

DATE OF MEETING April 19, 2017

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SUBJECT HERITAGE FACADE GRANT – NANAIMO FIREHALL #2 – 34 NICOL STREET

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To obtain Council approval for a heritage facade grant for the Nanaimo Fire Hall #2 building (34 Nicol Street).

Recommendation

That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council:

1. approve a \$14,316 Heritage Facade Grant to rehabilitate the exterior of the Nanaimo Fire Hall #2 building located at 34 Nicol Street; and,
2. provide for the \$9,316 Heritage Facade Grant shortfall through a budget transfer from the Heritage Home Grant Program.

BACKGROUND

A heritage facade grant application has been submitted by the owner (R. Bryson Insurance Consultants Inc.) of the Nanaimo Fire Hall #2 building (34 Nicol Street) to rehabilitate the building's exterior including cleaning, repairing and rebuilding of exterior masonry/stucco, and cleaning and repairing window exteriors.

The Nanaimo Fire Hall #2 is currently on the City's Heritage Register and is listed as a significant heritage building in the Downtown Heritage Conservation Area as contained in the City's Official Community Plan (see Attachment A for the building's historical value statement).

PROJECT SCOPE AND EVALUATION

Staff has reviewed and evaluated the grant application and note that the proposed project satisfies the relevant requirements and objectives of the Heritage Facade Grant Program (as outlined in Attachment B - Heritage Facade Grant Program Purpose and Conditions).

The proposed exterior rehabilitation work will include brick repair and cleaning, as well as window repair and repaint. Photos of the condition of the existing building exterior can be viewed in Attachment C – Existing Exterior Building Condition.

The proposed work is intended to repair, refresh and conserve the appearance of the building consistent with the City's Downtown Heritage Building Design Guidelines and Parks Canada's Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada.

The total estimated project cost is \$28,631. The project is eligible for up to \$14,316 in grant assistance based on the 50/50 cost sharing model specified under the program, and the

maximum facade allotment of \$10,000 per street frontage. In this case, the property faces onto three separate street frontages.

Due to a previously approved facade grant this year, the 2017 Heritage Facade Grant budget has been reduced to \$5,000 remaining, which leaves a funding shortfall of \$9,316 in order to fully fund the requested grant for this project. Should Council wish to fully fund the grant request as eligible under the grant program, Staff recommend using a budget transfer of \$9,316 from the Heritage Home Grant Program. Currently, the program has \$9,500 remaining in its 2017 budget. Such a transfer of funds will effectively zero out the home grant fund meaning that no additional applications will be accepted this year.

Staff believes the additional funding support is merited in this case given the significant heritage value of the Nanaimo Fire Hall #2 building, the level of deterioration to the building's exterior which has occurred over the past decade, and its high profile on a major road way.

It should be noted that the property did receive a previous facade grant in 2003 totalling \$7,366 for exterior signage. Under the parameters of the Heritage Facade Grant Program, a previous grant does not preclude the property owner from applying and receiving additional funding support.

OPTIONS

1. That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend Council approve a \$14,316 Heritage Facade Grant to rehabilitate the exterior of the Nanaimo Fire Hall #2 building located at 34 Nicol Street.
 - **Budget Implication:** The Heritage Facade Grant Program currently has \$5,000 left in its annual \$20,000 budget available to partially cover this amount. In order to provide the full eligible funding, an additional \$9,316 is proposed to be transferred from the Heritage Home Grant Program budget.
 - **Strategic Priorities Implication:** The Heritage Facade Grant Program furthers the goals of the Economic Health and Cultural Vitality Community Values of the 2016-2019 Strategic Plan Update, as well as the conservation objectives of the City's Heritage Conservation Program.
2. That Council deny the Heritage Facade Grant application.
 - **Policy Implication:** Could create uncertainty about the City's commitment to the Heritage Facade Grant Program's purpose and parameters.
 - **Strategic Priorities Implication:** Would run counter to the City's cultural vitality and heritage conservation objectives.

SUMMARY POINTS

- R. Bryson Insurance Consultants Inc. has applied for a \$14,316 Heritage Facade Grant to rehabilitate the exterior of the Nanaimo Fire Hall #2 building at 34 Nicol Street.
- The total estimated project cost is \$28,631.
- The grant application satisfies the relevant requirements and objectives of the Heritage Facade Grant Program.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Nanaimo Fire Hall #2 History and Significance

Attachment B: Heritage Facade Grant Program Purpose and Conditions

Attachment C: Existing Exterior Building Condition

Submitted by:



Bruce Anderson
Manager, Community and Cultural Planning

Concurrence by:



Dale Lindsay
Director of Community Development

ATTACHMENT A

NANAIMO FIRE HALL #2 HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE

Built in 1893, the Nanaimo Fire Hall #2 is a very good example of Victorian Italianate architecture, one of the most popular 19th century styles. The fortress-like crenellated roofline is particularly appropriate on the fire hall, a widely recognized symbol of protection. The large doors at the front lower level were designed for easy access for the fire company's horses and equipment. Similarly functional, the concrete hose tower, added to the rear of the building in 1914, allowed for the efficient drying of fire hoses.

The Nanaimo Fire Hall #2 speaks to the continuing growth and maturity of the City. Although a volunteer fire brigade existed before construction of the Fire Hall, this substantial and expensive building, whose construction costs were raised through subscription, indicates community commitment to efficient, modern service and faith in the City's future.

Located on a narrow triangular lot between two main thoroughfares and at a major intersection, the Fire Hall is an important downtown gateway building and a highly visible landmark.

ATTACHMENT B

HERITAGE FACADE GRANT PROGRAM PURPOSE AND CONDITIONS

The Heritage Façade Grant Program was created by Council in 2003 as part of the City's Downtown Revitalization Strategy. The program is designed to provide financial incentives to encourage rehabilitation and enhancement of heritage buildings located in the City's downtown core, enliven the streetscape, create a more attractive environment for visitors and tenants, and stimulate investment in the area. The program has been successful at leveraging private investment toward rehabilitating and enhancing the exteriors of historic buildings located in the downtown core.

Façade grants are available yearly on a first-come, first-served basis to significant heritage buildings listed in the Downtown Heritage Conservation Area, as outlined in the City's Official Community Plan. The 2017 grant program budget is \$20,000. Each grant covers up to 50% of a project cost, to a maximum of \$10,000 per building side facing onto a street. To date, \$304,049.66 has been paid out under the grant program for 32 exterior building façade improvements leveraging \$7,074,522.00 in private investment.

Should Council approve the grant, the following conditions will also apply as specified under the program:

- The project must be fully completed prior to payment of the grant.
- The owner must agree to register a Heritage Conservation Covenant on the property title for a five-year term prohibiting demolition or exterior alteration of the building, unless the City approves these actions.
- Work must be substantially underway within six months of grant approval and completed within one year.
- Work must be of good quality, meet appropriate building/fire codes or approved equivalent, comply with existing bylaws, be conducted in accordance with a valid building permit (if applicable), and pass municipal inspections.
- Work is subject to inspection. If, during the course of the project, it is determined that the work fails to adhere to the program guidelines, then the award of the grant, in whole or in part, may be rescinded.
- Signage crediting the City's funding will be provided and must be displayed for a mutually agreeable period not to exceed three months after the project is completed. Grant recipients may be asked to participate in other promotional efforts as appropriate.

The applicant shall not involve the City of Nanaimo in any legal action between him/her and any contractors, estimators, employees, workers or agents arising from or out of the facade improvement project.

ATTACHMENT C

EXISTING EXTERIOR BUILDING CONDITION









