

Meeting Date: May 21, 2019
Department: Building and Planning
Prepared By: Jennifer Huff, Manager of Building & Planning
Submitted By: Matthew Stephenson, Director
Reviewed By: Greg McClinchey, Chief Administrative Officer
SUBJECT: **Façade Improvement Grant**

RECOMMENDATION: **THAT: The maximum capital amount awarded to Façade Improvement Program projects be amended so as to not exceed 50% of total project costs in regards to multi-fronting facades and to not exceed 25% of total project costs in regards to single-fronting facades. Further, that Council approve the deadline for submission to change from March 31 to May 31 of each calendar year.**

BACKGROUND

The municipal Façade Improvement Program currently awards a capital grant of up to 50% of improvement costs (to a maximum of \$5,000) to multi-fronting facades and up to 25% (to a maximum of \$2,500) for single-fronting facades. Section 4.1 of the Façade Improvement Program States:

4.1 AVAILABLE INCENTIVES

The following incentives may be offered to those projects approved under this plan:

- a) Municipal staff expertise to assist in the development of preliminary design and structural plans, and to assist in the identification and securing of alternative public funding sources.
- b) Capital grant up to 25% of the cost of façade and structural improvements that satisfy design guidelines (to a maximum of \$2,500 per project per year). Capital costs may include professional design, material, labour and taxes necessary to complete eligible work.
- c) Capital grant up to 50% of the cost of façade and structural improvements that satisfy design guidelines and result in multi-fronting façades in selected areas (to a maximum of \$5,000 per project per year). Capital costs may include professional design, material, labour and taxes necessary to complete eligible work.

At the time the Municipal Council establishes its annual budget, Council will determine the maximum contribution to be allocated to the program for the current year. The Municipality is not obligated to fund any project.

Since program inception in 2006, costs of improvements have increased and the maximum amounts awarded through this program should better reflect this. More intense revitalization projects would be better incentivised if the maximum amount awarded could be increased at the discretion of Council and Municipal staff on a per project basis. This would allow for an increase in quality versus quantity of façade improvement projects, and would result in more capital investment in the Strathroy-Caradoc BIAs. There would be no increase in the maximum percentage of total project costs awarded. The total funds available for the façade grant programme remains unchanged.

For example, per the current administrative façade funding program, a \$50,000 multi-fronting façade improvement project could be awarded a maximum of \$5,000. Staff's recommendation would give discretion to council and staff to award the project up to \$25,000 for a multi-fronting façade or \$12,500 for a single-fronting façade project.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No implications, as the total amount awarded to projects through this fund will be unchanged.

ATTACHMENTS

- none