



Report to: Development Services Committee

Report Date: May 6, 2014

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<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Commercial Façade Improvement Grant Program for Heritage Districts 2014
<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	Peter Wokral, Heritage Conservation Planner ext. 7955
<b>REVIEWED BY:</b>	Regan Hutcheson, Manager Heritage Planning ext. 2080

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1) THAT the report entitled "Commercial Façade Improvement Grant Program for Heritage Districts 2014" dated May 6, 2014 be received;
- 2) AND THAT the identified applications for the Commercial Façade Improvement Grant Program be approved, provided that the applicants comply with the eligibility requirements of the program;
- 3) AND THAT 80 Main St. N. receive up to \$15,000.00 of grant assistance from the Commercial Façade Improvement Grant Program;
- 4) AND THAT 142 Main St. Unionville receive up to \$15,000.00 of grant assistance from the Commercial Façade Improvement Grant Program;
- 5) AND THAT the grants be funded from the Heritage Façade Improvement Program Account 620-101-5699-14000 which has a budget of \$32,000.00 and that the remaining funds of \$2,000.00 be returned to the original funding source;
- 6) AND THAT any difference between the grant given and the \$15,000.00 upset limit per applicant will be returned to the original funding source;
- 7) AND THAT staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of the report is to recommend the approval of grant assistance for commercial façade improvements for properties within the City's four heritage conservation districts.

**BACKGROUND:**

Council approved the creation of the Commercial Façade Improvement Grant Program and the Commercial Signage Replacement Grant Program for commercial properties located in the City's heritage conservation districts on June 8, 2004.

**The purpose of the programs**

The purpose of the Commercial Façade Improvement program is to assist in the exterior improvement of privately owned buildings in commercial use located within the City's

heritage districts. The financial assistance is available to encourage the restoration and improvement of commercial building facades in the heritage districts/ main street areas. Both heritage and non-heritage buildings in commercial use are encouraged to apply to the program.

**Eligibility requirements for grant assistance**

Commercial properties located in the City's heritage districts are eligible for the Façade Improvement grant program. Owners and tenants of commercial property can apply for assistance. The subject property must not be in default of any municipal taxes, local improvements or any other monies payable to the City (fees or penalties). Also, the property must not be the subject of a by-law contravention, work order or outstanding municipal requirements. Approved work completed since the 2013 deadline for applications to the program, may also be considered eligible for grant assistance.

**Types of improvements eligible for assistance**

Eligible facade improvements on **heritage properties** may include:

- Repair or restoration of original features (cornices, parapets, eaves, other architectural features).
- Repair, restoration or replacement of windows and doors.
- Cleaning and repair of masonry.
- Removal of non-original siding or facing
- Installation of new signage in accordance with the Special Sign District policies of the City's Sign By-law.

Eligible façade improvements on **non-heritage properties** may include:

- Renovation of existing commercial storefronts in accordance with standard principles of traditional storefront design (fascia board for signage above storefront, appropriate display windows, removal of incompatible alterations, etc.).
- Improvements to the principal facades of incompatible buildings being sympathetic and compatible with the historic character of the area and the policies of the heritage conservation district plan.
- Re-cladding in more traditional materials complementary to the district character.

**Amount of grant assistance**

The maximum façade grant is \$10,000 for non-heritage properties and \$15,000 for heritage properties. The assistance is in the form of a 50/50 matching grant that is paid upon completion of approved work. An applicant can receive one grant per calendar year. As a condition of any grant of \$5,000 or more, the property owner is required to enter into a façade easement agreement, in perpetuity, with the municipality.

**Grant Agreement/Letter of Understanding**

Applicants who secure grant approval are also required to enter into a Grant Agreement/Letter of Understanding with the municipality. This Agreement establishes a formal arrangement between the applicant and the City, and outlines the amount of the grant, the work to be done and the project completion date.

**OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:**

The review of grant applications is undertaken by Heritage Section Staff and Heritage Markham, Council's heritage advisory committee. Two applications were received by the March 7, 2014 deadline. (See Appendix A for a summary of each requested grant). The following criteria were considered when reviewing the applications for assistance:

- The project must comply with the policies and guidelines of the area's heritage district plan;
- Preference is given to applications proposing work on heritage properties;
- On heritage properties, conservation and restoration of original architectural features will occur to the extent possible;
- Projects must obtain municipal approval to qualify;
- The assistance should not reward poor property stewardship;
- Substantive improvements rather than short-term cosmetic patch-ups should be given priority.

**The grant application for 80 Main St. N. Markham Village is recommended for approval**

Grant assistance to an upper limit of \$15,000.00 is recommended for approval pending suitable quotes for the restoration of the storefront at 80 Main St. N. in Markham Village, provided the applicant obtains a heritage permit for the work, and a review by City departments determines that there are no outstanding issues related to the property.

**The grant application for 142 Main St. Unionville is recommended for approval**

The building was recently altered without obtaining City approvals. These alterations included the removal of non-heritage windows and the installation of the two modern bay windows, as well as the removal of an internally illuminated sign and the installation of the current awning sign. To address these infractions, the applicant is working with staff to install complementary windows and signage. Up to \$15,000.00 in grant assistance is recommended for approval for storefront improvements at 142 Main Street Unionville, provided the applicant obtains a heritage or building permit for the work, and a review by City departments determines that there are no outstanding issues related to the property.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND TEMPLATE: (external link)**

The total sum of the grant assistance recommended for the façade improvement/signage replacement grant program for 2014 is up to \$30,000.00. These applications will be funded through the Heritage Façade/Signage Replacement Project Account 620-101-5699-14000 which has a budget of \$32,000.00. Remaining funds of \$2,000.00 will be returned to the original funding source. Any difference in the dollar amount allocated for each project and the dollar amount of work which can be awarded grant money will also be returned to the original funding source.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS**

"Not Applicable"

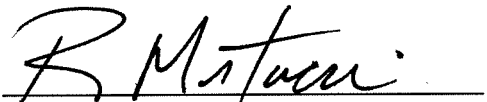
## **ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

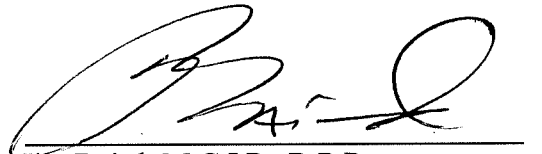
Assisting with the costs of restoring and improving downtown commercial properties in Heritage Conservation Districts and replacing inappropriate legal non-conforming signage, promotes private investment, increases property values, and property tax revenue while strengthening a sense of community and civic pride.

## **BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:**

The applications were forwarded to Heritage Markham for review on April 9, 2014. Heritage Markham supports the recommendations of this report. The Finance Department has also reviewed this report.

## **RECOMMENDED BY:**

  
Rino Mostacci, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.  
Director of Planning & Urban Design

  
Jim Baird, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.  
Commissioner of Development Services

## **ATTACHMENTS:**

Appendix 'A'

Summary of Applications and Photographs

## Summary of 2014 Commercial Façade Improvement Grant Requests

142 Main St. Unionville

Status: Class 'A' heritage building (Unionville Heritage Conservation District).



Proposed Work	Quote 1	Quote 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New heritage appropriate front door</li><li>• New heritage appropriate signage</li><li>• Installation of 2 new heritage windows to match the north side of the building (144 Main St.) and patching of existing signage</li></ul>	Final quote yet to be submitted	Final quote yet to be submitted
Total Cost		

**Staff Comment:** The proposed work and the newly completed front door meet the eligibility requirements of the program. Staff is working with the applicant to refine the quotes and obtain the City's approval for the proposed alterations. Staff recommends grant funding up to a maximum of \$15,000.00 provided all eligibility requirements of the program have been met.

## 80 Main St. N., Markham Village

**Status:** Class 'A' individually designated heritage building in the Markham Village Heritage Conservation District.



Proposed Work	Quote 1	Quote 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Selective replacement of damaged and deteriorated clapboard</li><li>• reconditioning of historic wooden storm windows</li><li>• removal of awning and new traditional signage</li><li>• appropriate panelling details for the knee wall below store windows</li><li>• new historically appropriate front door</li><li>• repair of deteriorated wooden trim</li></ul>	Quote needs to be revised to reflect approvable work	Quote needs to be revised to reflect approvable work
Total Cost		

**Staff Comment:** Staff is working with the applicant to refine the quotes and obtain the City's approval of the proposed alterations. Staff recommends grant funding up to a maximum of \$15,000.00 provided all eligibility requirements of the program have been met.