

Staff Report 2023-0140

Meeting Date: March 21, 2023

Subject: Update to Designated Heritage Property Grant Program

Submitted By: Cassandra Jasinski, Heritage Planner, Strategic Policy Planning,
Planning Department

RECOMMENDATION

That a by-law be enacted to amend By-law 2013-99, as amended, to update the Heritage Property Grant Program Guidelines attached as Schedule A to Staff Report 2023-0140 and in accordance with the proposed By-law attached as Schedule C to Staff Report 2023-0140.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The Designated Heritage Property Grant (the “DHPG”) program helps designated heritage property owners with small to mid-size conservation projects.
- The DHPG program currently provides grants of 50% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$4,000 per grant.
- As part of the Bill 23 Heritage Prioritization Strategy, staff are reviewing the heritage incentive programs offered by the Town, starting with the DHPG program.
- Staff recommend that the maximum grant amount be increased to \$6,000 and that the Town expand the program to include additional types of eligible work.
- These changes to the DHPG program provide current designated property owners with more support and is an integral incentive for the designation of more heritage properties across Caledon.
- Staff recommend that the DHPG program by-law be amended to update the Program Guidelines as outlined in this report and attached as Schedule A.

DISCUSSION

Program History

The DHPG program was originally established by By-law 2006-34 as a financial incentive program to promote and support stewardship of designated heritage properties. Originally run by the Caledon Heritage Foundation, the administration of the program transferred to the Town in 2010 (resolution no. 2010-32). The Town currently offers a grant that matches up to \$4,000, which property owners can apply for twice per year, depending on available funds.

The Town previously updated the program in 2013, 2019 and 2021 to address, amongst other matters, the establishment of the Bolton Heritage Conservation District and the introduction of the Heritage Tax Rebate program.

Bill 23

Bill 23, announced by the Province on October 25, 2022, included a wide range of amendments to the *Ontario Heritage Act*, most of which came into force and effect on January 1, 2023. The amendments greatly limit the Town's ability to protect its listed, non-designated cultural heritage resources.

As first introduced in Staff Report 2023-0066, Heritage staff are preparing a Heritage Strategy to protect Caledon's significant cultural heritage resources. One of the components of the Heritage Prioritization Strategy is a review of the Town's heritage incentive programs, which includes the DHPG Program.

Proposed Changes to the Designated Heritage Property Grant Program

Increase in Maximum Grant to Six Thousand (\$6,000) Dollars

The financial summary of the DHPG Program from 2019-2022 (Schedule B) resulted in several observations, including the following:

- The Town supports approximately 10 applications/grant round, or 20/year
- On average, owners collectively dedicate \$277,500 annually towards heritage conservation projects for their properties as part of the program
- The program has provided support for 22.6% of the combined estimated cost of these projects
- While the average grant amount is just over \$3,000, the average cost estimate for supported conservation projects is \$14,515
- Approximately half of all grants are approved to receive the current maximum grant of \$4,000

The financial summary indicates that the current maximum grant of \$4,000 is sufficient for roughly half of all applicants; at least half of the conservation projects the Town is supporting are estimated to cost \$8,000 or more, with the average cost of a conservation project closer to \$15,000.

As a result, Heritage staff recommend an increase in the grant maximum to \$6,000, which will offer more support for the average project cost while also maintaining the Town's ability to offer the grant to as many eligible applicants as possible. The total budget for the DHPG program for 2023 is \$80,000.

Increase in Range of Eligible Work

Heritage staff also reviewed the list of work eligible for heritage grant support. Eligible grant work has historically focused on the conservation of exterior heritage attributes. However, Heritage staff propose that an additional range of projects, including select

interior renovation work, receive grant support to assist property owners with larger-scale rehabilitation projects.

The expanded list of eligible work addresses the following:

- program gaps for maintenance of existing wood windows
- support for larger projects involving the stabilization and rehabilitation of heritage buildings

Additional types of work proposed for heritage grant support include:

- Preparation of architectural and engineering drawings, and feasibility studies for the heritage portions of all designated heritage properties (not just those run by non-profit organizations)
- Replacement of knob and tube wiring with code-compliant electrical work
- Seasonal installation/removal of wood storm windows
- Installation of interior storm windows
- Removal of asbestos, mould, lead paint, urea formaldehyde and other contaminants, where determined appropriate by the Grant Review Group
- Floodproofing/waterproofing of foundation, where deemed appropriate by the Grant Review Group
- Roof re-shingling with modern materials that simulate a historic roofing material, and where the modern material does not replace a Heritage Attribute

Overall Rewrite of the DHPG Program Guidelines

Heritage staff have rewritten the DHPG program guidelines to make them easier to use and understand while maintaining the necessary content. Heritage staff will work with other Town departments to produce a promotional version of the DHPG program guidelines should Council approve the by-law update.

Repeal of Redundant By-laws

Council passed By-law 2021-17 to delete and replace the DHPG program guidelines which form Schedule A to the DHPG program by-law. As Schedule A is being replaced again, By-law 2021-17 is redundant and should be repealed.

Conclusion

Staff recommend that the DHPG program by-law be amended to update the DHPG program guidelines as outlined in this report and attached as Schedule A. Together, the increase to the maximum grant and the expanded range of eligible work will help existing designated property owners and act as an incentive for the designation of more of Caledon's heritage properties.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The budget for the DHPG program for 2023 is \$80,000. Uptake of the new grant amount will be evaluated and incorporated into the 2024 budget.

COUNCIL WORK PLAN

Connected Community

This report fosters a connected community by preserving heritage

ATTACHMENTS

Schedule A: Proposed Guidelines for the Designated Heritage Grant Program

Schedule B: Designated Heritage Property Grant Program Financial Summary

Schedule C: Proposed By-law to Amend By-law 2013-99