Heritage Tax Incentive Program
Application Process

The Heritage Tax incentive program helps support preservation, rehabilitation and seismic upgrades of designated heritage buildings. The incentive offsets rehabilitation costs through an exemption from property taxes for up to 10 years.

Important Notes

- The tax exemption will not be given retroactively, and work must not begin before approval is given.
- A Heritage Alteration Permit is also required and the application must be submitted with the Heritage Tax Incentive application to provide necessary building details.
- Applicants should meet with the Senior Heritage Planner prior to submitting the application and all required plans.
- You can apply for a building permit prior to final approval by Council.
- The term of the tax exemption will begin in the year following issuance of the final occupancy permit.
- The property owner is still liable for Local Improvement charges appearing on the property tax notice.

In cases where the applicant also applies for a Building Incentive Program grant from the Victoria Civic Heritage Trust, staff will coordinate applications to ensure no duplication of incentives is provided for the same work.

Application Process

City Staff review the application for completeness and then forward it to the Victoria Civic Heritage Trust for review at its monthly meeting. Their recommendations are provided to City Council who is the final authority in granting eligibility to the tax incentive. The approval process takes about three months though complex applications may require more time.

The following outlines the sequence of events that can be expected during the application process for the Heritage Tax Exemption program.

COTW refers to the Committee of the Whole (composed of all City Council members)

WHO is responsible	WHAT needs to be done
► **Applicant**	☐ Review the scope of work and seismic strategy with staff prior to applying. Refinements may be required for eligibility. ☐ Submit the application, fees and all supporting materials.
BC Assessment Authority	☐ Review by Assessment Authority for an estimate of an increase of property values.
Victoria Civic Heritage Trust	☐ Review by City Staff and by Victoria Civic Heritage Trust.
► **Applicant**	☐ Attend Victoria Civic Heritage Trust meeting (virtual or in-person) to answer questions.
City	☐ Staff present recommendations to COTW. Victoria Civic Heritage Trust's comments and recommendations will be attached to the report. ☐ Committee of the Whole reviews application and may recommend changes, approval, rejection, referral or tabling.

WHO is responsible	WHAT needs to be done
► **Applicant**	☐ Attend COTW meeting to answer any questions. ☐ If changes or requests for clarification are required following City review, submit revisions to City staff.
City	☐ Preparation of any covenants or development agreements, as required. ☐ If COTW recommends approving the application, a draft bylaw will go to Council for first and second readings before moving to a Public Hearing for adoption. ☐ Final voting on the Tax Exemption Bylaw requires a two-thirds majority vote by Council for final approval.