

## OxForward Façade Grant

***\*\*Applicants are eligible to receive 50% matching funds, not to exceed a \$10,000 match per application per fiscal year, for eligible façade projects.***

### **Purpose**

To provide an economic incentive to: Renovate storefronts in Downtown Oxford, encourage good design projects that capitalize on the rehabilitation of existing properties, and preserve unique historic characteristics.

### **Eligible Projects**

- Exterior structural repairs
- Replacement/addition of awnings\*
- New/updated affixed signage
- Replacement/addition of window or exterior window treatments
- Exterior remodel costs
- Exterior painting improvements
- External lighting
- Cleaning/repair of brick/masonry/external siding

*\*Grant funding is not eligible if the awning includes a business name*

### **Eligibility**

1. Owner(s) or tenant(s) of a building located within the Municipal Service District (MSD) only.
2. Owner(s) and tenant(s) may request incentive facade grants separately; however, any tenant(s) must have the owner's written permission attached to the application.
3. OxForward's Design Committee may judge a property eligible for a second facade grant if:
  - at least three (3) years have elapsed since the first grant was awarded, and the facade is in need of further improvement, i.e., repairing, repainting; or
  - the existing business undergoes significant expansion that requires alteration to the facade, i.e., expanded services; or
  - a new business moves in and requires changes to the facade, i.e., a new awning (without business name).

### **Funding**

- Applicants are eligible to receive 50% matching funds for an approved improvement project, not to exceed \$10,000 per application per fiscal year (July 1–June 30). For example, a \$15,000 facade project will be reimbursed the maximum match at \$7,500 (50%), with the Applicant responsible for the remaining \$7,500 in expenses. Funds are reimbursed following the

completion of the project. If a property is leased or under contract, all parties to the lease or contract must agree in writing to the proposed project. If funds are needed prior to the completion of a project, funding requests can be made on a case-by-case basis.

- The total amount of funding available for the grant program will be determined on an annual basis by OxForward and may fluctuate from year to year. Funding may also be divided among several applicants based on the project criteria.

### **Guidelines**

1. Grant applications are submitted before work is to commence, in order to get feedback from OxForward's Design Committee. If an application is submitted to OxForward without prior pre-approval and after the work is completed, OxForward has the discretion to consider or not consider the application.
2. Eligible projects must be visible from the public right-of-way. Improvements to building interiors are not eligible for funding. Any exterior renovation proposal - from entire facade rehabilitation to the replacement of a sign - is eligible for funding, but top priority will be given to projects that will make a highly visible contribution to the downtown district.
3. The project includes front or side portions of the building if they have major pedestrian and vehicular exposure. A rear façade project application will be awarded if the parking lot and pedestrian access are available at the rear of the building, en route to district businesses.
4. Rehabilitation of structures in the MSD should be considered a contemporary solution that respects the architectural integrity of the entire building front and retains elements that enhance it. If it's a historic building, the exterior's historic features must be maintained.
5. The Secretary of the Interior's [Standards for Rehabilitation](#) will serve as guidelines for improving the structure's façade.
6. All changes must comply with local zoning or ordinance restrictions, such as the City of Oxford's Sign Permit Application, Historic Preservation Ordinances (if applicable), the design guidelines in the UDO, or other relevant requirements. Additionally, if the project involves a property designated as a historic building, design changes must comply with local historic preservation requirements. If seeking federal/state historic tax credits, please determine requirements for your building by visiting the NC's State Historic Preservation Office's (NC SHPO) [website](#). For all local requirements, please contact Oxford's Planning Department to determine requirements for your project, with contact details and ordinances found on the Planning Department's [website](#).
7. The Design Committee will not approve any grant requests for business name(s) on awnings.
8. Rehabilitation, repair, or replacement of signs in the MSD should be considered a contemporary solution that respects the architectural integrity of the entire building front and the historic downtown streetscape. Permanent signage should be affixed to the façade to be eligible for this grant. Other non-affixed signage should be considered for OxForward's Vibrancy Grant.

## **Application Process**

The Façade Grant is a revolving program, meaning that applications will be accepted throughout the year. Application(s) received by the OxForward will be reviewed monthly by the OxForward Design Committee at the meeting following receipt of the application.

1. **Pre-Approval Application:** Applicants must submit an application before work commences in order to gather feedback from the Downtown Director. Owner(s)/tenant(s) complete the application, including plans or sketches and owner's permission, if necessary, and return to OxForward. OxForward may provide feedback.
2. **Review:** OxForward's Design Committee reviews completed applications and selects grant recipients at its monthly meetings.
1. **Notification:** A Notification Letter will be sent to the applicant as to whether the project has been pre-approved as described in the application, pre-approved with conditions, or rejected. All decisions made by the Design Committee are final. Projects must be completed no later than 6 months after the date of pre-approval, unless an extension has been granted by OxForward for unforeseen circumstances.
3. **Permits:** Applicants should determine early in the planning phase any applications and/or permits needed for the project. Applicants are responsible for all permitting and necessary approvals prior to commencing work on the project.
4. **Reimbursement Request:** Within 60 days of facade completion, the applicant must send items from the "Reimbursement Checklist" below. OxForward will review the application and, upon approval, request a check be issued for 50% of the actual project cost or \$10,000, whichever is less, provided the work is completed in accordance with the agreement.

## **Pre-Approval Application Requirements**

The completed application packet must include the following forms and documents:

- The application, including the building owner's signature
- Photographs clearly showing existing building conditions
- Facade diagram, sketch, paint colors, awning swatches, or renderings showing the proposed improvements
- Contractor quote(s) and/or pricing for materials for proposed improvements
- Historic photographs of the building, if possible
- Copies of Permits/Certificate of Appropriateness, if required by City of Oxford's Planning Department
- Optional: If the applicant is seeking federal/state tax credits, a copy of the approved NC SHPO Application must be submitted

## **Reimbursement Checklist**

- A paid receipt of the completed work
- Copy of canceled check
- Before and after photographs of the project
- Copies of any final permits, if required

**Contact**

Grant applications, questions, and clarifications should be directed to:

Marley Spencer

Downtown Development Director, City of Oxford

[marley.spencer@oxfordnc.org](mailto:marley.spencer@oxfordnc.org)

**Source of Funds**

The OxForward Façade Grants are made possible through private contributions and may include appropriations from the City of Oxford, Granville County, and/or MSD funding.

## OxForward Façade Grant – Application

<b>Date of Submission</b>	
<b>Business Name</b>	
<b>Applicant's Name</b>	
<b>Property Address</b>	
<b>Applicant Mailing Address</b>	
<b>Email Address</b>	
<b>Telephone Number</b>	
<b>I am the...</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Tenant <input type="checkbox"/> Building Owner
<b>If tenant, please list the property owner's name and phone/email</b>	
<b>Current building use</b> <small>(e.g. vacant, retail, office, mixed use, etc)</small>	
<b>Estimated Project Cost</b> <small>(If multiple projects, please explain in the description below)</small>	\$ _____
<b>Expected Project Start &amp; End Dates</b>	Start _____ End _____

**Description of the project**

I have included the following for my applications:

- Photographs clearly showing existing conditions
- Diagram, sketch, paint colors, or renderings showing the proposed improvements
- Contractor quote(s) and/or pricing for materials for proposed improvements
- Historic photographs of the building, if possible
- Permit/Certificate of Appropriateness, if required by City of Oxford's Planning Department.
- Total Project Expenditures: \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Requested Grant Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_ agree to the following:

Applicant's Name – please print

1. The recipient agrees to abide by and conform to all rehabilitation, repair, or replacement undertaken pursuant to this Agreement, to all applicable laws of the United States, the State of North Carolina, and those applicable provisions of the ordinances of the City of Oxford, directly or indirectly related to the subject matter in this Agreement.
2. The amount of this grant is payable, provided said project meets the City of Oxford's Ordinance and any relevant permits are submitted and approved.
3. Feedback provided by OxForward will be advisory only. OxForward will not be a party in negotiations between the Recipient and any contractor employed by him/her.
4. Once project work has been completed, I understand that I must submit the following information within 30 days in order to receive the matching funds: 1) the paid receipt of work completed, 2) a copy of a canceled check, 3) before and after photos of the completed work, 4) any permits (if applicable), and 5) a completed W9 form (March 2024 version).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Property Owner Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*\*If the applicant is the tenant, the owner MUST also sign*

**OxForward Office Use Only**

Date Application Received:

Date Design Committee Approval:

Requested Grant Amount:

Date OxForward Approval:

Amount Awarded:

Applicant Payment Date: