

DATE OF MEETING OCTOBER 16, 2019

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SUBJECT HERITAGE FAÇADE GRANT APPLICATION – 34 VICTORIA CRESCENT

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To obtain Council approval for a Heritage Façade Grant for the Queens Hotel building (34 Victoria Crescent).

Recommendation

That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend Council approve a Heritage Façade Grant of up to \$20,000 for the Queen's Hotel located at 34 Victoria Crescent to repaint the building's exterior, as well as install new brick cladding, a new awning system, new signage (including a vintage refurbished Queen's sign), and new exterior lighting to the building's Victoria Crescent façade.

BACKGROUND

A Heritage Façade Grant application has been submitted by the owner of the Queen's Hotel (34 Victoria Crescent) building. The City of Nanaimo budgets \$20,000 per year for a Heritage Façade Grant program to support the conservation and revitalization of heritage buildings.

The Queen's Hotel 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 – Queen's Hotel History and Significance).

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

The proposed exterior rehabilitation work will include a repaint of all exterior walls, as well as installation of new brick cladding, a new awning system, new signage (including a vintage refurbished Queen's sign), and new exterior lighting to the building's Victoria Crescent façade. For reference, a detailed summary of the proposed project is included as Attachment C – Queen's Hotel Rehabilitation Project Summary.

The proposed exterior alterations are intended to rehabilitate and enhance 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 cost of the project is \$58,052.85. Based on a maximum façade grant allotment of up to \$10,000 per street frontage (the property faces onto two separate street frontages Victoria Crescent and Lois Lane), the project is eligible for up to \$20,000 in grant assistance (based on the 50/50 cost-sharing model where no more than \$40,000 of total project costs would be considered). Should a grant of up to \$20,000 be approved and the actual cost of the project be less than \$40,000, the amount reimbursed would be reduced to reflect the 50/50 cost-sharing model.

It should be noted that the property was given a \$14,850 grant in 1994 under the Provincial Government's Downtown Revitalization Program (no longer in existence). The property has not previously applied for a heritage façade grant under the City's existing program.

This property is owned by a business. Under Section 25 of the *Community Charter*, Council may, by an affirmative vote of at least 2/3 of all the members of Council, provide financial assistance to a business for the conservation of a protected heritage property (this property is considered a protected property due to its listing in the Downtown Heritage Conservation Area).

OPTIONS

1. That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend Council approve a Heritage Façade Grant of up to \$20,000 for the Queen's Hotel located at 34 Victoria Crescent to repaint the building's exterior, as well as install new brick cladding, a new awning system, new signage (including a vintage refurbished Queen's sign), and new exterior lighting to the building's Victoria Crescent façade.
 - Advantages: The Heritage Façade Grant Program furthers the goals of the Livability and Economic Health Strategic Themes of the 2019-2022 Strategic Plan, as well as the conservation objectives of the City's Heritage Conservation Program. To date, there have been no other applications for the 2019 grant funding.
 - Disadvantages: Should the full grant be approved, no further applications can be considered for the remainder of 2019.
 - Financial Implications: The Heritage Façade Grant program currently has a \$20,000 budget available to cover the application.

2. That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend Council deny the Heritage Façade Grant application for the Queen's Hotel located at 34 Victoria Crescent.
 - Advantages: Would leave funding for potential applications to be considered until December 2019.
 - Disadvantages: Could create uncertainty about the City's commitment to the grant program's purpose and parameters. Would run counter to the City's livability, downtown revitalization, and heritage conservation objectives. There may not be any further applications this year and not awarding funding would be contrary to the first-come, first-served priority for eligible applications.
 - Financial Implications: Funding would remain available for further applications in 2019. If unused during 2019, this funding would not be carried forward for use in future years.]

SUMMARY POINTS

- The building owner has applied for a \$20,000 Heritage Façade Grant for the Queens Hotel building located at 34 Victoria Crescent to repaint the building's exterior, as well as install new brick cladding, a new awning system, new signage (including a vintage refurbished Queen's sign) and new exterior lighting to the building's Victoria Crescent façade.
- The grant application meets the relevant requirements and objectives of the Heritage Façade Grant Program.
- The total estimated cost of the project is \$58,052.85.
- Based on a maximum façade grant allotment of up to \$10,000 per street frontage (the property faces onto two separate street frontages Victoria Crescent and Lois Lane), the project is eligible for up to \$20,000 in grant assistance (based on the 50/50 cost-sharing model where no more than \$40,000 of total project costs would be considered).
- Should a grant of up to \$20,000 be approved and the actual cost of the project be less than \$40,000, the amount reimbursed would be reduced to reflect the 50/50 cost-sharing model.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A – Queen's Hotel History and Significance
Attachment B – Heritage Façade Grant Program Purpose and Conditions
Attachment C – Queen's Hotel – Existing Condition
Attachment D – Queen's Hotel – Proposed Improvements |

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