



2021-2022 BUDGET

OPERATIONS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

HERITAGE

Introduction

The **Oro-Medonte Heritage Committee** is a committee of Council with a mandate to preserve, protect, restore, and maintain historical documents, sites, facts and other pertinent findings of historical significance on behalf of the residents of Oro-Medonte. The Oro-Medonte Heritage Committee also provides recommendations to Council on issues of cultural / historical significance in accordance with Ontario Heritage Act. The Heritage Budget contains funding for the administration of the Committee as well as the Oro African Methodist Episcopal Church, a designated National Historic Site.

The Heritage Committee relies on the sale of books, grants and donations to generate revenues to offset operational costs.

As of December 2020, the Municipal Heritage Register contains 62 listed properties and 2 properties designated under the Ontario Heritage Act.

The **Oro African Methodist Episcopal Church**, built between 1846 and 1849, is a designated National Historic Site. It is one of the last buildings erected by a community of African Canadians whose roots were uniquely anchored in the history of United Empire Loyalists and represents the important role that Black militiamen played in the defense of Upper Canada during the War of 1812, and also represents early Upper Canada land policy.

The Oro African Methodist Episcopal Church is one of, if not, the oldest African log church still standing in North America. This Church stands as a testament to both the Black Settlers who carefully crafted and cared for it for nearly 75 years and passionate community volunteers who have worked diligently to preserve it since its abandonment in the 1920's.

In 2016, the restoration of Oro African Episcopal Church was completed with the assistance of Parks Canada, Ontario Trillium Foundation and community contributions. From 2017-2019, the Church was made available for tours and visitation on weekends throughout the spring/summer with the assistance from the County of Simcoe who operated under a satellite to County of Simcoe Museum. Through discussion with County staff, the County is no longer able to continue to provide an interpretive program but will continue to support promotion of the Church. In 2020, the Church was closed due to COVID 19 restrictions. The 2021 operating budget does not include provisions to provide regular interpretive services at the church. In December 2020, Report OCS2020-04 Oro African Church Governance and Service Levels was presented to Council. Following the report, Council provided direction to staff to prepare a terms of reference to develop a strategy for the management of the church and report back to Council. This is currently underway and following the completion a report will be provided to Council outlining the terms of reference and resource requirements to develop this strategy. Funding of \$20,000 from the Oro African Church Reserve has been identified in 2021 to develop this plan.

Environmental Scan:

Heritage preservation – The Township prides itself on its *Proud Heritage, Exiting Future*. This simple statement highlights the inherent conflict often present in the attempts to balance both preservation and progress. The Township is rich in heritage and culture and has had much success in documenting in the Township's history through the work of dedicated volunteers. In 2014, the Township also

established a policy to establish a policy and framework to establish a Municipal Heritage Register. The Heritage Committee has now listed several buildings under this policy and act. As this process evolves and properties are considered for designation there will be a need to engage a consultant for conducting cultural heritage assessments on properties considered. This will ensure cultural heritage attributes are properly assessed/identified in an unbiased manner providing the Heritage Committee and Council with information from which to base decisions. The cost of an individual property assessment is approximately \$1,500.

The update to the Township's Official Plan also presents an opportunity to review policies with respect to Heritage Preservation.

Infrastructure – The Township has a number of cairns, plaques and monuments throughout the Township. In addition, the Township has a number of older structures, buildings, and other infrastructure that may hold cultural/heritage significance. As these assets continue to age, and the community change, there will be increasing pressure to ensure their preservation. *The proposed capital budget includes \$6,000 in 2021 and \$17,000 in 2022 to complete restoration work on the Township's cairn's, plaques and monuments. There is potential that this may be offset by community support and external grants.*

Technology – The advancements in GIS and digital mapping software present the ability to map cultural and heritage assets and also provide capabilities for customer interaction which benefits Tourism, education etc... the County of Simcoe has recently completed a cultural mapping exercise and updated their GIS database.

Volunteers – An aging boomer and senior cohort presents opportunity for community mobilization with respect to heritage. There is much knowledge and interest in these demographics to research, understand, and educate on issues surrounding heritage.

**Township of Oro-Medonte
Operating Budget 2021//2022**

Heritage	A	B	C	D	E	VARIANCES Increase / (Decrease)			Variance Explanation Number
	2020 Original Budget	2020 Adjusted (COVID-19) Budget	2020 Projection	2021 Budget	2022 Budget	2020 Projection vs 2020 Adjusted Budget (C - B)	2021 Budget vs 2020 Original Budget (D - A)	2022 Budget vs 2021 Budget (E - D)	
Heritage Committee Expenditures	10,655	4,774	1,104	9,200	9,400	(3,670)	(1,455)	200	1
Oro African Church Expenditures	12,533	12,533	4,229	32,090	11,631	(8,304)	19,557	(20,459)	2
Less: Revenues Generated	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Less: Transfer From Oro African Church Reserve	-	-	-	(20,000)	-	-	(20,000)	20,000	4
Total Tax Levy Requirement	23,188	17,307	5,332	21,290	21,031	(11,975)	(1,898)	(259)	
<u>Variance Explanations:</u>									
	1								
	2	20,000 budgeted for student/consultant to develop long term stratgy for the management of the Oro-African Church National Historic Site.							
	3								
	4	20,000 transferred from the Oro African Church Reserve to fund the above.							