months) may result in disqualification from the grant.

Conditions on the Grant : The project must be complete within four years of the date of the agreement, or such other time as approved by the City in the grant funding agreement.

The grant funding agreement will indicate that all future grants will cease in the following circumstances:

- The Applicant goes bankrupt or enters into receivership;
- The property on which the project is located is the subject of foreclosure proceedings;
- The Applicant is found to have been dishonest in the application process;
- Construction ends on the project before construction is completed. Temporary pauses in construction may be allowed;
- A failure to cooperate with an audit.

The grant funding agreement shall indicate that grants that have been paid out by the City will have to be repaid to the City in the following circumstances:

- Construction on the project has ceased and the project shall not be completed within the timelines outlined with the grant funding agreement.
- Construction on the project has ceased as a result of bankruptcy, foreclosure, receivership, or some other legal proceeding;
- The Applicant is found to have been dishonest in the application process;
- The project is not complete within the time outlined in the grant funding agreement;
- Construction ends on the project before construction is completed. Temporary pauses in construction will be allowable;
- A failure to cooperate with an audit.
- A caveat may be placed on the property to ensure security for the City in the event that repayment may be required.

The criteria outlined in this Program to qualify for a grant shall be considered to be ongoing conditions in the grant funding agreement.

Deadlines: Missing deadlines for documentation submission may result in the program file being closed and funding reallocated.

Development Permits and Building Permits: The applicant is responsible for obtaining all development and building permits required for the project. This includes approval from the Edmonton Design Committee (EDC).

Documentation: It is the applicant's responsibility to obtain all required permits, including Development and Building permits.

Failure to Comply with the Terms of the Grant: If it is determined that the property owner has failed to comply with the terms of a grant funding agreement, the City may request reimbursement of the full grant amounts that have been paid. This may include the failure to complete the project within a timely manner, the failure to spend as much on construction or build what was initially contemplated, or the failure to follow any other term of the grant. If a property owner is found to have made any misrepresentations in the application or the grant funding agreement, the full amount of the grants will be immediately repayable to the City.

Grant Amounts: Grant amounts will not be increased due to changes in project scope, cost overruns, or additional housing units.

Grant Audit: The City may audit all financial and related records associated with this Agreement including expenditures on construction costs and the use of the grant funding. This audit may include a review of all documentation associated with the project. The Applicant shall fully cooperate with any audit that is conducted by the City and provide whatever documentation is requested by the City to complete the audit. A failure to co-operate with an audit will mean that no additional grant payments will be made and prior grant payments may be required to be repaid. Audits may occur for up to six years after the final grant has been issued, and documentation must be preserved for that period of time.

Grant is Discretionary: Whether to provide a grant will be a purely discretionary decision on the part of the City. The City may refuse to issue a grant for any reason. In addition, grants are always subject to funding approval, and grants may no longer be issued if funding is no longer available or if there is a question of whether there is sufficient funding remaining in the program. There is no appeal from any decision on whether to provide a grant.

Increase in Rental Rates for Qualifying Units: Rental rates for qualifying units will not exceed the maximum qualifying proportions of Median Renter Income for Edmonton as published by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). At such time as updated figures for Median Renter Income are released, the maximum rent for qualifying units will be updated. The maximum rental rate will only be adjusted when new Median Renter Income figures are published. The City may publish these rates on its website for convenience, but in case of discrepancy, CMHC will prevail.

Maintenance: All new buildings supported by the program must be maintained for a period of 10 years. This includes general maintenance, graffiti removal, and keeping windows and doors clear of clutter, vinyl wraps, and security bars or shutters. Failure to maintain the building may require repayment of up to 50% of the grant.

Municipal Property Tax or Municipal Property Taxes: means municipal property tax and community revitalization levies calculated pursuant to Part 10, Divisions 2 and 4.1 of the Municipal Government Act, but does not include local improvement levies, special taxes, any taxation levied by the Province of Alberta including provincial education tax and requisitions, or any other type of tax.

No Appeal: There is no appeal from any decision on whether to provide a grant.

Properties with Multiple Owners: Where there are multiple owners, the owners shall designate which of the owners shall receive the grant funding.

Reservation of Rights: The City reserves the right to make decisions and award funding to projects in its sole discretion. Decisions are final, the amount of funding commitment by the City may vary in the City's sole discretion.

Calculation of Grant Amount

- The grant will be calculated annually as a partial rebate of property taxes.
- Program participants will be required to provide documentation on an annual basis that demonstrates that rents do not exceed the maximum rental amount for the Qualifying units.
- Qualifying units must remain attainable to participate in the program.
- If rents exceed attainable levels, the annual grant will not be paid, and the grant agreement may be terminated at the City's discretion, with a requirement to repay grants already received.
- Program participants will be required to pay their full property taxes each year. Upon payment, a grant will be paid equal to the increase in property taxes above the pre-construction baseline, multiplied by the percentage of units in the building that qualify as attainable. (Detailed Calculations are provided below).
- If, during the course of construction, the municipal property taxes owing in a given year are less than the baseline tax, then no grant will be paid.

The grant will be paid for a maximum of 10 years as long as qualifying units remain eligible. However, grant payments will not be payable beyond the expiry of this program in 2044.

Baseline Property Tax

The amount of municipal property taxes that are paid in the year in which the application is submitted will be considered to be the baseline tax.

Detailed Calculation

Calculation 1) Annual Grant Calculation for Building with only residential uses:

- a) Annual Grant Payment = [Current Year Municipal Property Taxes] - [Baseline Property Taxes] x [Proportion of units that are qualifying]

Calculation 2) Annual Grant Calculation for buildings with a mix of residential and non-residential uses.

- a) If non-residential municipal property taxes in the current year exceed the Baseline Property Tax

- i) Annual Grant Payment = [Current Year Municipal Residential Property Taxes] x [Proportion of units that are qualifying]
- b) If non-residential municipal property taxes in the current year are less than the Baseline Property Tax
 - i) Annual Grant Payment = [Current Year Municipal Residential Property Taxes] - ([Baseline Property Taxes] - [Current Year Municipal Non-Residential Property Taxes]) x [Proportion of units that are qualifying]

An example of how the grant would be calculated for a building with a mix of residential and non-residential uses is available in Schedule C.

Calculation of Complex Situations

In complex situations, such as buildings that are anticipated to be partially exempt from property taxes, properties anticipated to receive the Brownfield Redevelopment Incentive, properties with a mix of rental and condominium units, and other situations identified by the City after reviewing the application, the calculation of the grant will be established in the Grant Funding Agreement based on the particular circumstances of the building in question.

Other Taxes

The grant shall not pay for any provincial taxes and requisitions, local improvement taxes, special taxes, or any other form of tax or levy other than municipal property tax.

Supplementary Taxes

If there are supplementary taxes as a result of the property being completed during a taxation year, an additional grant may be paid to offset the supplementary municipal taxes for that year.

Responsibility to Pay all Property Taxes

Property owners will continue to be responsible for the payment of all taxes by the due date for the tax to avoid penalties. Grants shall never be paid to offset penalties.

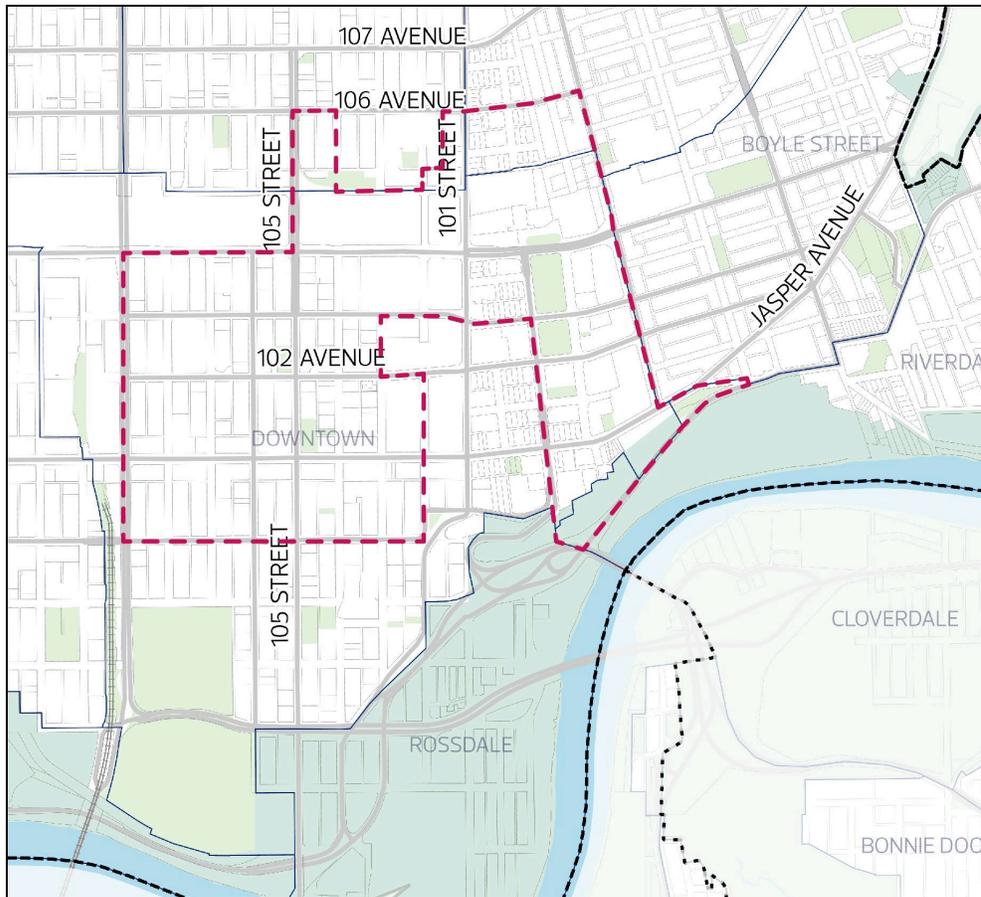
FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact the program team:
Attainable Housing Incentive

Email: urbanrenewal@edmonton.ca
Website: edmonton.ca/build-downtown

SCHEDULE A: PROGRAM BOUNDARY

This program is currently available only within the boundary of the Capital City Downtown Community Revitalization Levy area.



Attainable Housing Program Boundary - - - - -

SCHEDULE B: ELIGIBILITY FOR OTHER INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

Applicants are encouraged to seek funding sources to ensure the viability of their project. However, projects receiving other sources of funding may not be eligible under this program. Specifically:

- Units within a project that are receiving funding from another City-administered grant program will not be counted as qualifying units under this program.
- Projects receiving grants or exemptions based on property tax. Grant programs that involve a rebate of property taxes, or that may affect the tax-exempt status of the project, require special consideration as described below.

Project-specific information will be provided to applicants in conditional approval letters.

Examples of existing grants/funding sources include:

A non exhaustive list of examples of existing grants/funding sources include:

Brownfield Redevelopment Grants

- There is no conflict with Phase 1 or 2 Brownfield Redevelopment Grants.
- Phase 3 Brownfield grants are also calculated as a rebate of property taxes. Projects may participate in both grant programs, however, in no year shall the grant amount exceed 100% of the property tax uplift. Grant Funding Agreements for projects participating in both programs will detail how the grant amount will be calculated.

Downtown Student Housing Incentive

- Downtown Student Housing Incentive (DSHI) recipients require Building Permits approved by Nov 9, 2026. Should a project qualify for both programs, the Attainable Housing program would apply to the non-Student Housing Units only.
- Any unit that has been or is subject to a DSHI agreement will not be considered as a qualifying unit under the Attainable Housing program, even if the DSHI agreement is cancelled.
 - For example, if 40% of units in a building are covered by a DSHI agreement, the other 60% would be eligible for the Attainable Housing Program would be 60%.

Affordable Housing Investment Program (AHIP)

- Participants may receive funding from AHIP as well as this program. However, the same units cannot qualify for AHIP and this program.
- Properties that are anticipated to be exempt or partially exempt from property taxes may require a different grant calculation that will be detailed in the Grant Funding Agreement.

Grants from other Orders of Government

- Participants may receive funding from other orders of government as well as this program.
- Properties that are anticipated to be exempt or partially exempt from property taxes may require a different grant calculation that will be detailed in the Grant Funding Agreement.

Development Incentive Program/Storefront Improvement Grant

- Storefront Improvement grant participants may receive funding from either of these programs, as well as the Attainable Housing Program

Infill Infrastructure Fund/Downtown Infrastructure Fund/Green and Walkable Downtown

- Incentive programs that fund public or publicly-accessible infrastructure in support of a new development are not in conflict with this program. Participants may receive funding from both programs.

Village at Ice District Infrastructure

- The Capital City Downtown CRL Plan states that the Village at Ice District development is not eligible for this incentive.

SCHEDULE C: EXAMPLE GRANT CALCULATION

The following is an example of how the amount of the grant would be calculated:

Grant Year	Baseline	1	2-10
Activity	Application is Submitted	Construction Completed mid-year	Complete
Total Units		150	150
Qualifying Attainable Units		60	60
COM assessment	\$5,000,000*	\$1,000,000	\$3,000,000
RES assessment	\$0	\$16,000,000	\$42,000,000
Commercial Municipal Taxes	\$121,114**	\$27,030	\$83,272
Residential Municipal Taxes		\$160,505	\$440,054
Supplementary Commercial Municipal Taxes		\$14,061	
Supplementary Residential Municipal Tax		\$69,887	
Baseline Tax		\$121,114	\$121,114
Municipal Tax Uplift		(Calculation 2a) \$160,505 - (\$121,114-\$27,030) = \$66,421	(Calculation 2a) \$440,054 - (\$121,114-\$83,272) = \$402,212
Qualifying Proportion		40%	40%
Grant Amount		\$66,421 x 40% = \$26,568	\$402,212 x 40% = \$160,885
Supplementary Grant Amount		\$83,948 x 40% = \$33,579	

Total grant paid over 10 years is \$1,508,112. This calculation assumes assessments and property tax rates do not change.

*Assumed to be equal to the CRL Baseline

**2025 Mill rates are used for illustrative purposes