



Report to: Development Services Committee

Date: May 22, 2012

SUBJECT:	Commercial Façade Improvement and Signage Replacement Grant Programs for Heritage Districts 2012
PREPARED BY:	Peter Wokral, Heritage Conservation Planner ext. 7955
REVIEWED BY:	Regan Hutcheson, Manager, Heritage Planning

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1) THAT the report entitled "Commercial Façade and Signage Improvement Grant Program for Heritage Districts 2012" dated May 22, 2012 be received;
- 2) AND THAT the identified applications for the Commercial Façade and Signage Improvement Grant Programs be approved, provided that the applicants comply with the eligibility requirements of the programs;
- 3) AND THAT 86 Main St. N. Markham Village receive \$10,000.00 of grant assistance from the Commercial Façade Improvement Grant program provided that the applicant enters into a Grant Agreement and Façade Easement with the Town and receive \$1,000.00 of grant assistance from the Signage Replacement Grant program;
- 4) AND THAT 155 Main St. Unionville receive \$2,000.00 of grant assistance from the Commercial Façade Improvement Grant program;
- 5) AND THAT 188 Main St. Unionville receive \$4,181.00 of grant assistance from the Commercial Façade Improvement Grant program;
- 6) AND THAT Council authorizes the Mayor and Clerk to enter into Façade Easement Agreement with the owners 86 Main St. N. Markham Village (required for assistance over \$5,000);
- 7) AND THAT Council agrees to waive the eligibility criteria pertaining to the timing of the work already done at 86 Main St. N. Markham Village, and 155 and 188 Main St. Unionville;
- 8) AND THAT Council agrees to waive the eligibility criteria of two competing quotes for 86 Main St. N. Markham Village, based on the cost of work already completed;
- 9) AND THAT the grants be funded through the Heritage Façade Improvement/Sign Replacement Project Account 620 101 5699 10013 in the amount of \$17,181.00;
- 10) AND THAT the eligibility requirements of the Commercial Façade Improvement /Signage Replacement Grant program be revised to allow projects undertaken between the deadline for applications of the previous year and the current year

deadline, to be considered eligible for grant assistance, provided that all other eligibility requirements of the program are met;

- 11) And that Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Heritage Staff and Heritage Markham are recommending grant assistance of \$17,181.00 for three commercial properties located in the Town's heritage conservation districts. Heritage Staff also recommends that the eligibility requirements of the program be revised to allow projects undertaken between the application deadline of the previous year and the current year deadline for applications, to be considered eligible, provided that all other eligibility requirements of the program are met.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the report is to recommend the approval of grant assistance for commercial façade and signage improvements for properties within the Town's heritage districts and to amend the eligibility requirements of the program.

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 Town'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 Town'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. The purpose of the Signage Replacement program is to encourage the replacement of inappropriate legal non-conforming commercial signage in the Town's heritage districts with new appropriate signage in terms of size, placement and from of illumination. Both heritage and non-heritage buildings in commercial use are encouraged to apply for either program.

Eligibility requirements for grant assistance

Commercial properties located in the Town's heritage districts are eligible for the Façade Improvement and Signage Replacement grant programs. 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 Town (fees or penalties). Also, the property must not be the subject of a by-law contravention, work order or outstanding municipal requirements, and the proposed work cannot commence prior to application approval.

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 Town'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.

Signage Replacement eligible for assistance

Only the replacement of existing, legal non-conforming signage that has been grandfathered is eligible for assistance under the commercial signage replacement grant program.

Amount of grant assistance signage replacement

The commercial signage replacement grant program offers a matching grant up to a maximum of \$1,000.00 per commercial establishment and eligible work can include sign design, production and installation.

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 Town, and outlines the amount of the grant, the work to be done and the project completion date.

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:

Four applications were received in March 2012 in response to latest advertisement of the program

The review of grant applications is undertaken by Heritage Section Staff and Heritage Markham, Council's heritage advisory committee. In total, four applications were

received by the March 23, 2012 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 applications for 86 Main St. N are recommended for approval notwithstanding the eligibility requirements of the two programs

The applicant completed the work on the façade and signage at 86 Main St. N. in 2011 after the 2011 grant programs had been advertised by the Town. For the purpose of the 2012 grant program, the applicant provided two competing quotes for the façade work and one quote for the new signage. However, the cost of the new signage was approximately \$7,288.50 so it is unlikely that a competing quote for the new signage would have warranted grant assistance less than the maximum of \$1,000.00 permitted under the signage replacement program. The applicant did obtain all necessary approvals from the Town for the work that was undertaken. Approval of grant assistance is recommended in the amount of **\$10,000.00** (Façade Program) and **\$1,000.00** (Signage Program) provided that a review by Town departments determines that there are no outstanding issues related to the property

The grant application for 155 Main St. Unionville is recommended for approval

The façade grant application for **\$2,000.00** to repaint the exterior of 155 Main St. Unionville in historic colours is recommended for approval provided that a review by Town departments determines that there are no outstanding issues related to the property. The applicant has indicated that he wishes to initiate the work in order to be completed by the June Festival. If undertaken prior to Council approval of the grant, this work would be considered ineligible unless Council waives this restriction.

The grant application for 188 Main St. Unionville is recommended for approval notwithstanding the eligibility requirements of the program

The applicant has already completed the work at 188 Main St. Unionville and obtained the Town's approval for the work. The work commenced prior to receiving Council's approval for grant assistance due to the timing of current tenant's occupation of the premises and the tenant's desire to have the store ready for customers before the busy spring/summer season. Approval of grant assistance in the amount of **\$4,181.00** is recommended provided that a review by Town departments determines that there are no outstanding issues related to the property.

Heritage Staff recommends changes to the eligibility requirements of the program

This year, and in past years, Heritage Staff and Heritage Markham have recommended that Council support grant assistance for projects considered ineligible for funding under the eligibility requirements of the program. The projects were considered to be ineligible because they were commenced or completed prior to receiving the approval of grant assistance by Council. In all cases, Council supported the grant assistance.

The original intent of this particular eligibility requirement of the program was to limit the number of applications in any given year, by not accepting applications for work that had been completed in past years. However, since 2004 there have been several projects worthy of grant assistance that were completed prior to receiving Council's approval of the grant request due to the timing of business transitions and openings that occurred when the program was not being advertised, or in the period between the deadline for applications and the approval Council. Heritage Section Staff recommend that applications for work undertaken between the deadline date of the previous year's program and the current year deadline, be considered eligible for funding, provided that all other eligibility requirements of the program are met.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND TEMPLATE: (external link)

The total cost of the requested façade grants is \$17,181.00. These applications will be funded through the Heritage Façade/Sign Replacement Project Account 620 101 5699 10013 which has a current balance of \$30,000.00

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS

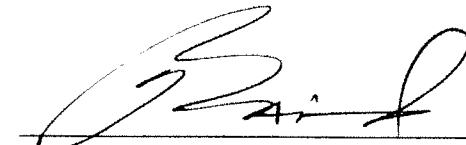
"Not Applicable"

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Assisting with the costs of restoring and improving downtown commercial properties in Heritage Conservation Districts 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 11, 2012. Heritage Markham delegated approval of amount of grant assistance for each property to Heritage Section Staff. The Finance Department has 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:**

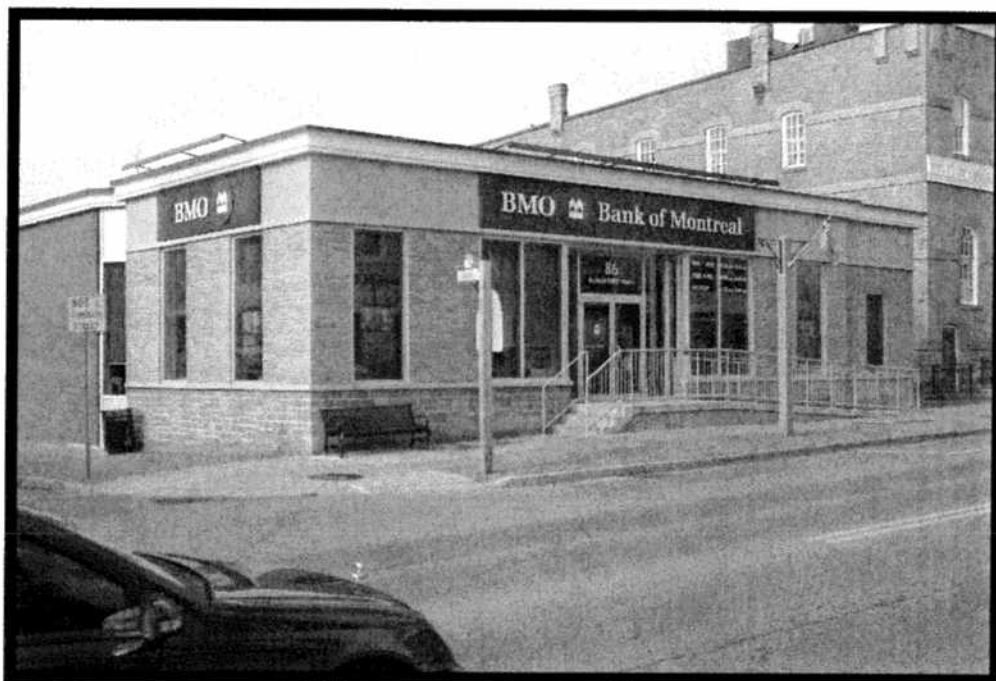
Appendix 'A'

Summary of Applications and Photographs

Summary of 2012 Commercial Façade Improvement/Signage Replacement Grant Requests

86 Main St. N. Markham Village Bank of Montreal

Status: Class 'C' modernist building (non-heritage) constructed in the 1960's but designated under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act (Markham Village Heritage Conservation District).



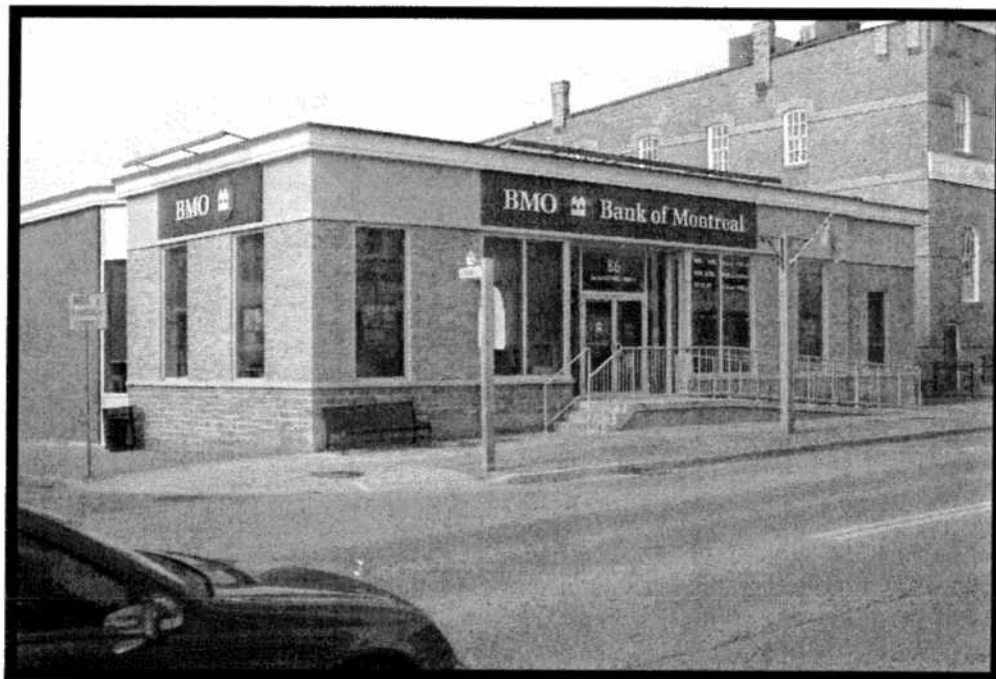
Proposed Work	Quote 1	Quote 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Re-cladding of main building in stone and brick	Alfie Masonry Co. Ltd.	Viewmount Masonry
Total including labour and materials	\$74,420.00	\$76,471.00

Staff Comment: Given the Class 'C' status of this non-heritage building, any potential grant funding would be limited to a maximum of \$10,000.00. The work done would have been eligible for funding if the program was running at the time of approval and construction. The work was reviewed and approved by Staff and Heritage Markham and recognized in 2011 with a Heritage Markham Award of Excellence, but normally would not be eligible for 2012 grant funding because the work was done in the past. Staff recommends funding for this project given that there are sufficient funds in the program.

The cost of the actual work was \$74,000 so a grant of \$10,000 can be supported.

86 Main St. N. Markham Village (Bank of Montreal)

Status: Class 'C' modernist building (non-heritage) constructed in the 1960's but designated under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act (Markham Village Heritage Conservation District).



Commercial Signage Replacement Grant Program

Proposed Work	Quote 1	Quote 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Replacement of legal non-conforming internally illuminated signage with new externally illuminated signage conforming to the special sign district provisions of the Sign By-law.	Calibre Signs	Not Available
Total including labour and materials	\$7,288.50 (Actual)	

Staff Comment: The new signage would have been eligible for funding under the Commercial Signage Replacement Grant Program if applied for at the time of review and installation. Given the cost of the new signage (\$7,288), it is reasonable to assume that a competing quote would have exceeded \$2,000.00 thereby warranting grant assistance up to the maximum amount of \$1,000.00. Staff recommends funding of this signage replacement project in the amount of \$1,000 given its high profile, and for being recognized by Heritage Markham for excellence.

155 Main St. Unionville (V.I.P. Hair Salon)

Status: Class 'B' building. The recessed half is a heritage brick building which is clad in board and batten. The protruding portion is a complementary modern building

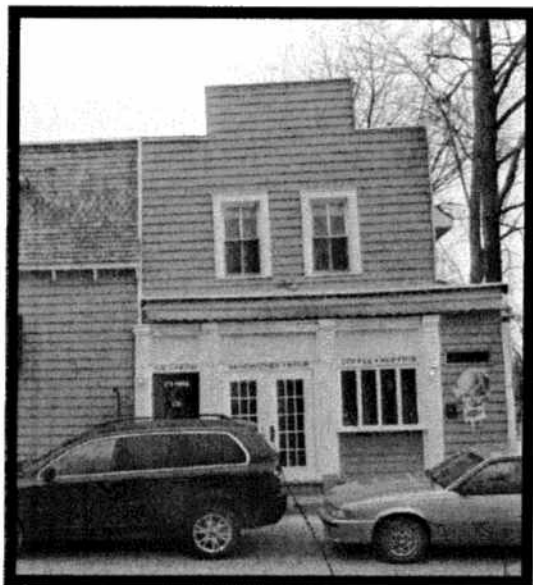


Proposed Work	Quote 1	Quote 2
Repainting of exterior elements	CertaPro Painters	Central Painting
Total Cost	\$4,000.00	\$4,294.00

Staff Comment: The proposed work is eligible for grant funding if the building is painted in original or historic colours. Staff supports a 50/50 grant based on the lowest quote (Grant Amount would be \$2,000.00 based on Quote 1).

188 Main St. Unionville (new Dairy Queen Orange Julius)

Status: Class 'A' heritage building in the Unionville Heritage Conservation District



Proposed Work	Quote 1	Quote 2
Construction of appropriate wooden storefront windows and doors	Arc Constructors Inc. \$7,853.50	Renovation Solutions \$8,814.00
Priming and Painting of new windows and doors	Arc Constructors Inc. \$508.50	Arc Constructors Inc. \$508.50
Total Cost	\$8,362.00	\$9,322.50

Staff Comment: The work has already been undertaken due to the new business's scheduled opening in the spring of 2012, but the work has been reviewed and approved by Heritage Staff. Staff recommends funding this project in the amount of \$4,181.00 (Quote 1-half the cost of production and installation of the new windows and doors plus half the cost of priming and painting).