



Report to Council

Department: Development Services
Division: Planning
Date: February 2, 2026
Prepared by: Rita Jabbour, RPP, Manager, Planning Services
Report Number: Planning-2026-03
Subject: Heritage Grant Program Annual Report
Number of Pages: 5 including attachments

Recommendation(s)

That Planning Report 2026-03 entitled Heritage Grant Program Annual Report prepared by Rita Jabbour, RPP, Manager, Planning Services dated February 2, 2026, be received.

Purpose

To provide Council with an update on applications made under the Town of Essex Heritage Grant Program.

Background and Discussion

The Town of Essex Heritage Grant Program (the "Grant Program") was adopted in 2017 under Section 39(1) of the *Ontario Heritage Act* ("the Act") which authorizes municipalities to provide for grants or loans to the owners of properties designated under the Act for the purpose of completing alterations to the heritage resource such as alterations to a designated building. "Alterations", as defined under the Act, means a transformation or change because of a restoration, renovation, or repair such as the repair or replacement of windows, doors, roof or

siding material, or, the reconstruction of architectural elements such as porches which have been lost, or still exist but require repair.

The Grant Program consists of the following three (3) financial incentive programs:

- **The Professional Heritage Services Grant Program** –\$2000 per property
 - A grant to help offset the cost of services from an architect, engineer, archaeologist, or similar professional for preservation and conservation advice and the preparation of preservation strategies and Heritage Impact Assessments (HIA).
- **The Development Permit Fee Grant Program** –100% of the Permit or Application fee
 - A grant to help offset the cost of Building permits or Planning Act applications required for any repair and restoration work to the Heritage resource.
- **The Repair and Restoration Grant Program** –50% up to \$10,000 Maximum
 - Provides financial incentives for improvements to conserve, reconstruct, repair or restore significant components of built and cultural resources, including but not limited to the repair of exterior surfaces such as windows, doors, and trim.

Each year, \$25,000 is allocated annually to the Operating Budget to fund the Grant Program.

As per the **Heritage Grant Program Implementation Strategy** (attached), staff will monitor the Grant Program and report to Council on an annual basis on the merits of continuation, expansion, or cessation of the program and on future funding levels.

The following table describes completed projects that have received Grant Program funding from 2018 to 2025:

Year	Address	Grant Program received/approved for receipt	Total Grant Paid
2018	-	-	-
2019	-	-	-
2020	78 Fox Street (the "Essex House")	Repair and Restoration Grant	\$3,180.95
2021	-	-	-
2022	-	-	-
2023	-	-	-
2024	915 County Road 50 east (the "John R. Park Homestead")	Professional Services Grant Development Permit Fee Grant Repair and Restoration Grant	\$13,845.94 (paid in 2025)
2025	54 Talbot Steet South (the "Robert B. Potts House")	Repair and Restoration Grant	\$6,788.48
	179 County Road 50 (the "Snider House")	Professional Services Grant Development Permit Fee Grant Repair and Restoration Grant	\$450 (paid in 2025 for Professional Services Grant)

As is demonstrated in the table above, interest in the Grant Program in the years following its adoption was low. This was due to a lack of eligible properties on the Heritage Register. In recent years, due to the addition of more privately owned heritage buildings, interest in the

Grant Program has increased. The Grant Program is expected to continue to be of interest and of assistance to private heritage property owners in 2026. Notably, the Grant Program has been a valuable tool for staff when promoting the benefits of heritage designation.

A total of \$25,000 has been allocated and approved for the 2026 Heritage Committee operating budget for the continuation of the Grant Program. Planning Services staff, in consultation with the Municipal Heritage Committee and heritage property owners, has been reviewing the Grant Program and will be proposing modifications to Council in 2026 which will make the program more accessible for applicants and for a broader range of services. These changes are expected to increase the uptake of applications for the Grant Program in 2026. Staff will continue to monitor funding levels.

Financial Impact

There are no financial impacts from the continuation of the Heritage Grant Program. Program funding for 2026 has been approved as part of budget deliberations.

Consultations

Kate Rowe, Director, Corporate Services

Link to Strategic Priorities

- Embrace asset management best practices to build, maintain, and continuously improve our municipally owned infrastructure.
- Leverage our Town's competitive advantages to promote jobs and economic investment.
- Take care of our natural environment and strengthen the sense of belonging to everyone who makes Essex "home".
- Deliver friendly customer service in an efficient, effective, and transparent manner while providing an exceptional working environment for our employees.
- Build corporate-level and community-level climate resilience through community engagement and partnership and corporate objectives.

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Heritage Grant Annual Update - Planning-2026-31.docx
Attachments:	- Town of Essex Heritage Grant Program Implementation Strategy-accessible.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Jan 26, 2026

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



Lori Chadwick, Director, Development Services - Jan 26, 2026 - 9:43 AM



Kate Giurissevich, Chief Administrative Officer - Jan 26, 2026 - 11:29 AM