

DESIGNATED PROPERTY

Grant Guidelines



Introduction

Owners of properties designated under the Ontario Heritage Act with historical and/or architectural significance are eligible to receive grants for conservation and restoration of heritage features. Through the Designated Property Grant program an owner may receive one grant per calendar year for work done on the heritage elements of the property.

In general, eligible projects must be directed toward the conservation and/or restoration of property elements cited in the reasons for designation cited in the property's designation bylaw. Proposal eligibility will be determined by Planning and Building Services staff on the advice of the St. Catharines Heritage Advisory Committee.

Application forms are available online at stcatharines.ca/HeritageGrants.

Eligible properties

Any property designated under Part IV (individual properties) or Part V (heritage districts) of the Ontario Heritage Act is eligible. Such designation is only considered eligible when the designation bylaw for the property has been passed and registered.

Properties may receive no more than one grant per year.

Grant amount

The grant amount is one half of the eligible project costs, up to a maximum grant limit of \$5,000. Any grant money awarded must be matched by the owner, based on actual expenditures by the owner as verified through invoices.

Grant funding amount is determined annually by City Council and thus applications will be considered on a first come, first served basis. Maximum grant allocation to an owner is discretionary, based on the volume of applications and previous grants already received.

Grants will be paid out upon completion of the project.

Eligible projects

Only the projects described below are eligible for grant funding. Any questions or concerns related to interpretation in relation to a specific project should be addressed to Planning and Building Services staff.

General

Any work which conserves or enhances elements specified in the reasons for designation or heritage district plan, is eligible.

Eligible projects fall into three categories:

- a) The conservation of existing architectural elements which are significant. This would include, for instance, repair of deteriorated original elements such as doors and windows, siding and roofing materials, and other significant features.
- b) The reconstruction of significant architectural features which still exist, but which are beyond conservation or repair. This would include only accurate reconstructions of the original features, using materials, sizes and configurations which match the original.
- c) The restoration of significant architectural features which have been lost, but for which the appearance can be clearly determined from documentary sources. These documentary sources must pertain to the particular property for which funding is requested. The documentation should be in the form of historic drawings or photographs clearly showing the feature(s) to be restored.

Poor or defective work is not eligible for grant funding. Only projects in which the quality of work carried out is satisfactory will be deemed eligible for grant funding. Unsatisfactory work includes minor items which can be corrected (such as paint dribbled onto adjacent surfaces) as well as major problems (such as an entire paint job which fails because of inadequate surface preparation, or masonry joints which have been cut out using power tools).

To achieve optimal outcomes, work on historic buildings requires care and often involves specialized materials and techniques. Please consult technical information provided to the City by the Ministry of Culture before undertaking any work. If further information is required, staff can consult the Heritage Branch of the Ministry on behalf of the owner.

Short-term, routine maintenance is not eligible. This includes minor repairs (such as repairing a broken step or a broken window), painting (other than as part of a restoration project) and repair of non-original siding or roofing materials (aluminum siding, asphalt shingles, etc.)



Exterior

Eligible projects might include the conservation or accurate reproduction or restoration of significant architectural features such as:

- doors
- windows
- verandahs
- cupolas
- significant chimneys (exterior only)
- bargeboard or other decorative trim
- shopfronts which have been altered or replaced
- fences and outbuildings if specifically referred to in Reasons for Designation or district plan
- any other features important to the overall composition of the structure as specified in the reasons for designation or district plan

Eligible work does not include:

- work on modern additions
- sheds or outbuildings not specifically referred to in the reasons for designation or district plan.
- modern doors and windows unless replicas of the original
- new storm or screen doors and windows, except as described in (d) below
- chimney repair other than restoration of a significant chimney
- repair of eaves trough unless its nature is such that it is significant to the heritage of the structure

Explanatory notes:

a) The conservation or renewal of original roofing and siding materials

This includes repair and replacement of wood clapboard or board-and-batten, repair and repointing of masonry buildings, stucco repair, repair or replacement of original roofing materials. It also includes removal of a modern materials and replacement with original materials in cases when original material can be documented.

Repairs to or renewal of modern materials are not included.

The conservation or renewal of original roofing and siding materials deals exclusively with historical materials. The materials are defined as: wooden shingles, shakes, boards roofing; metal roofing made of copper, zinc, tin or terneplate; and roofing of clay tile and slate.

Designated Property Grants are intended to help offset the extra costs associated with the new scarce materials and skills required for the preservation of heritage properties. For this reason, materials such as standard asphalt shingle and other “modern” readily available roofing types are not eligible under this program. The only exception to this rule is that roofing for flat roofs.

b) The repair, repointing and cleaning of masonry

Masonry work is eligible only if the materials and methods used will not cause harm to the historic masonry.

In repair and repointing work, relatively soft lime mortars must be used. All cement content must be white cement, to avoid introducing harmful salts.

Repointed areas are to match the historic mortar in colour, texture and joint width/profile. Old, defective mortars are to be cut out using hand tools only with the exception of power saws or discs used for partial cutting out of hard cement mortars, to a maximum of half the joint width. Masonry work using non-reversible materials such as epoxies is not eligible.

Application of water-repellent coatings is not eligible.

Cleaning of masonry buildings may be eligible if it is necessary for the building’s preservation, and if it is carried out using suitable materials, methods and pressures.

Under no circumstances will grants be paid for sandblasting.

c) Stucco

Designated Property Grants may be applied to the restoration of stucco where this is known to have been the historic exterior finish for the structure.

To receive a grant, the stucco work must replicate the original or historic rendering of the building in colour, materials and texture. For example, a structure originally finished in a “rough-cast” texture and yellow colour must be restored to this finish to be eligible.

Modern renderings with high cement contents are not eligible.



d) Storm and screen windows

Designated Property Grants may be applied to the repair, conservation or reconstruction of wooden storm or screen windows if the historical use of storm windows is documented. The storm or screen windows must be replicas of the original in both style and material.

Storm windows utilizing materials such as lexan, plexiglass, aluminum, or extruded metal are not eligible for funding.

e) Stained Glass

The Designated Property Grant program provides assistance for the conservation and repair of stained glass. Funding may be provided for the repair of lead or copper comes and wooden frames or the restoration of the stained glass lights. Funding is not provided for the installation of lexan, plexiglass or other synthetic materials to protect stained glass windows. These materials are considered as new storm windows and are ineligible

f) Eaves trough

Designated Property Grants may be applied to the restoration of gutters and downpipes only where these items are considered to be a significant architectural feature of the building, such as gutters and downpipes of now rarely-used but long-lasting materials such as copper and lead; gutters and downpipes which incorporate decorative elements, often found at the "storm heads" or at the metal straps; and gutters which are built into the building cornice.

Galvanized metal and modern materials such as plastic, vinyl or aluminum are not eligible for grant consideration.

Interior

Interior work is ineligible for the conservation of features not specifically referred to in the reasons for designation or district plan.

Eligible interior features, if specified in the reasons for designation, include woodwork, plasterwork, wall or ceiling murals, etc.

New services (electrical, plumbing, heating) and insulation are not eligible.

Structure

Work to restore the building to structural soundness, but not including structural work to accommodate modern renovations, is eligible.

This includes the correction of serious structural faults which threaten the building's survival, but does not include routine maintenance.

Structural work necessitated by modern renovations (e.g. a new supporting beam over the opening for a new door) is not eligible.

Architectural and engineering fees

Professional fees to a maximum of \$500 of the \$5,000 grant are eligible under the Designated Property Grant program for work directly related to proposed conservation and rehabilitation projects.

Funding is strictly limited to professional fees which are directly related to completed eligible projects.

For instance, eligible fees might be related to:

- preparation of drawings for reconstructed or restored elements such as porches, windows, doors, etc., for which the appearance for the individual property can be clearly determined from documentary sources;
- solution of structural problems such as foundation repairs and beam reinforcement
- preparation of specifications for masonry repair, repointing or cleaning;
- paint analysis to document the historic paint colours for the building.

Building permit and planning application fees

Building permit and planning application fees for projects that meet the requirements of the Designated Property Grants guidelines are eligible.

Administration

Application and grant process

- a)** The property owner should consult with the City as early as possible in the process of planning a project. This advanced consultation helps to avoid ineligible proposals.
- b)** The property owner submits an application for a grant to the Planning and Building Services Department, via printable or online forms at stcatharines.ca/HeritageGrants.

This application must include all details necessary for a full understanding of the proposed work such as materials to be used, dimensions, mortar mixes, cleaning chemicals for masonry, etc.

Where necessary, the City may request additional plans, specifications, drawings or photos.

The professional fees for the preparation of such material may be grant eligible.

Properties must be designated under Part IV or Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act.

- c)** The application is reviewed by the City.

Project proposals will be referred to the St. Catharines Heritage Advisory Committee.

The Heritage Advisory Committee and/or City staff will visit the building, and discuss the proposed work with the owner, as required.

The committee will consider the application and provide a recommendation. Approval of the application is delegated to the Director of Planning and Building Services.

The applicant will be informed in writing of the City's decision, and of the conditions under which the grant will be paid.

- d)** Following approval in principle being granted, the owner will undertake the work.

The owner is required to contact the municipality concerning any changes to the project which are proposed during the course of the work.

- e)** Work must be inspected to ensure conformity to the proposal submitted. Inspections may be carried out by City staff or, by Heritage Advisory Committee members.

- f)** The grant is paid to the property owner by the municipality, based on receipts for project costs.

Information, advice and contacts

The Heritage Advisory Committee is a good source for information and advice, especially on designation, small-scale technical matters, and the Designated Property Grant.

The committee is accessible through the Planning and Building Services office.

Other helpful sources include:

- St. Catharines Historical Society
- St. Catharines Museum at Lock 3
- Special Collections Room at the St. Catharines Centennial Library

These serve as a useful starting point for documentary information and other contacts.

For further information regarding Preserving St. Catharines Designated Property Grant Program please contact:

Citizens First

905.688.5600 | citizensfirst@stcatharines.ca

