

## REPORT

### Planning and Development Council

Meeting Date: May 10, 2021

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**FROM:** Planning Services Department

**DATE:** April 27, 2021

**SUBJECT:** **Heritage Grant Program 2021**

**LOCATION:** Town-wide

**WARD:** Town-wide

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#### RECOMMENDATION:

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.

#### KEY FACTS:

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

- This is the eighth year of the Heritage Grant Program, which is an annual program with \$90,000 available in funding each year.
- Additional funds are available for this project year from developer contributions, fees and unused grants from previous years.
- 39 project applications were received requesting over \$253,000 in funding for conservation work on designated heritage properties.
- Restoration projects that improve structural stability and preserve exterior systems such as walls, roofs and windows were given priority during the evaluation process to ensure that the program funding supports the projects most necessary to preserve heritage buildings.
- Including this program year, 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:

This is 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

This report provides recommendations for the allocation of the 2021 heritage grant funding and demonstrates the ongoing success of the program.

## COMMENTS:

### 2021 Heritage Grant Program Recommendations

The 2021 Heritage Grant Program continues to be very well-received by owners of heritage designated properties. Heritage planning staff received more than 50 inquiries about the program and 39 applications requesting over \$253,000 in grant funding.

The 2021 program was launched the second week of January 2021 and applications were received until March 19, 2021. The seventh year of the Heritage Grant Program continues the success of the program, with the combined value of the proposed projects at more than \$740,000.

Heritage planning staff and five members of the Heritage Oakville Advisory Committee formed a working group to evaluate the applications. As with previous years, the working group had the choice to fund six to eight applications to the maximum requested amount or to distribute the grant money to a maximum number of applicants. Given that many of the applications were for similar projects (i.e.

stucco repairs, historic roof replacement, window restorations), the working group felt it was important to distribute the available funding to as many worthy projects as possible. This is consistent with the approach to grant allocation for the past program years.

In order to allocate grant funding consistently and fairly, the working group ranked priority projects in order to determine how much funding each project would receive. High priority projects were considered as follows:

- Projects that propose restoration work of a structural nature. These projects include work to foundations and masonry systems necessary to the stability of the historic building.
- Projects that restore existing heritage attributes that are integral to the preservation of the superstructure (wall systems, roof) of the heritage building. Many of these projects involve restoration of historic windows and replacement/new wood storm windows, as well as significant repairs to historic stucco.

The working group has recommended that all of the 39 applications receive at least some level of funding from the Heritage Grant Program. The recommended projects are attached to this report as Appendix A. These recommendations were endorsed by the Heritage Oakville Advisory Committee at the meeting on April 20, 2021.

Each approved project has been provided with a 'maximum grant amount', so that they may receive 50% of the costs of their approved projects to the maximum amount. Grant recipients will still be encouraged to complete their entire projects as proposed, but if they are not able to, a minimum scope of work will be required to be eligible for funding. As long as the grant recipient has met the approved minimum scope of work, the project will be eligible for 50% of the costs up to the maximum approved amount.

Following consideration by Council, all applicants will be notified of the decision regarding their application, and if applicable, the minimum scope of work to be completed.

As outlined in the Heritage Grant Program Procedures, grants will be provided to successful applicants at the satisfactory completion of their project. Grant recipients are required to contact heritage planning staff to arrange for an inspection to ensure that the completed work matches the approved project. If work does not meet the satisfaction of heritage planning staff, the grant funds will be withheld until the project does meet the satisfaction of heritage planning staff. Invoices must also be presented at the inspection to ensure that grant recipients have covered 50% or more of their approved project costs. If a project is completed under budget and the

maximum approved amount is more than 50% of the project costs, the grant recipient will receive only 50% of the final project costs.

#### Additional Funds

Additional funds were available for this program year from several sources:

- Unused grant funding from 2016 - \$8,750
- Fees for heritage address changes - \$1,000
- Developer contribution - \$43,525

Additional funds vary from year to year and are not a reliable source of income for the Heritage Grant Program, but the additional funds are much appreciated when they are available.

#### Conclusion

The eighth year of the Heritage Grant Program has built upon the achievements of the past seven years. 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.

The Heritage Oakville Advisory Committee has reviewed the recommendations for the Heritage Grant Program 2021 and endorsed them at their meeting on April 20, 2021.

Heritage planning staff consider the eighth year of the Heritage Grant Program a resounding success and look forward to the improvements that will be made to Oakville's heritage properties as a result of this important program.

Heritage planning staff recommend that Council endorse the approval of the 2021 heritage grant amounts as attached in Appendix A.

### **CONSIDERATIONS:**

#### **(A) PUBLIC**

All applicants to the Heritage Grant Program will be notified of the approval/rejection of their application and the grant amount, if approved, following Council approval.

#### **(B) FINANCIAL**

Funding for the Heritage Grant Program was approved through the town's annual budget process.

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

Heritage planning staff will continue to work with staff from the Finance Department to award heritage grants following the completion of approved projects.

**(D) CORPORATE STRATEGIC GOALS**

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

- enhance our cultural environment
- be the most livable town in Canada

**(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.

**APPENDICES:**

Appendix A – Recommended Grant Projects and Maximum Approved Amounts

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