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Communication

CW(WS) – October 9, 2024

Item No. 2

Vaughan Pilot Designated Heritage Property Grant Program

Committee of the Whole Working Session
October 9, 2024



Background

For the past year, due to Bill 23 changes to the *Ontario Heritage Act*, which mandated cities to evaluate all buildings on their municipal register and either designate or remove them from the register by January 2025, City of Vaughan Cultural Heritage Team has brought forward 33 individual designations to Council to protect the cultural heritage resources of Vaughan, with 18 completed with designation by-laws. City had **139 properties** on its municipal register.

Recent Bill 200 extended the timeline now to January 2027.



Background

Maintenance and restoration of heritage buildings is generally more costly than for non-heritage buildings, as it requires hiring heritage experts or craftsmen, and use upgraded quality more durable materials for doors, windows, cladding, and roofing restorations.

Cultural Heritage staff has been investigating current incentives programs in several Ontario municipalities to examine the feasibility of Heritage Grants and other possible heritage incentives.

City of Vaughan is the only municipality among York Region municipalities that does not have any heritage incentive.



Comparison

Municipality	Type of Program	Eligibility	Annual Cost
Mississauga Population: 712,000	Heritage Grant- – from \$500 to \$10,000, 50% of cost	All designated properties (Part IV and V, except non-contributing buildings in HCD's)	\$75,000
Hamilton Population: 330,000	Commercial Heritage Improvement and Restoration Program – provides up to \$20,000 in matching grants for conservation or restoration of heritage elements.	Commercial and industrial zoned designated or easement properties.	\$130,000
	Hamilton Community Heritage Fund interest free loan program up to \$20,000.	Any designated property.	\$1,000,000
London Population: 355,000	Heritage Grant Program Municipal contribution of 20% of projects, maximum \$20,000, minimum \$500	Designated properties	\$75,000

Comparison

Municipality	Type of Program	Eligibility	Annual Cost
Markham Population: 300,000	Heritage Tax Relief – 30% (minus Regional share of taxes) for all properties. Easement required.	Any Group 1 or 2 designated property (Part IV and V).	\$38,000
	Heritage Loan Fund – up to \$15,000 at an interest rate of 5% (or 5% below prime), 5 years to repay, lien against title of the property.	Any designated property owner.	\$200,000
	Commercial Façade Improvement Program – 50% of the cost, limit of \$10,000.	Commercial property owners in HCD's.	\$50,000 (for Façade program and Signage Programs)
	Commercial Signage Replacement 50% program limit of \$1,000.	Commercial property owners in HCD's.	
	Residential Heritage Grant Program 50% of the cost, limit of \$5,000.	Residential Part IV or Part V property owners	\$25,000

The goal of this program is to incentivize maintenance and restoration of heritage properties.

Program Highlights

Duration of Program

2 years

Budget

Total \$200,000 - \$100,000 per year + Heritage Letters of Credit (LOCs) that City would draw should the heritage obligations are not met. We request that Council direct staff to transfer the money to the fund for the benefit of all designated properties in Vaughan.

Amount of Assistance

Support to the owner in the form of a grant representing 50% of eligible work, up to a maximum limit of \$8,000 per property.

Heritage Property Eligibility

Properties must be designated under Parts IV or V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. In the case of Part V (Heritage Conservation Districts), only properties identified in a district plan as being 'contributing' to the cultural heritage value or interest of the HCD (as identified in the HCD Inventory) are eligible.

Program Highlights

Eligible Projects

Work that primarily involves the repair, restoration or re-creation of heritage features or components including, but not limited to cornices, parapets, doors, windows, masonry, siding, woodwork, and verandas.

Ineligible Projects

The property is subject of a contravention including offences under a municipal by-law, work order or outstanding municipal requirements.

Existing use is not in conformity with applicable zoning bylaw regulations and other relevant planning controls.

The work that is not related to heritage attributes of the property.

PAC Application

Prior to submitting a formal application staff recommend a pre-application consultation to determine the eligibility, discuss restoration proposal with building department and heritage staff .

Building Permit may be deemed necessary under the *Ontario Building Code*.

Program Highlights

Timing and Number of Grants

Grants are to be awarded on an annual cycle following a request for applications with an established deadline.

Only one grant per calendar year per property.

First time applicants will get priority each year and repeat applicants will be considered only if the annual cap is not reached by first time recipients.

Review Process

Applications are reviewed by City (Heritage Section) staff and Heritage Vaughan Committee, and recommended submissions are forwarded to Council for approval.

Discussion Points:

1. Is the proposed budget of \$200,000 from Tax Revenue + any potential Heritage Letters of Credit (LOCs) that City would draw, appropriate?
2. Should the City seek contributions to the heritage grant to preserve other designated heritage properties in cases where demolition is unavoidable?
3. Does the approval of each grant application come to Council for approval, or can they be delegated to DCM of Planning and Growth portfolio or to Heritage Vaughan Committee with annual/biennial report to Council?
4. If the demand is high, should the approval be on a first come first serve, or should staff review based on some evaluating criteria to identify priorities?
5. Have we missed anything?