

Oxford Downtown Development Authority Façade Grant Improvement Program

The grant program has been developed to encourage property and business owners to improve the appearance of Oxford's commercial and business district. The program is funded and administered by the Oxford Downtown Development Authority, (DDA).

The intent of the *Oxford Façade Grant Improvement Program* is to provide financial incentive for improving the exterior appearance of its buildings. This program provides an opportunity to preserve the architectural heritage of Oxford and enhance the unique character of the downtown. A well maintained downtown creates an image of a flourishing community and as a result encourages potential businesses to consider locating in Oxford. The DDA believes the best approach to creating a vibrant downtown is through the preservation of a building's original architectural features. This preservation-based philosophy is a key component of the National MainStreet Program.

- Proposed New designs should be compatible with existing buildings. This does not mean limiting the architectural style but rather that designs should respect existing buildings and strive for visual harmony with the character of the street.
- Each individual building should take advantage of its historic past. This does not necessarily mean to reproduce the appearance of the building exactly as it looked during a particular period in time but to improve the appearance by using what exists and emphasizing positive features.
- The removal of inappropriate tacked on "modernizations"; simple maintenance; the addition of a well-designed, original/historic exterior looking or improved/additional awnings and the care in the selection of colors and materials can produce a better visual result of the existing façade.
- By coordinating improvements, individual merchants/tenants, and property owners are able to retain their individual identities while at the same time strengthening the image of the DDA district.

There will be an \$11,500 maximum *Facade Improvement Grant* which earmarks \$10,000 for the façade and the remaining \$1,500 may be used for an awning. All grants awarded must be matched and/or exceeded by the applicant. Grants will be awarded on a first come, first serve basis at the discretion of the DDA. The *Facade Improvement Grant* will be limited to one (1) application per building, one (1) front or one (1) rear (or one (1) side, in special circumstances) as determined by the Design Committee. An opportunity to split the grant award between the front and rear of an existing building will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Design Committee. Submitting an application does not guarantee an award of the grant. The DDA Design Committee will review each application with final approval by the DDA Board.

The grant's definition of an eligible "façade" is limited to the face of an existing building's principle front exterior that faces the addressed street or road of the property which acts as the primary entry to access the interior of the structure. A "rear entry" or "back entrance façade" is a building's entrance that typically faces a parking lot or driveway not visible from the addressed street/road the building fronts but has high visibility and is used to access the interior of the structure frequently, as defined above. An "awning" is considered a secondary covering that is attached to a front façade over a window, door, or entire storefront.

Qualifications for Façade Grant Approval:

1. The property must be located in the Oxford DDA District.
2. The applicant must be the property owner or business owner with property owner's written permission. An applicant can be a merchant/tenant (lease holder), property owner, building owner. Sublease holders, land contact holders, vendee and/or vendors are ineligible to apply for this grant.
3. Improvements must be visible within the DDA District from the right of way (R.O.W.) at the front of the building, as defined above, of the building's street/road address, including special circumstances (corner lots, building's main entry being in rear adjacent/connected to a supporting parking lot, side entry/façade, etc.) as determined by the Design Committee.
4. The grant monies must be used for façade improvements that include the following architectural

exterior elements/features that are eligible for repair or replacement:

- Exterior coverings (including masonry, metal, paint, tile, stone, wood)
 - Roof Elements (including cornices, gables, dormers, eaves, turrets, parapets, metal standing seam, shingles tile/clay/slate/composite/asphalt at the Design Committee's discretion)
 - Windows and doors (including thresholds, jams, headers, mullions)
 - Exterior lighting that is consistent with the surrounding buildings
 - Awnings (including structural materials of wood, aluminum/metal, reinforced plastics and steel consisting of durable, weatherproof fabrics such as canvas, vinyl-coated polyester, and acrylic fabric)
 - Other architectural features as determined by the Design Committee.
5. Improvements must be recommended for approval by the Oxford DDA Design Committee and approved by the DDA Board before starting the project.
 6. Work must be done by a licensed, insured contractor. Labor provided by the applicant, owner or any other unlicensed contractor will not be considered.
 7. If a commercial building, under one ownership is a multi-tenant building, each separate unit with an individual storefront or an independent ground floor entry shall be eligible to apply for a *Façade/Awning Grant*. In some cases, a *Back Entrance Façade Grant Program* would be more suitable for multi-tenant structures depending on the scope and layout as listed above. Such unique situations shall be reviewed at the decision of the DDA Executive Director, DDA staff, and/or Design Committee.
 8. Any project must comply with the latest ordinances, fire, and building codes.
 9. All taxes, water, sewer and rubbish bills must be paid in full and any outstanding violations must be corrected to be eligible.
 10. Applicants (i.e. merchant/tenant/lease holder, property owner, building owner) can only apply for a *Façade Grant Improvement Program* for the same façade (same address) once (1 time) every five (5) years. This includes awnings.
 11. No interior renovations are eligible, including the interior window display area.

Eligible Expenses: Expenses incurred having to do with the project that has been reviewed and approved by the Design Committee and the DDA Board and included in the grant application.

Ineligible Expenses: Any expense not specifically stated under eligible expenses such as but not limited to:

1. Expenses incurred prior to the DDA's receipt, review and approval of an application
2. Property acquisition
3. Mortgage, land contract refinancing or loan fees
4. Site plan, building & sign fees
5. Attorney, architectural and engineering fees
6. Interior furnishings and improvements of any kind.
7. Any portion of the expenses for which the applicant pays a contractor in merchandise or trade for service.
8. Exterior materials not listed including but not limited to vinyl siding, aluminum cladding/siding, mechanical equipment, roofing materials (tar, bitumen, membrane, concrete, loose stone, vegetative/green roofs), other items not visible from the R.O.W. or adjacent parking lot as defined above.
9. Signs, murals and materials/location of such are not part of this grant. See the "*Oxford Sign Grant Program*" for more information, located online at: <https://downtownoxford.info/grants-resources/>
10. Depending on the building and the case for a façade grant, additional options are available for

the rear entry/façade of a building. See “*Back Entrance Façade Grant Program*” for more information, located online at: <https://downtownoxford.info/grants-resources/>

Grant Procedure:

1. Contact the Oxford DDA Office for information, application and design guidelines or go online at www.downtownoxford.org.
2. Review the proposed façade improvement design with the DDA Executive Director.
3. Submit one (1) copy of your completed application with design plans, three (3) cost estimates, and color and material samples to the DDA office.
4. After being submitted the application is reviewed by the DDA Executive Director, then it will be sent to the Design Committee Chairperson to put it on the agenda for the Design Committee.
5. Grant applicants shall coordinate with the DDA Executive Director and DDA staff upon submission of an application to determine the item’s placement on a scheduled Design Committee agenda (time/place) and if the applicant should attend the Design Committee meeting depending on the complexity of a grant request.
6. After being reviewed by the Design Committee a written recommendation for approval is sent to the DDA Board or applicant is notified of recommended changes or denial of request
7. The DDA Board acts upon the application at their regular meeting, which is the third Monday of each month, which the applicant must attend.
8. A written notice is sent to the applicant notifying him/her of the decision following the DDA Board meeting.
9. The DDA Director will refer a change in construction plans to the Design Committee or back to the full DDA Board who must authorize any modifications to the approved application and façade grant in writing. During construction, any changes to the approved facade, including but not limited to exterior changes in materials, window, doors, cornices, etc. must be authorized in advance by the DDA in writing or the funding commitment may be rescinded.
10. At the completion of construction, the applicant prepares a project financial report and provides the DDA with proof that approved renovation expenses are paid (canceled checks, paid invoices, sworn contractor’s statement, sub-contractor’s waiver of lien, etc). The Design Committee must also review the completed project and sign off on the project.
11. The DDA Director prepares a final project report for review by the DDA Board and puts it on the next regular meeting agenda. If all conditions for payment are satisfied, the DDA Board authorizes disbursement of funds.
12. Approval or denial of this grant does not supersede the Village of Oxford’s ordinances and permitting process. More information can be found on such procedures on the Village of Oxford website: <https://www.thevillageofoxford.org/>

Application: The following items must be submitted to the Oxford DDA office before the application can be reviewed. Contact the Executive Director for a copy of the grant application. Items required by the applicant:

1. Completed application; incomplete applications will not be accepted. Deadline for submittal shall be the last Thursday of each month. Applicant may elect to have a “preliminary review” by the Design Committee to obtain feedback prior to formal submittal of the grant request.
2. Current photos of the property to be improved
3. Detailed drawings of the proposed improvements
4. Written description of proposed improvements, including materials and color (colors must follow the current DDA color palette).
5. Samples of materials and colors being used in the improvement. Material information brochures should also be included.
6. Proof of project funding sources.
7. Three bids for the project for each contracted service (materials and labor listed separately)

Review/Approval:

After the completed application, with all required information, has been submitted to the DDA (a site visit of the property may be requested), along with a review of the application will be conducted by the DDA Director and the applicant. This will be scheduled by the Executive Director of the DDA.

The applicant may attend the Design Committee meeting depending on the complexity of the project as determined by the Executive Director or DDA staff. A presentation and review of the application will be given to the Design Committee by the applicant, Executive Director and/or DDA staff. The Design Committee may, at their discretion, forego the requirement for three bids.

The DDA Design Committee reviews each application separately. Due to the number of buildings within the DDA, history of grants awarded to a building, and special circumstances in each case, the Design Committee reserves the right to use its discretion in reviewing each case and to uphold the intention of the grant being applied for as it pertains to the visual benefit of the DDA and surrounding properties.

After review by the DDA Design Committee, the committee will make a decision on the application and a recommendation to the DDA Board. Final approval will be granted by the DDA Board of Directors, which meets the third Monday of every month, which the applicant must attend. Final approval must be received from the DDA Board prior to beginning the project. After the Board approves the project, a letter will be sent to the applicant committing funds or advising them of the project's status.

Approval or denial of this grant does not supersede the Village of Oxford's ordinances and permitting process. Outcomes for each scenario are as follows:

- If a grant is awarded for a proposed project, the applicant must follow procedures for permitting and approval through the Village of Oxford's planning commission/staff.
- If a proposed project is not awarded a grant but meets the ordinance and codes of the Village of Oxford, the project can still proceed through the permitting and approval process as determined by the Village of Oxford's planning commission/staff.
- More information can be found on such procedures on the Village of Oxford website: <https://www.thevillageofoxford.org/>

Final Payment:

Grant improvements must be completed within six (6) months of approval, or the applicant must apply for an extension, which will be granted at the sole discretion of the DDA Board.

Upon completion of construction the applicant prepares financial reports and provides the DDA with proof that approved renovation expenses are paid (canceled checks, paid invoices).

Verification of the completed work will also be made by the DDA Design Committee.

The DDA Executive Director prepares a final project report, which summarizes actual project expenses and payments for work completed for review by the DDA Board. If all conditions for payment are satisfied the DDA Board authorizes disbursement of funds. These funds are disbursed within 30 days of the DDA Board approval of completed work.

Proposed Improvements: Please attach official quotes (labor and material indicated separately for each contracted service), for the individual proposed improvement activities:

Estimated project start date: _____

Estimated project completion date: _____

Project Financial Description: Please attach additional information about project funding source(s) if needed.

Estimated Project budget: _____

Project Funding Source(s): _____

Required Supplemental Information: Applicant is required to submit Ten (10) copies of this form with the following information:

1. Current photographs of the property to be improved.
2. Detailed drawings of proposed improvements
3. Written description of proposed improvements, including materials and colors. Colors must follow the current Oxford DDA color palette
4. Samples of materials and colors being used in the improvement
5. Material information brochures should also be included
6. Proof of project funding sources
7. Letter of Approval by the property owner – if applicable

I have read and understand the conditions of the DDA Façade Grant Improvement Program and agree to abide by its conditions and guidelines.

I understand that if this application is approved any changes, alterations or modifications to the approved façade design must be authorized in writing by the DDA Director, Design Committee and DDA Board. If unauthorized changes are made I understand that the DDA may withdraw its funding commitment.

I understand that if the project is not completed within the timetable of six (6) months, the DDA can withdraw its funding commitment. I understand that I can reapply and that all applications are subject to funding availability at the time of reapplication.

Applicant's signature

Date

Submit application with attachments and/or questions to: Oxford
DDA
22 W. Burdick St.
P.O. Box 94
Oxford, MI 48371
(248) 770-8587

OFFICE USE ONLY:

Date application sent/given to applicant: _____

Date completed application was received: _____

Total Project Cost: _____

Total Eligible Cost: _____

DDA Executive Director's Signature and Date: _____

All taxes, water, sewer and trash bills current and any code violations corrected? _____

Date this application reviewed by the Building Inspector: _____

Date received by Design Committee: _____

Date on Design Committee Agenda: _____

Date Design Committee recommends approval to DDA Board: _____

Date on DDA Board Agenda: _____

Date approved/denied by DDA Board: _____

If approved, Total grant amount approved: _____

Date letter sent to the applicant: _____

Date of project completion: _____

Date of Design Committee verification: _____

Date financial expenses submitted: _____

Date to DDA Board for authorization of disbursement of funds: _____

Date funds disbursed: _____

Revised/approved by DDA Board 9/20/2010