



**DESIGNATED HERITAGE PROPERTY  
GRANT PROGRAM**

**GUIDELINES  
2025-2026**

# DESIGNATED HERITAGE PROPERTY GRANT PROGRAM

## Development Planning Department

## Urban Design and Cultural Heritage

### 1.0 Purpose of the Program

The purpose of the Designated Heritage Property Grant Program is to offer financial assistance on a cost sharing basis to owners of properties of cultural heritage significance towards the conservation and restoration of property's heritage attributes.

### 2.0 Definitions

**Act** means the *Ontario Heritage Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. O.18, as amended from time to time.

**Applicant** means the owner of the property applying for a grant, or their agent, if such agent is authorized in writing by the owner to act as agent for making the application.

**Eligible Heritage Property** means real property, including all buildings and structures thereon, located within the City of Vaughan, that has either been Designated under Part IV Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* (OHA), or is within the boundary of a Heritage Conservation District (HCD) designated under Part V of the OHA and which has been identified as being a 'contributing' property within the HCD.

**Eligible Conservation Work** means that which is described in section 5.1 of this document.

**Eligible Property** means that which is described in section 3.0 of this document.

**Guidelines** means the City's Designated Heritage Property Grant Program Guidelines, as may be amended from time to time.

**Heritage Attributes** means the principal exterior architectural and aesthetic features, characteristics, context and appearance that contribute to the cultural heritage significance of an eligible property.

**Heritage Vaughan** means the City's municipal heritage advisory committee.

**Manager** means the Manager, Urban Design and Cultural Heritage, part of the Development Planning Department for the City of Vaughan, also including delegates.

## 3.0 Eligibility

### 3.1 Eligibility Requirements

- a. Only **Eligible Heritage Properties**, as defined herein, are eligible for this program.
- b. The **Eligible Heritage Property** must not be in arrears or default of any municipal taxes, local improvements charges or any other monies owed to the City (fees or penalties).
- c. The **Eligible Heritage Property** must not be the subject of a contravention, work order or outstanding municipal requirements, unless the consent of the Deputy City Manager of Community Services is obtained. A contravention includes offences under a municipal by-law, Act or regulation for which enforcement proceedings have been commenced, but not necessarily finalized, that relates specifically to the building or land for which a grant is sought or given.
- d. Existing use of property must be in conformity with applicable zoning by-law regulations and other relevant planning controls.

### 3.2 Eligible Applicants

Owners and tenants of an **Eligible Heritage Property** may apply for assistance. Tenants are required to provide documentation of the property owner's consent to the improvements. Written consent may be either in the form of a lease indicating the lessee's authority for property renovation and repair, or written documentation of the property owner's agreement to the proposed alterations.

Heritage resources owned by any level of government are not eligible except in the following cases:

- a. where the property is under long term lease to an individual and the tenant or lessee is the applicant; or
- b. where a non-profit community group has assumed, by long-term lease or legal agreement, responsibility for the building and the non-profit community group is the applicant.

## 4.0 Grant Information

### 4.1 Amount of Grant Assistance

The amount of a grant is calculated as a maximum of fifty percent (50%) of the eligible cost of the **Eligible Conservation Work**,

- Structural repairs: Up to a max \$10,000 for both commercial and residential
- Non-Structural/Aesthetic:
  - Commercial/Industrial up to a max \$5000
  - Residential up to a max \$10,000

The owner of the property must pay the remaining fifty percent (50%) of the eligible costs as part of its contribution to the **Eligible Conservation Work**.

The costs of labour, materials and equipment related to the **Eligible Conservation Work** may be considered part of the cost of the **Eligible Conservation Work** provided proof of such costs are verified by invoices. Donated labour and materials are not considered part of the eligible costs or part of the owner's matching contribution.

Two cost estimates for the **Eligible Conservation Work** are to be provided by independent professional/licensed contractors other than the owner. The grant will not necessarily be calculated based upon the lowest estimate but will be based on the most appropriate quote for the proposed work as determined by Cultural Heritage staff, taking into consideration the cost quoted, the scope of work described and the capabilities of the contractor to complete the work. The grant will not address cost increases or over-runs.

### 4.2 Frequency of Grant

Subject to approval, an **Eligible Heritage Property** may receive one grant per calendar year. If a grant is provided, the work must be completed and inspected before another grant application may be submitted to the municipality.

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 applicants.

### 4.3 Completion of Work

Grant commitments are valid for one (1) year and expire if the work is not completed within that time period. This timeframe may be extended at the discretion of the **Manager**.

## 5.0 Eligible Projects

### 5.1 Eligible Conservation Work

For the proposed work to be eligible for a grant, it must be **Eligible Conservation Work**, which means the following:

- a. any conservation work which directly and appropriately preserves, restores or enhances specific **Heritage Attributes** and does not detract from or diminish the cultural heritage value of the property or the district including:
  - (i) preservation or conservation of existing exterior architectural elements or features which are significant (i.e. repair of deteriorated original elements such as doors and windows, siding and roofing materials, architectural trims, verandas, historic chimneys, fences and other significant features; repointing and cleaning of masonry only if the materials and methods will not cause harm to the historic masonry);
  - (ii) re-construction of significant exterior architectural elements or features which still exist, but are beyond conservation or repair (including accurate reconstructions of original features using materials, sizes and configurations which match the original);
  - (iii) restoration or re-introduction of significant exterior architectural elements or features which have been lost, but for which the appearance can be clearly determined from archival or documentary sources, or physical evidence that supports the existence of the missing feature (i.e. removal of modern material such as vinyl, PVC, fiberglass and aluminum siding and replacement with original material).
  - (iv) introduction or repair of protective elements to protect original features (i.e. wooden storm windows).
- b. any work necessary to restore the building to structural integrity including the correction of serious structural faults which threaten the building's survival (i.e. introduction of supporting beam, alterations to correct failing foundations), but not routine maintenance;
- c. any work which directly and appropriately preserves, restores or enhances specific **Heritage Attributes** associated with historic cemeteries and their features such as mausolea, dead houses, stone walls, wrought iron gates and fences which are part of the original design, but not specific grave markers, tombs or monuments;
- d. other alterations which, at the sole discretion the **Manager**, determines are important to the cultural heritage significance of the property.

Where an **Eligible Heritage Property** contains non-heritage additions or elements, or the proposed work involves new additions, only the **Heritage**

**Attributes** of the property will be subject to grant assistance.

The final determination of what constitutes **Eligible Conservation Work** is at the discretion of the **Manager**, with reference to the Guidelines, and the final decision is made by the Council of the City of Vaughan.

## **5.2 Ineligible Work/Projects**

Ineligible work includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. Interior work, unless related to structural issues;
- b. Short term, routine maintenance;
- c. Work on modern additions or work to accommodate modern renovations to a building of cultural heritage value;
- d. Landscaping;
- e. Paving;
- f. Lighting, unless repair or restoration of a Heritage Attribute;
- g. Signs and commemorative plaques;
- h. Eaves-trough, unless considered significant architectural features of the building such as those with decorative elements or those made from long- lasting materials such as copper and lead;
- i. Mechanical systems and insulation;
- j. Skylights;
- k. Poor or defective work;
- l. Non-permanent fixtures.

## **5.3 Eligible Costs**

Eligible costs shall be the cost of materials, equipment and contracted labour to complete eligible conservation, restoration or preservation work, documented by invoices to the satisfaction of the **Manager**. Labour provided by the applicant or tenant of the building will not be an eligible cost.

The grant is paid upon completion of the previously approved work, subject to compliance with these **Guidelines**.

## **5.4 Approval Considerations**

All works must be pre-approved by Cultural Heritage staff, reviewed and recommended to Council for approval, and must receive a building permit if deemed necessary under the Ontario Building Code. All works completed will be verified by Cultural Heritage staff and kept on record. The City may pre-qualify contractors to undertake the work.

The following considerations will apply when reviewing all applications for grant assistance:

- a. Preference will be given to applications where the integrity of the **Eligible Heritage Property** may be threatened if the proposed conservation work is not undertaken
- b. Preference will be given to applications proposing work visible to the general public;
- c. The project should generally comply with acknowledged heritage conservation principles, policies and guidelines including, but not limited to, a specific Vaughan HCD Plan, policies of the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism (or its successor), and the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada;
- d. The scope of the work is clear, logical and demonstrates the maximum retention of the historic fabric and **Heritage Attributes**;
- e. Grant assistance can only be obtained for projects which have received municipal approval prior to work being initiated.
- f. The grant program should not reward poor stewardship.

## 6.0 Application Details

### 6.1 Application Deadline

Grants are to be awarded on an annual cycle following a request for applications within a deadline established by the **Manager**, and published from time to time on the City's website and in other media, at the discretion of the **Manager**.

### 6.2 Application Requirements

#### a. Application Form

The **Applicant** is required to complete an application form available from the Development Planning Department (Vaughan City Hall) or from the City's website. The **Applicant** is encouraged to engage a professional (architect, engineer or designer) to assist with decisions on alterations and provide the necessary drawings.

#### b. Information to Accompany Application

The application must include all the details necessary for a full understanding of the proposed work, and shall include:

- (i) A professionally prepared and scaled drawing of the proposed work, including any specific details as may be required by the **Manager**. Depending on the nature and extent of the work, a building permit and the required drawings may be required.
- (ii) Samples of proposed materials or colours, and any

product information.

- (iii) the cost estimates required by clause 4.1 hereof.

### **6.3 Application Process**

The Designated Heritage Property Grant Program will be administered by Vaughan's Development Planning Department. The Cultural Heritage Section will co-ordinate the program. Applications will be considered on the basis of first-come first-served in conjunction with the outlined criteria whilst funds are still available.

#### ***Step 1. Determine if you are eligible***

Prior to submitting a formal application for financial assistance, it is recommended that the following steps be undertaken:

- a. Determine if the property is eligible to receive funding. Contact the Cultural Heritage Section.
- b. Discuss any restoration or rehabilitation proposal with the Building Department to determine any zoning or other building regulations.
- c. Discuss any restoration or rehabilitation proposal with a Heritage Section staff member
- d. When an application is deemed eligible by Cultural Heritage staff, a report with recommendation of approval by City Council will be prepared; a Building Permit may be deemed necessary under the *Ontario Building Code*.
- e. Secure a grant application form from the Development Planning Counter or from the City's website and complete and return it with the necessary documentation.

This consultation stage should help to avoid ineligible proposals.

#### ***Step 2. Submit your application***

Submit a completed application with all required materials before the deadline date.

#### ***Step 3. Staff Review***

The application will be reviewed by City Staff to ensure that it meets all the eligibility requirements, including confirmation that no municipal requirements are outstanding.

#### ***Step 4. Grant Review Committee***

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 that are most deserving based on the outlined criteria in this



document.

Cultural Heritage staff will report on applications that are recommended for approval to Council together with a list of all applications received.

***Step 5. Approval by Council***

All grants will require approval by Council, or Council's delegate Authority.

***Step 6. Notification/ Legal Agreement***

**Applicants** who secure grant approval will be notified and required to enter into a Letter of Understanding with the municipality. This document establishes a formal arrangement between the **Applicant** and the City and outlines the amount of the grant and the project completion date. The Letter of Understanding must be signed and returned to the City.

If an application is unsuccessful, a letter will be sent confirming that a grant will not be issued.

***Step 7. Undertaking the Improvements***

Nothing contained in the grant application procedures or approval relieves the applicant from obtaining all necessary municipal planning and building department approvals. All work must be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Ontario Building Code and municipal by-laws.

The applicant is required to obtain the consent of the **Manager** for any changes to the project which are proposed during the course of the work.

***Step 8. Issuing the Grant***

Before a grant will be paid by the City, the following must occur:

- (a) the **Eligible Conservation Work** must be completed within one (1) year from the date of approval of the grant by Council or Councils delegate Authority and be completed to the satisfaction of the **Manager**.

In exceptional cases, the timeframe for project completion may be extended. In such cases, a written request, stating the reasons for required for the extension, must be submitted by the applicant for review and approval at the discretion of the **Manager**;

- (b) The **Eligible Conservation Work** must be completely paid for by the owner with documentation to verify such payment (i.e. copies of paid invoices), and the work completed to the satisfaction of the **Manager**;
- (c) the **Manager** must be in receipt of all required documentation as identified in the **Guidelines** (i.e. paid invoices), and any other documentation reasonably required by the **Manager**;

- (d) the completed **Eligible Conservation Work** must reflect the **Eligible Conservation Work** that was approved by Council or as amended by the **Manager**. Heritage Section is responsible for the inspection to ensure that works have been completed as proposed.
- (e) The City reserves the right to withhold the payment of all or a portion of the grant if the work has not been substantially completed in accordance with the approved plans and specifications, or payment documentation, such as invoices, are incomplete, unclear or have not been submitted. In case of a conflict between city staff and the applicant after initial approval, the application will be escalated to Council for decision and applicant must agree that Council decision would be final on the matter.
- (f) If the cost of the completed work is less than the original amount upon which the grant was calculated, the grant will be revised to reflect fifty percent (50%) of the new cost.

## **7.0 General Information**

### **7.1 Funding Availability**

Funding for this grant program will be considered on a biennial basis by Vaughan City Council as part of its overall budget process. Individual grants are approved subject to the availability of funding.

### **7.2 Continuation of the Program**

The City, in its sole discretion, may change or discontinue this program at any time.

### **7.3 By-law**

This program has been created by municipal by-law.

### **For further information, please contact:**

Cultural Heritage Section  
Urban Design and Cultural Heritage  
Development Planning Department  
City of Vaughan  
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive  
Vaughan ON, L6A 1T1  
[CulturalHeritage@vaughan.ca](mailto:CulturalHeritage@vaughan.ca)