

Staff Report



To	Committee of the Whole
Service Area	Infrastructure, Development and Environment
Date	Wednesday, April 3, 2024
Subject	Guelph Greener Homes Loan Program By-law (2023) – 20764 Update

Recommendation

1. That Council authorize the updates to Guelph Greener Homes Loan Program By-law (2023) - 20764
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Executive Summary

Purpose of Report

Updates to Guelph Greener Homes Loan Program By-law (2023) - 20764 (GGH By-law) are proposed that will allow for program adjustments that will help improve the operation of the program.

Key Findings

The GGH By-law sets the overarching boundaries that govern the design and function of the Guelph Greener Homes program.

The program launched on July 31, 2023. Since this time, the Guelph Greener Homes program has received strong interest with over 300 registrants that are at different stages in the program and with a current program commitment of over \$2 million. Based on several months of operation, updates to the GGH By-law are being proposed to improve the Guelph Greener Homes program functionality including equitable access to low-income household grants.

Strategic Plan Alignment

Proposed updates to the GGH By-law improve the Guelph Greener Homes program functionality. The Guelph Greener Homes program supports Guelph residents to complete energy efficiency and greenhouse gas emissions reduction projects in their homes and is directly aligned to Guelph's Race To Zero carbon emissions initiative.

Future Guelph Theme

Environment

Future Guelph Objectives

Environment: Empower the community to help create a sustainable city

Financial Implications

Updates to the GGH By-law will not cause financial impact. Updates improve program functionality and equitable access to low-income household grants.

Report

The Guelph Greener Homes program offers interest free loans and low-income household grants to Guelph residents to complete energy efficiency and greenhouse gas emissions reduction projects in their homes. The Guelph Greener Homes program receives support from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Community Efficiency Financing (CEF) initiative.

The program launched on July 31, 2023. Since this time, the Guelph Greener Homes program has received strong interest with over 300 registrants that are at different stages in the program and with a current program commitment of over \$2 million.

Through operating the system, the program team have identified minor updates to the Guelph Greener Homes Loan Program By-law (2023) - 20764 (GGH By-law) that will allow for program adjustments to improve the functionality of the program. The GGH By-law sets the overarching boundaries that govern the design and function of the Guelph Greener Homes program.

The updates have been summarized below and documented in Attachment-1 using tracked changes to the original version of the program by-law.

Initial Disbursement Limit Increase for Low-Income Household Grants

The initial disbursement is currently set at 20% for loans and low-income household grants. This update proposes to maintain the initial disbursement limit for loans but increases the initial disbursement limit for low-income household grants to 50% with program payments made upon submission of paid invoices to a 10% holdback limit. The 10% holdback will be released upon Guelph Greener Homes program completion. The purpose of this update is to reduce cashflow pressures for low-income households participating in the grant stream while ensuring program closeout requirements will be completed.

Maximum Eligible Loan Amount

The maximum eligible loan amount standardizes the maximum loan limit to balance household access to Guelph Greener Homes program loans by maintaining the existing \$50,000 maximum loan limit amount and removing the maximum loan limit reduction to 10% of the current value of the property for all households. The rationale for removing the current value of the property reference is due to current values being dated to 2016 and not reflecting present-day housing market values or cost of home improvement work.

Housekeeping and Administrative Updates

Updates terminology, repayment of nominal loan amounts of less than \$100, improves alignment to Energuide certified energy audit report processes, and adds clarity that special charge by-laws are to be posted publicly as per Ontario local improvement charge regulations.

Financial Implications

Updates to the GGH By-law will not cause financial impact. Updates improve program functionality and equitable access to low-income household grants.

Consultations and Engagement

None

Attachments

Attachment-1 Redlined updates of By-law Number (2023) - 20764

Attachment-2 Draft final of By-law Number (2024) - 20926

Departmental Approval

Finance – James Krauter, Deputy Treasurer, Manager of Revenue and Treasury

Report Author

Bryan Ho-Yan, M.A.Sc., P.Eng., CEM, Manager, Energy and Climate Change

This report was approved by:

Antti Vilkkö, P.Eng., MBA

General Manager, Facilities and Energy Management

Infrastructure, Development and Environment

519-822-1260 extension 2490

antti.vilkkö@guelph.ca

This report was recommended by:

Jayne Holmes, P.Eng., PMP

Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

Infrastructure, Development and Environment

519-822-1260 extension 2248

jayne.holmes@guelph.ca