

What We Heard

Stakeholder groups, including heritage property owners, developers, and the City of Saskatoon (City)'s Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee have been consulted to date on existing support offered through the Heritage Conservation Program.

Opportunities to improve the existing Program were identified in the following areas:

1. **Current incentives require substantial upfront capital investment.** Owning a heritage property comes with unique challenges and maintenance requirements. It may take property owners several years to be able to pay the upfront cost for a heritage conservation project. Many property owners may never be in a position to afford the capital investment.
2. **Support is needed beyond the 10-year period offered.** Property owners are not able to access the program again if they reach the maximum grant amount, which is capped at

\$150,000 in a 10 year period. Support may not be available over the property's lifespan.



3. **Better public awareness and education.** The public is not aware of the incentives offered through the Heritage Conservation Program. They are often unaware of other City or Provincial incentives or grants that may be available to them.

Better education is a key component to teaching the public, professionals and other organizations the value of historical properties and how the program is able to offer assistance.

4. **No tangible measurables or targets identified.** Without set targets or quantifiable numbers, it is challenging to determine what would constitute success for the Heritage Conservation Program. Is it so many properties designated per year? Is it the amount of funding provided?
5. **Difficulty in finding skilled trades/ craftspeople/ professionals.** Finding people with knowledge of heritage buildings and appropriate conservation techniques is challenging in Saskatoon.
6. **Timing and delays in approvals are costly.** The perception that heritage designation means more "red tape" is pervasive. Delays in approvals are viewed as being costly to owners when necessary improvements are considered urgent.

7. **A culture shift is necessary.**

There needs to be a change in how we view heritage. Heritage needs to be assigned a value and considered to be an important attribute to a community. The City needs to be clear on what the "why" is. Why designate more heritage assets? Why is it important for the City to continue to conserve heritage and not solely rely on the private sector to do so? What are the implications of losing heritage?

8. **Consider disincentives to curb demolition and neglect.**

Consider implementing disincentives that deter investors or property owners from demolishing buildings.

9. **"Money talks"**. An all around more robust funding strategy and incentive program is required. Provide fair, ongoing support to those property owners that invest in Saskatoon's heritage.



Source. Saskatoon Local History

“What is our why? Why is it important for the City to continue to conserve heritage? What are the implications of losing heritage?”