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Town of Aurora

## Memorandum

Planning and Development Services

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**Re:** Draft Heritage Grant Program

**To:** Heritage Advisory Committee

**From:** Adam Robb, MPL, MCIP, RPP, CAHP, PLE  
Manager, Policy Planning and Heritage

**Date:** December 9, 2024

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### Recommendation

1. That the memorandum regarding Draft Heritage Grant Program be received; and
2. That the Heritage Advisory Committee comments regarding Draft Heritage Grant Program be received and referred to staff for consideration and further action as appropriate.

### Background

In May 2024, Council passed a motion to establish a Heritage Grant Program. On June 10, 2024, a memorandum was presented to the Heritage Advisory Committee seeking feedback on the development of the Grant Program. The draft Heritage Grant Program is now being presented to the Heritage Advisory Committee for additional comment prior to proceeding to Council for adoption.

### Analysis

**The draft Heritage Grant Program has been developed incorporating feedback received from the Heritage Advisory Committee**

Upon initial consultation with the Heritage Advisory Committee, comments were provided regarding the need to prioritize façade improvements, acknowledge and provide grant opportunities for commercial properties including graffiti removals that do not necessarily require a heritage permit, to start gradual with the program but allow for expansion in the future, to provide categorization of eligible works, and to seek partnership opportunities with local hardware providers as the program rolls out. The

draft Heritage Grant Program as presented in the attached largely incorporates these comments, with primary elements of the Program including:

- That the grant program is only available to designated heritage properties.
- The development of clear eligibility requirements based on minor, moderate, and major works with corresponding grant values of \$1,000, \$5,000 and \$10,000 dollars with a yearly cap of \$30,000 for the Program overall, which can be expanded as needed in the future. Applicants will also be required to provide multiple cost estimates as part of the application, and if estimates are less than the eligibility categories, the lesser value is used.
- Clear distinction that the awarding of any grant funding is strictly at the discretion of Council through recommendations made by the Heritage Advisory Committee. Just because the funding categories and overall cap are set above does not mean that it all needs to be spent in any given year.
- Recognition that the majority of works will require an accompanying heritage permit and approval. Exceptions are noted for certain minor works like graffiti removal, which may not necessitate a heritage permit.
- The requirements for a thorough review, approval, and inspection process prior to funding being provided. It is anticipated that staff and members of the Heritage Advisory Committee will be involved in the final inspection process.
- Recognizing that applicant eligibility is based on a property only being eligible for the grant once every 5 years. In exceptional circumstances the Heritage Advisory Committee and Council are authorized to make exceptions. Grant funding is to be allocated on a first-come first-serve basis.

Partnerships with local hardware suppliers and vendors are also continuing to be explored. It is anticipated that these opportunities will continue to be explored on an ongoing basis as the Grant Program is rolled out, providing an opportunity for the Town to connect applicants with partnered hardware providers directly.

The attached Heritage Grant Program still remains draft and is subject to any further comment and refinement prior to proceeding to Council for final adoption in 2025.

## **Attachments**

1. Attachment 1 – Draft Heritage Grant Program