

Committee of the Whole (2) Report

DATE: Tuesday, November 12, 2024

WARD(S): ALL

TITLE: VAUGHAN PILOT DESIGNATED HERITAGE PROPERTY
GRANT PROGRAM – REVISED

FROM:

Haiqing Xu, Deputy City Manager, Planning and Growth Management

ACTION: DECISION

Purpose

To seek Council Support to implement a pilot designated heritage property grant program to assist heritage property owners in the maintenance and restoration of their heritage properties as per the attached guidelines (Attachment 1).

Report Highlights

- The proposed Vaughan pilot designated heritage property grant program would work with a grant amount of \$100,000 per year.
- The pilot program would be implemented for two (2) years.
- Applicants can submit proposals for a one-time per year grant funding of up to \$10,000 covering 50% of the cost of eligible work.
- Grant to be awarded based on first-come first-served, but prioritizing structural work and first-time applicants.
- Staff will provide a report to Council annually detailing the results of the program, the lessons learned and seek Council direction regarding the potential continuation and/or modification of the program.

Recommendations

1. THAT Council approve the Vaughan Pilot Designated Heritage Property Grant Program and associated Guidelines;

2. THAT Council direct staff to prepare a By-law in accordance with Council's approval of the recommendations in the report;
3. THAT Council approve a reserve fund for the program with an initial \$200,000 from tax revenue plus possible donations to the heritage grant program and any potential Letter of Credit posted for Heritage Preservation, Rehabilitation, or Relocation that the City would draw on if the obligations were not met; and
4. THAT all grants to be approved by Council.

Background

On October 9, 2024, Staff took the Pilot Designated Heritage Property Grant Program to Committee of the Whole Working Session to seek direction on details of the Program.

Council provided comments with regards to the amount, creating different categories for commercial properties and residential properties, potential donations vs fines under municipal by law, and delegation authority.

Staff have revised the following in the program in response to Council comments:

1. Amount of Assistance was increased from \$8,000 to \$10,000 covering 50% of the eligible costs with the following breakdown:
 - Structural repairs: Up to a max \$10,000 for both commercial and residential properties
 - Non-Structural/Aesthetic:
 - Commercial/Industrial properties up to a max \$5,000
 - Residential properties up to a max \$10,000
2. A recommendation to accept donations to preserve the City's cultural heritage resources was added.
3. Language was added in the guidelines regarding dispute resolution between the City and the Applicant:
 - In case of a conflict between city staff and the applicant after initial approval, the application will be escalated to Council for the final decision.
4. Process was revised as per the following
 - The review of all grant applications will be undertaken by Cultural Heritage staff in consultation with Heritage Vaughan Committee.
 - The submissions will be reviewed against the Guidelines, and grants will be recommended for the projects based on the criteria stated in the Guidelines.
 - Cultural Heritage staff will provide a report on applications that are recommended for approval to Council, together with a list of all applications received.

5. Staff will provide an annual update to Council to outline the success/ challenges of the program and to receive further direction.

Previous Reports/Authority

[Vaughan Pilot Designated Heritage Property Grant Program](#)

October 09, 2024, Committee of the Whole (Working Session) (Item 2)

Analysis and Options

Based on the review of heritage grant programs in 10 municipalities, the average maximum granted amount was \$6,900 typically covering up to 50% of the cost (one municipality covered only up to 25% of the cost). There were no municipalities that offered a 100% of the cost.

The research showed grant amounts ranging from \$11,000 to \$150,000 and dependent on specifics of the program –ie. some municipalities have two sub-programs which allow applicants to specifically apply for rebates on foundation work.

This Heritage Grant fund is drawn from a reserved pool of money determined by Council. In all cases, the Heritage Grant is applied for a specific project on a property that must be approved through the Heritage Permit process and payment is provided as a lump sum after the approved works have been completed and the property owner has submitted their final invoice of eligible costs to the satisfaction of the Manager of Urban Design and Cultural Heritage.

The economic impact of this tool can be easily measured, from a finite pool of money that can be set aside annually.

Details of the Program

The Guidelines (Attachment 1) present the full details of the Program, which include the following highlights:

a) Amount of Assistance:

Support to the owner is in the form of a grant up to a max \$10,000 per application covering 50% of eligible costs

- Structural repairs: Up to a max \$10,000 for both commercial and residential properties
- Non-Structural/Aesthetic:
 - Commercial/Industrial properties up to a max \$5,000
 - Residential properties up to a max \$10,000

b) 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.

- c) 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.
- d) 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 by law regulations and other relevant planning controls.
 - The work that is not related to heritage attributes of the property.
- e) 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. An owner of multiple heritage properties can apply for an application for each property.
 - First time applicants and structural restoration will receive priority each year. Repeat applicants will be considered only if the annual cap is not reached by first time recipients.
- f) Eligible Costs: The cost of materials, equipment and contracted labour, but not donated labour or materials or labour performed by the applicant.
- g) Cost Estimates: Two separate estimates of work (due to the specialized nature of the work) are to be provided by a licensed contractor (other than the owner) for consideration.
- h) Review Process: Applications are reviewed by City (Heritage Section) staff in consultation with Heritage Vaughan Committee, and recommended submissions are forwarded to Council for approval, together with a list of all applications received.
- i) Timeframe for Completion of Work: Grant commitments are valid for one year and expire if the work is not completed within that time period (an extension of one year may be granted at the discretion of the Manager of Urban Design and Cultural Heritage).
- j) Written Agreement: Approved applicants will be required to enter into a Letter of Understanding with the City.

Financial Impact

The program requires an initial fund of \$200,000 from tax revenue.

Operational Impact

There are no additional Operational Regional impacts or considerations.

Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations

There are no broader Regional impacts or considerations.

Conclusion

This program provides much needed assistance to heritage property homeowners to maintain and restore the property and aligns with the Council's Strategic Priorities by working to preserve resources and features of cultural heritage value in order to foster community well-being.

For more information, please contact Shahrzad Davoudi-Strike, Manager of Urban Design and Cultural Heritage, at extension 8653.

Attachments

1. City of Vaughan Designated Heritage Property Grant Program Guidelines
2. Comparison of Heritage Incentive Programs in Ontario
3. List of Part IV Heritage Designated Properties that can potentially be eligible for Program

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