

FORMAL REPORT

To:	Mayor Strathdee and Members of Council
Prepared by:	Trisha McKibbin, Director of Corporate Services / Deputy Clerk
Date of Meeting:	12 September 2017
Subject:	COR 35-2017 Heritage Property Tax Rebate Bylaw

PURPOSE

This report presents Council with the final version of Bylaw 79-2017 on the creation of a Heritage Property Tax Rebate program for the Heritage Conservation District.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COR 35-2017 Heritage Property Tax Rebate Bylaw be received for information; and

THAT Council approve By-Law 79-2017, being a bylaw to establish a Heritage Property Tax Rebate program for the Heritage Conservation District.

BACKGROUND

Throughout 2015 and 2016 the Strategic Priorities Committee and Council reviewed and discussed the establishment and specific criteria of a Heritage Property Tax Relief program. At the November 8, 2016 Regular Council meeting the following resolutions were made.

Resolution 2016-11-08-09

THAT Council approves the implementation of a Heritage Property Tax Rebate program.

Resolution 2016-11-08-10

THAT Council support Option A (20% rebate) with an added condition that properties with outstanding property standards non-compliance would not qualify for the rebate.

Resolution 2016-11-08-11

THAT the Heritage Property Tax Rebate Program Option B as outlined in the report be added to the 2017 budget for consideration.

REPORT

With the passing of Council resolutions at the November 8, 2016 Regular Meeting of Council and passing of By-law 22 of 2017 on March 21, 2017 approving the Operating and Capital Budget for 2017 the next step to implementing a Heritage Property Tax Rebate program is the passing of a bylaw outlining the program components.

In April, the draft bylaw was sent to the Municipality's Solicitor for legal review. Upon receipt of comments from the Municipal Solicitor final edits and revisions have been made to the draft by-law.

The Bylaw outlines two program streams, one at a 20% rebate and another at a 40% rebate. Each program has its own eligibility criteria, with the 40% rebate criteria being more restrictive.

The criteria for each program is as follows:

Program A – 20% Tax Rebate

- I. Located in the Town of St. Marys;
- II. Designated as part of a Heritage Conservation District under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act; and
- III. Is subject to a Heritage Conservation and Maintenance Agreement with the Town respecting the property;
- IV. An application must be submitted no later than February 28 in the year following the year for which the Owner is seeking to obtain the Heritage Property Tax Rebate;
- V. The building on the property must be occupied 10 months of the year to be eligible;
- VI. Not subject of any unpaid taxes, local improvement charges, fees, or other monies owed to the Town;
- VII. The property is ineligible if the property owner is receiving vacant building tax relief or Charity Rebate from the Town;
- VIII. Not the subject of any contraventions, work orders or outstanding municipal requirements;
- IX. Not the subject of any outstanding property standards non-compliance.

Program B - 40% Tax Rebate

- I. Located in the Town of St. Marys;
- II. Designated as part of a Heritage Conservation District under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act; and
- III. Is subject to a Heritage Conservation and Maintenance Agreement with the Town respecting the property;
- IV. An application must be submitted no later than February 28 in the year following the first year for which the Owner is seeking to obtain the Heritage Property Tax Rebate
 - a. Submission of all receipts and expense reports for work on the property must accompany the application form
 - b. Before and After photographs must accompany the application form
 - c. Copy of Insurance must accompany the application form
- V. The property has undergone significant renovation and/or significant rehabilitation that created more, or significantly improved existing, residential dwelling units on one or more upper floors of the eligible property;
- VI. The building on the property must be occupied 10 months of the year to be eligible;
- VII. Not subject of any unpaid taxes, local improvement charges, fees, or other monies owed to the Town
 - a. The property is ineligible if the property owner is receiving vacant building tax relief or Charity Rebate from the Town
- VIII. Not the subject of any contraventions, work orders or outstanding municipal requirements;
- IX. Not the subject of any outstanding property standards non-compliance;
- X. The satisfactory completion of any and all inspections of the Eligible Property by the appropriate Town staff.

Under both programs, the rebate is considered to be separate and distinct from all other granting programs (i.e. stacking restrictions do not apply).

The Directors from Corporate Services, Finance and Building and Development have met and reviewed the bylaw and have discussed the administration and application process for the program. Applications forms and packages have been drafted and are under final review.

Once the Bylaw has been passed, the next steps will be launching a communication campaign for the program and its corresponding application process. Staff will be working with the Corporate Communications team to ensure the effective communication for the roll out of this new program.

SUMMARY

The purpose of a Heritage Property Tax Rebate Program is to provide an incentive to owners to make regular investments in the ongoing conservation or their heritage properties. This report contains information related to the implementation of a Heritage Property Tax Rebate Program under Bylaw 21-2017. The report outlines key program components, specifically Option A of the Program which is a 20% rebate and Option B of the Program which is a 40% rebate, and the eligibility criteria for each.

The Province of Ontario contributes to the program by funding the education portion of the property tax rebate program. The education portion of funding is based on the same proportion as the municipal tax rebate.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There is \$50,000 in the 2017 Operating Budget for the implementation of the program in 2017.

STRATEGIC PLAN

- ☒ This initiative is supported by the following priorities, outcomes, and tactics in the Plan.
- Pillar #4 Culture & Recreation:
 - Outcome: Downtown Revitalization Plan
 - Tactic(s):
 - Investigate prospect of turning second storey downtown space into rentals or studios (see Housing pillar).
 - Offer incentives to new businesses to occupy vacant storefronts.

OTHERS CONSULTED

Jim Brown, Director of Finance
Grant Brower, Director of Building and Development

ATTACHMENTS

None

REVIEWED BY

Recommended by the Department



Trisha McKibbin
Director Corporate Services/Deputy Clerk

Recommended by the CAO



Brent Kittmer
CAO / Clerk