



## REPORT

2022 Budget Committee

**Meeting Date: December 14, 2021**

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**FROM:** Planning Services Department

**DATE:** November 16, 2021

**SUBJECT: Heritage Grant Program - Proposed Budget Increase**

**LOCATION:** Town-wide

**WARD:** Town-wide

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### RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the report titled '*Heritage Grant Program – Proposed Budget Increase*' dated November 16, 2021 from Planning Services, be received.
2. That Council approve the increase of the Heritage Grant Program annual budget from \$90,000 to \$120,000.

### KEY FACTS:

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- The Heritage Grant Program has been offered by the Town of Oakville for eight years with \$90,000 available in funding each year, occasionally supplemented with developer fees/contributions.
- The Heritage Grant Program funds important restoration projects that improve structural stability and preserve exterior systems such as walls, roofs and windows, as well as other heritage attributes of designated heritage properties.
- To date, the Heritage Grant Program will have provided \$678,000 in heritage grants to assist with more than 140 restoration and conservation projects worth more than \$3.2 million.

### BACKGROUND:

2021 marked the eighth year of the Heritage Grant Program, which Council approved on an annual basis on May 16, 2016, following the successful completion of a three-year pilot program. The grant program was developed to provide funding

for owners of properties designated under Part IV or Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The program sets out criteria for eligible conservation work, and defines what projects are not eligible to receive funding. Grants can be applied for as matching funding up to a maximum contribution of \$15,000. The program offers a total of \$90,000 in funding each year through the Town's operating budget but occasionally additional funds are available from unused grants, developer contributions or heritage fees.

The following chart provides an overview of the Heritage Grant Program statistics to date:

Program Year	Number of Projects	Requested Funding	Funding Available	Value of Projects
2014 (pilot)	28	\$235,000	\$80,000	\$500,000
2015 (pilot)	26	\$172,000	\$80,000	\$466,000
2016 (pilot)	23	\$138,000	\$80,000	\$370,000
2017	25	\$181,000	\$90,000	\$402,000
2018	19	\$164,000	\$90,000 + \$5,000	\$478,000
2019	51	\$379,000	\$90,000 + \$25,175	\$1,000,000
2020	25	\$207,000	\$90,000	\$510,000
2021	39	\$253,000	\$90,000 + \$53,275	\$740,000

The Heritage Grant Program has been incredibly well received by the owners of designated properties in Oakville. Providing assistance for restoration projects has emphasized Oakville's commitment to conserving properties of cultural heritage value through financial contributions. Heritage properties can be expensive to maintain and restore due to specialized materials, products and trades. While every property owner is responsible for maintaining their buildings and landscapes, a heritage property owner will pay a premium for work that is completed in accordance with best practices in heritage conservation. The Heritage Grant Program recognizes the extra effort and cost that heritage property owners are responsible for in order to maintain the heritage character of Oakville's unique heritage properties. It does not cover the entire cost of repairs or restoration, but it does help offset the premiums paid by heritage property owners.

Past recipients of grants from the Heritage Grant Program have shared their thanks with staff and councillors to help maintain their heritage properties, some of whom would not be able to complete the required work without the assistance of the Program.

The Heritage Grant Program has been consistently oversubscribed for each year the program has been offered. The Heritage Oakville Advisory Committee, through a

sub-committee who reviews all applications to determine funding each year, has faced difficult decisions in how to fund eligible projects every year. The reduction in available grant funding has resulted in a reduction of the work able to be completed by property owners who are reliant on the program for funds to complete the entirety of their projects. While the Heritage Grant Program has proven successful, increased funding to the program could provide full funding requests or support additional projects.

At the Planning and Development Council meeting on May 10, 2021, Council supported the following motion made by Councillor Duddeck:

- 1. That the 2021 funding allotment as attached in 'Appendix A - Recommended Grant Projects and Maximum Approved Amounts' to the report titled Heritage Grant Program 2021 dated April 27, 2021, be endorsed.*
- 2. That the Oakville Heritage Grant Program for 2022 be increased to \$120,000.00 and this request be forwarded to 2022 Budget Committee for consideration.*

The review of previous grant years demonstrates the value of financial support and incentives for property owners who are stewards of Oakville's cultural heritage resources. Heritage Planning staff recommend that the 2022 Budget Committee increase the annual funding for the Heritage Grant Program from \$90,000 to \$120,000.

**CONSIDERATIONS:**

**(A) PUBLIC**

The Heritage Grant Program is open to all owners of designated heritage property under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

**(B) FINANCIAL**

As discussed in the report.

**(C) IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS & USERS**

The program is managed by Planning Services with assistance from the Finance Department to secure and release funding for the program.

**(D) CORPORATE STRATEGIC GOALS**

This report addresses the corporate strategic goal(s) to:

- be accountable in everything we do
- be fiscally sustainable

**(E) CLIMATE CHANGE/ACTION**

A Climate Emergency was declared by Council in June 2019 for the purposes of strengthening the Oakville community commitment in reducing carbon footprints. The Heritage Grant Program encourages the restoration of historic materials, which diverts waste from landfills. The greenest building is the one that already exists and the Heritage Grant Program helps owners of designated properties maintain their buildings.

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