



# Waterloo Regional Heritage Foundation

**Jordan Baker – Chair, Special Committee**  
**John Glass – Chair, WRHF**

**Foundation Update**

**June 4, 2024**

# History, Background and Impact

- ▶ Incorporated Feb. 13, 1974. The first Heritage Foundation of its kind in Canada.
- ▶ Funded almost \$3M for cultural and heritage projects through a mandate of encouraging and supporting the heritage and culture of Waterloo Region.
- ▶ Meeting a distinct need in our communities.
- ▶ Building, Publication & Special Event categories.
- ▶ Projects from \$100 to over \$100,000, through 400 grants awarded.
- ▶ The Joseph Schneider Haus – National Historic Site.
- ▶ Regional funding based on population (\$100k for years '20, '21).
- ▶ Regional funding paused in November, 2021.
- ▶ Grant application pause January, 2022.

# What We Have Undertaken: New Strategic Planning Activities

- ▶ What Needed to Change?
  - ▶ The need for equitable grant distribution and greater visibility, with an eye towards impact and value to the Region.
- ▶ Hired a consultant – The Centre for Community Based Research
- ▶ Evaluated our grant procedures to ensure we are following DEI and REDI practices as defined by the Region.
- ▶ The ultimate goal of identifying and engaging with non-traditional applicants for heritage funding and to verify that grants are distributed equitably.

# Consultant Findings & WRHF Actions

## ▶ Core Findings

- ▶ There is a growing demand for increased relationship building, expanding opportunities for not only funding, but engagement with heritage and culture
- ▶ The need for reflection and action plans around understanding who belongs and who is excluded when it comes to supporting heritage, and reframing granting processes to increase accessibility and equity

## ▶ Short Term Actions to open funding again

- ▶ A new definition of heritage as “what we receive from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations. Heritage can be cultural or natural, tangible or intangible, and can apply to all creations of the past that have acquired cultural significance with the passage of time”
- ▶ A new Equity Funding Stream
- ▶ A reworking of grant application windows, and greater visibility of grant opportunities for more people and organizations throughout the Region

# Next Steps

- ▶ Update website with new info & process
- ▶ Direct communication to groups who participated in the consultant's investigation and to other under-represented groups
- ▶ Open grant window (target Sept 15 – Oct. 31)
- ▶ Evaluate Nov. 1 – Dec. 31. Announce Jan. 2025
- ▶ Currently targeting \$100k (of \$110k in reserve) over Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 windows.
- ▶ Request consideration of further Regional funding to continue beyond the summer of 2025