



Planning and Economic Development Department  
Commercial Districts and Small Business Section  
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## ***THE “GORE” BUILDING IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM***

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

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The Gore Building Improvement Grant Program (the “Program”) was developed to support the maintenance, attractiveness, functionality and viability of the historic building stock that fronts on King Street East between James Street and Catharine Street, known as the “Gore”. The Program is intended to provide financial assistance to bring existing properties to present-day Property Standards and Sign By-law requirements and, to improve their accessibility.

The Program supports an objective of the Downtown Secondary Plan: conserve and enhance the Gore as the primary landscaped open space and concentration of heritage buildings in Downtown Hamilton.

Applications under the Program are subject to the availability of funding. Applications will be accepted to the end of December 2014\* (with the exception of applicants granted an extension by Council).

### **PROGRAM TERMS**

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1. Property owners, and tenants authorized in writing by the owner, are eligible to apply for a grant under the program.
2. Grants will be paid on a matching basis up to a maximum of \$50,000 for eligible work under the Program.
3. Grants will be based on municipal addresses, identifying multiple and separate units with ground floor street frontages and entranceways and will be up to a maximum of \$50,000 per municipal address for eligible work under the terms of the Program.
4. Two separate cost estimates for the work are to be provided. Please note a contractor licensed with the City of Hamilton may be required to undertake the work. For more information on work that requires a licensed contractor

please refer to the Application Form or contact Building Department at (905) 546-2424 Ext. 2720.

An owner may present an estimate based on material only.

In the case where the applicant is the owner of a contracting company and wishes to utilize their company to undertake the improvements, one cost estimate from an arms-length contractor will also be required.

Grants will be calculated based upon lowest cost estimate.

A Building Inspector will review all estimates provided for the purpose of ensuring competitiveness.

5. Applicants will be required to provide a business case that identifies how the improvements will improve the marketability of the property for prospective tenants and/or improve the business vitality and/or utilize formerly under-utilized upper floors.
6. A building inspector will perform initial inspection relative to the proposed improvements, and subsequent final inspection to assure compliance with Property Standards.
7. Approval of the grant is at the sole discretion of the General Manager of the Planning and Economic Development Department and subject to the availability of funds.
8. Proposed improvements to be completed within one year to be eligible for payment. A one-year extension can be authorized by the Manager of Commercial Districts and Small Business.
9. Work completed must be consistent with estimates, and work proposed and identified within the application unless previously discussed and approved by the Commercial Districts and Small Business Section.
10. The Applicant shall provide to the City's Commercial Districts and Small Business Section copies of paid invoices for all work undertaken on the property for which the grant is applicable. This documentation is to be provided prior to the final inspection.
11. A City Building Inspector's final inspection report confirming all works have been carried out satisfactorily will be provided prior to release of any grant monies.

12. At the sole discretion of the Manager of Commercial Districts and Small Business, partial payments for works completed can be processed consistent with the payment process described above.
13. At the sole discretion of the Manager of Commercial Districts and Small Business, the grant cheque can be made jointly payable to the applicant and the contractor if such a request has been received from the applicant.
14. The grant is not transferable upon sale of the property.
15. The grant may also be received by an owner in conjunction with any other available City program in support of the redevelopment/development of the property with the exception of the Commercial Property Improvement Grant Program.
16. An application fee of \$423.75 for grants greater than \$12.5 K, or \$271.20 for grants less than or equal to \$12.5 K must be submitted at the time of application.
17. Without limiting the discretion as set out in paragraph seven, herein, City Council, whether or not an Applicant satisfies the requirements of the Program, may reject any application received from an applicant where, in the opinion of Council, the commercial relationship between the City and the Applicant has been impaired by, but not limited to, the applicant being involved in litigation with the City. Applicants shall include but not be limited to the following: the Applicant identified on the application form and if a corporation any person or entity with an interest in the corporation as determined by the City in its sole, absolute and unfettered discretion.
18. Without limiting the discretion as set out in paragraph 6 herein, City Council, whether or not an Applicant satisfies the requirements of the Program, may reject any application received from an applicant where there are property tax arrears owed on the subject property or on other properties owned by the Applicant within the City of Hamilton.
19. A successful applicant will enter into an agreement with the City containing the terms and conditions (but not limited to) set out in the program description.

#### **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

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- Property owners and authorized tenants are eligible.
- Property taxes must be paid current.
- The improvements shall be in accordance with Property Standards and in compliance with all applicable City by-laws, official plans, zoning regulations, design guidelines and site plan approvals.

- Works commenced prior to submitting an application are ineligible for funding under the Program. Works commenced after submitting an application but prior to approval of an application may be eligible for funding under the Program and eligibility will be determined by the General Manager of Planning and Economic Development Department, in his sole, absolute and unfettered discretion. An applicant shall assume the risk of paying for work commenced after an application has been submitted but prior to approval.
- Properties must front on King Street between James Street and Catharine Street.
- Existing use must be in conformity with the applicable Zoning By-law regulations (including the Heritage Character Zone), and other relevant planning controls.
- This program shall not apply to an existing or proposed Adult Entertainment Parlour, Body Rub Establishment as defined in the Zoning By-law.

### **ELIGIBLE IMPROVEMENTS**

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- Signage in conformity with the Sign By-law 10-197 as amended. (Note: the eligible grant amount will be increased to 75% of the cost of installing a sign that is in conformity with the Sign By-law and is replacing a legally non-conforming sign).
  - Façade improvements.
  - Restoration/reconstruction of building facades using existing and/or the site's previously existing historic facade elements and materials as supported by historical images or other documentation.
  - Reinforcement of floors, walls, ceilings and foundations.
  - Required improvements to ventilation systems.
  - Construction or alteration of stairs, guards, handrails.
  - Roofing.
  - Installation or repair of central air-conditioning.
  - Installation or repair of furnace.
  - Installation or alteration of required window openings.
  - Installation or alteration of fire protection systems; fire separations; fire doors, fire shutters and other fire protection devices.
  - Improvements for barrier-free accessibility including elevators.
  - Other improvements related to health and safety issues deemed eligible at the sole discretion of the General Manager of Planning and Economic Development.
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