

Heritage Facade Rehabilitation Program

Application Overview

v. August 2006

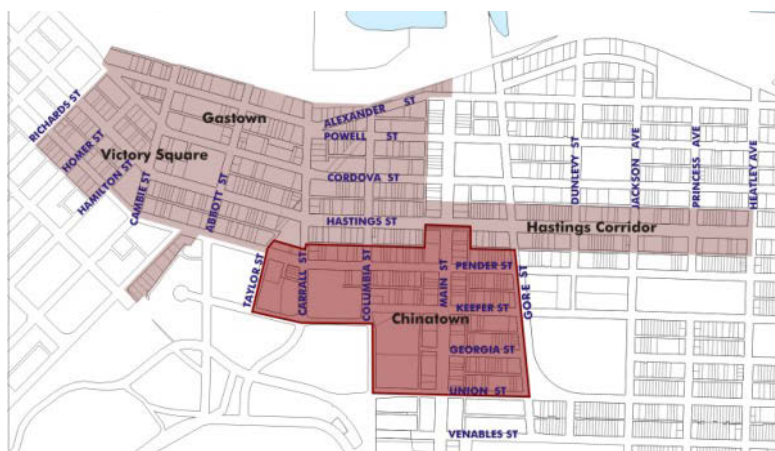
What is the Heritage Facade Rehabilitation Program?

City Council has approved a Heritage Facade Rehabilitation Program from 2003 to 2008, to assist property owners wishing to rehabilitate the facades of heritage buildings in Gastown, Chinatown, Victory Square and Hastings Street. Grants cover 50% of costs to a maximum of \$50,000 per principal facade.

The objectives of the program are to enhance the exterior appearance of buildings in a manner that is sympathetic to the heritage character of the area and to encourage the rehabilitation of ground floor spaces for active uses to kick start economic revitalization of the area.

Which buildings are eligible for the incentives?

All heritage buildings within the shaded areas, including Chinatown, are eligible to apply for incentives.



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Why should you consider this program?

The Heritage Facade Rehabilitation program provides a good opportunity for property owners to repair and restore the exterior of their heritage buildings to make them more attractive.

There are different degrees of building rehabilitation. Property owners can also choose to apply for the Heritage Building Rehabilitation Program which provides incentives for major building upgrades.

Buildings such as 124 Powell and 1 Alexander Streets applied for facade grant only. While other buildings, such as 5 West Pender Street (Chinese Freemasons), 51 E Pender Street (Wing Sang) and others, applied for full building rehabilitation incentives.

Since the implementation of the two programs in 2003, a wide variety of buildings were awarded incentives. These projects add a range of uses to the area, including rental housing, strata condos, single room accommodation, commercial live-work units, commercial and office space. Actively reusing heritage buildings not only helps enhance the unique heritage character of the area but also stimulates economic activities in the historic area.

I am interested in the program. Where do I start?

If you are interested in participating in the program or would like more information, you are encouraged to contact the City's Heritage Planner and Project Facilitator.



The Planner and Project Facilitator will be available to assist you with your application. They will help coordinate the public process, liaise with other City departments, and act as your central contacts throughout the application process.



What is a heritage consultant? Do I need one?

It is advisable for interested property owners to retain a heritage consultant when applying to the program. The heritage consultant should be a registered architect or a professional engineer with significant experience in heritage conservation.

A heritage consultant can help manage the process and ensure documentation required is prepared properly. The consultant will work closely with the Heritage Planner and Project Facilitator throughout the process.

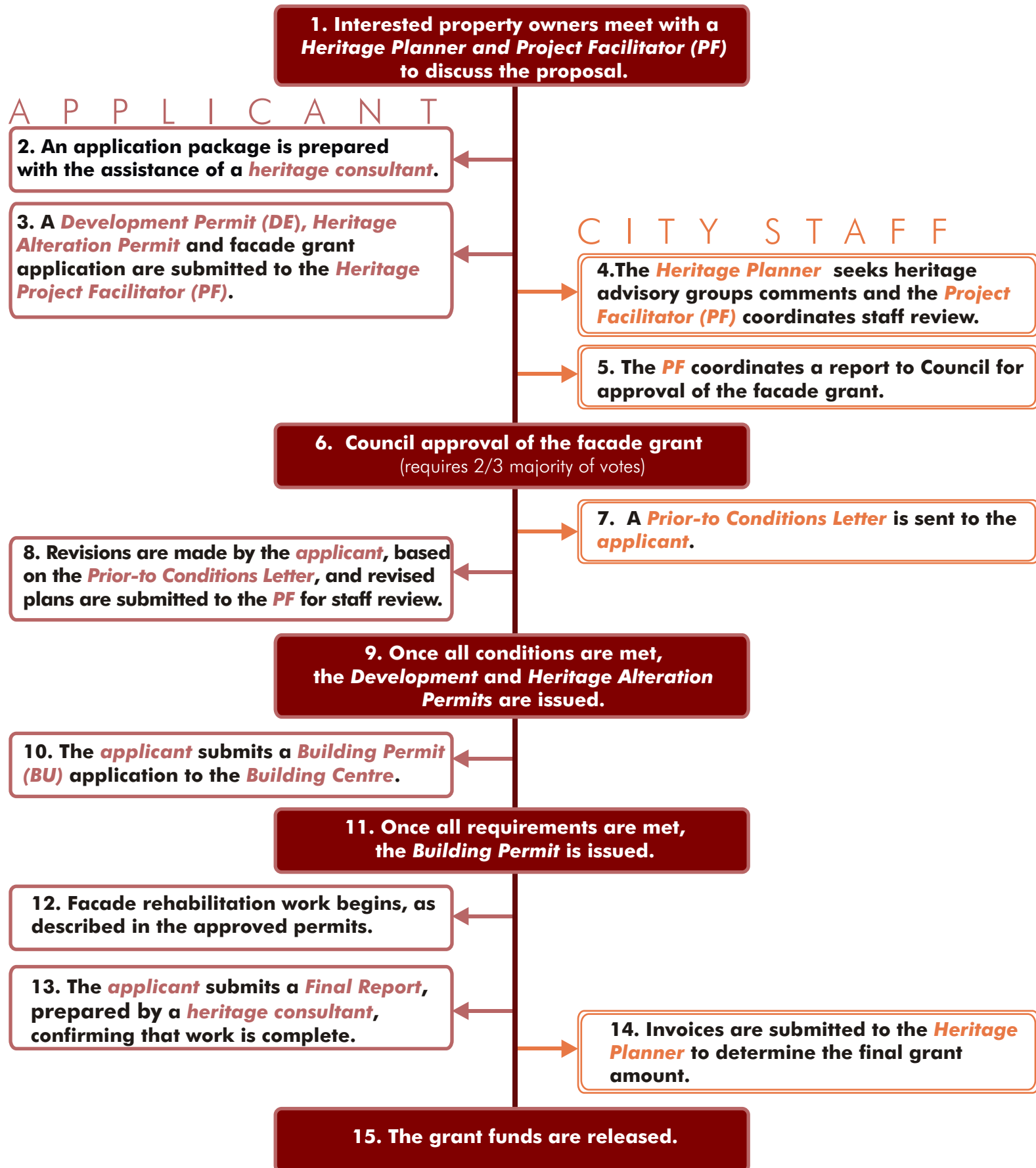
What costs are eligible for the facade grant?

Eligible heritage conservation work includes the cleaning, repair and maintenance of a building exterior and appropriate new design. The facade conservation work should not trigger building code upgrade requirements.

It is important that interested property owners obtain all necessary permits before any rehabilitation work begins in order to receive grant funds. The City will not consider retroactive funding for work completed prior to approval of the grant application.

How do I apply for a facade grant?

The Heritage Facade Rehabilitation Program is administered through the Development Permit (DE) application process. Typically it takes 4 months from application intake to issuance of a DE, but timing can vary for each application. The chart below outlines the review process for facade grant DE application.



The Application Package

The application package is usually prepared with the assistance of a heritage consultant on behalf of the property owner. The following items should be included in the package:

- Completed application form and fee;
- A photo board showing the building's existing condition, architectural details of the facade, as well as immediately adjacent buildings;
- A Design and Conservation Rationale summarizing the proposed scope of work;
- A Conservation Plan that includes discussion of:
 - The building, its historic value, and character defining elements as identified in the Statement of Significance (SOS);
 - Proposed conservation strategies and procedures that are compliant with *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*;
 - New building elements (e.g. windows, doors) that did not previously exist on the heritage building, and the rationale for their inclusion;
 - How heritage values and character defining elements identified in the SOS will be preserved and rehabilitated.
- Large scale architectural drawings showing both the existing and proposed condition, and cross-referencing the work described in the Conservation Plan; and,
- Three cost estimates for the proposed work prepared by three qualified construction firms.

Glossary

Applicant is the property owner or agent (e.g. a consultant) that makes application to the City for a permit and/or facade grant.

Building Centre is a branch within the City's Development Services department that oversees the review of Building Permit (BU) applications.

Building Permit (BU) authorizes the construction to take place in accordance with the plans and specifications that have been submitted for acceptance by the City.

Glossary

Building Principle Facade In the Heritage Facade Rehabilitation Program, the building facade is considered those facades which face primary streets. Other significant facades that do not face primary streets may be considered for inclusion in the program on a case by case basis.

Development Permit (DE) ensures that the proposed land use and design of buildings conform to established development plans, zoning regulations, bylaws and design guidelines for the area.

Final Report is prepared by a Heritage Consultant and confirms that all components of the proposed scope of work have been completed. The report is submitted to the City for review and approval prior to the release of grant funds.

Heritage Consultant is a registered architect or professional engineer that has significant experience in heritage conservation.

Heritage Planner is a City employee who reviews and authorizes all proposed rehabilitation work. The Planner will work closely with the applicant throughout the application process.

Heritage Project Facilitator (PF) is a City employee who oversees the processing of applications for heritage facade and building rehabilitation incentives. Together with the Heritage Planner, the PF assists applicants throughout the process.

Prior-to Conditions Letter Once approval for the proposed work and incentives have been approved by City Council, the applicant will receive a letter outlining the conditions, such as design refinements and heritage specifications, that must be met prior to the granting of the permit.

Statement of Significance (SOS) is a document that identifies the heritage value of a historic place and what should be protected. The heritage value is embodied in its character defining materials, forms, location, spatial configurations, uses and cultural associations or meanings. An SOS is prepared by a Heritage Consultant and is used as a tool for managing change by outlining broadly what should be conserved and where change may be permitted.