

DECISION/DIRECTION NOTE

Title: 2021 Heritage Financial Incentives Program

Date Prepared: June 23, 2021

Report To: Committee of the Whole

Councillor and Role: Councillor Maggie Burton, Planning & Development

Ward: N/A

Decision/Direction Required:

To seek approval of the grant applications, subject to compliance with requirements of the Heritage Financial Incentives Program.

Discussion – Background and Current Status:

Council approved the City's Heritage Financial Incentives Program on July 25, 2016, and offers two types of grants:

1. Heritage Maintenance Grant; and
2. Heritage Conservation Grant.

The City received 24 applications for the 2021 Grant program, slightly less than the past two years when we received around 30 applications each year, but an increase from the initial years when we received between 7 and 14 applications per year. Of the 24 applications, 13 applies for the Heritage Maintenance Grant and 11 applied for the Heritage Conservation Grant.

In 2019 it was noted that priority tended to be given to Heritage Conservation Grants and only a few Heritage Maintenance Grants were awarded. Therefore, Council directed that \$10,000 of the overall 2021 budget be dedicated to Heritage Maintenance Grants.

The request for grants totals just under the City's budget of \$60,000, totalling \$57,132.07. Two applicants provided only one quote, where two quotes are required. Of these two applications, one applicant provided two quotes on materials, but was unable to provide two quotes on labour. Both applicants said they had trouble obtaining two quotes due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2020 the provincial government launched a Residential Construction Rebate Program to stimulate employment in the province's construction industry during the pandemic. This program appears to have been successful, and many applicants noted that contractors are busy and were unable to take on additional work or provide quotes.

The Built Heritage Experts Panel discussed the applications in detail and after some discussion recommend the following:

That Council approve the 2021 Heritage Financial Incentives Program as follows:

ST. JOHN'S

Heritage Maintenance Grants in the amount of \$12,239.47
Heritage Conservation Grants in the amount of \$44, 892.60

With respect to those applications that have only one quote due to restrictions caused by the Covid Pandemic, the Panel recommends acknowledgement of the exception and going forward will require all applications to be accompanied by two quotes.

The Panel wanted to be very clear that the recommendation to accept applications with only one quote is solely due to the difficulties caused by Covid-19 pandemic and all applicants in future years should be required to obtain two quotes (as has always been required in previous years). They also agreed to recommend accepting these applications because all other applicants are eligible to receive a grant. Accepting these two applicants does not prohibit someone else from receiving a grant.

Should Council accept the two applications that did not provide two quotes, the total for grants would equal \$57,546.80 plus permit waiver (\$12,239.47 for Heritage Maintenance Grants and \$44, 892.60 for Heritage Conservation Grants). If these two are not accepted, the total equals \$49,367.18 plus permit waiver. Any applicant awarded a grant would be required to obtain all permits and City inspections before the grant is issued.

Key Considerations/Implications:

1. Budget/Financial Implications: The City budgeted \$60,000 in the 2021 Budget. There are 24 grant applications brought to the Panel for a total of approximately \$57,132.07 plus waiver of the permit fees.

Council should note that applicants are given 2 years to complete the work in the grant application. Currently, there are approximately \$45,500 in outstanding grants to be claimed that were issued in the 2019 and 2020 Grant Programs. Outstanding payments for the 2019 Grant Program are due June 25, 2021 and will expire prior to this decision note going to Committee of the Whole.

2. Partners or Other Stakeholders: The City partners with property owners via the Heritage Financial Incentive Program.
3. Alignment with Strategic Directions/Adopted Plans:
St. John's Strategic Plan 2019-2029 - A Sustainable City – Plan for land use and preserve and enhance the natural and built environment where we live.
4. Legal or Policy Implications: The City's Heritage Financial Incentive Program requires 2 quotes for proposed work. Two of this year's applicants cited the covid-19 pandemic and the provincial residential construction rebate as reasons why they could not obtain a second quote. Financial Services agrees with these exceptions, for this year only.
5. Privacy Implications: Not applicable.

6. Engagement and Communications Considerations: The Grant Program was promoted through the City's website, public notice emails and social media and was featured in the City Guide distributed to all households.
7. Human Resource Implications: Not applicable.
8. Procurement Implications: Not applicable.
9. Information Technology Implications: Not applicable.
10. Other Implications: Not applicable.

Recommendation:

That Council approve the twenty-four (24) grant applications as summarized in the attached tables, subject to compliance with the requirements of the Heritage Financial Incentives Grant Program and the City's heritage requirements.

Prepared by: Ann-Marie Cashin, MCIP, Planner III – Urban Design & Heritage
Approved by: Ken O'Brien, MCIP, Chief Municipal Planner

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	2021 Heritage Financial Incentives Program (COTW).docx
Attachments:	- 2021 Heritage Financial Incentives Program - Attachment (COTW).pdf
Final Approval Date:	Jun 24, 2021

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Ken O'Brien - Jun 23, 2021 - 3:00 PM

Jason Sinyard - Jun 24, 2021 - 10:17 AM