

OxForward Vibrancy Grant

*****Applicants are eligible to receive 50% matching funds for an approved improvement project, not to exceed a \$3,500 match per fiscal year, for eligible vibrancy projects. Multiple projects may be submitted throughout the year, with a maximum of a \$3,500 match per fiscal year.***

Purpose

OxForward's Vibrancy Grant encourages downtown business owners to activate their storefronts through the addition of creative and unique elements that will enhance their business and downtown Oxford. Activating store entrances could include strategies such as the addition of planters, outdoor seating, or merchandise displays along the sidewalk. Storefront enhancements could include the addition of outdoor dining space, lighting, or A-frame signage. Other creative ideas, like activating an alleyway or vacant lot, could be considered for the program.

Eligible Vibrancy Projects

- Planters/pots (plants and soil not included)
- Outdoor merchandise displays
- Outdoor dining and seating
- Interior window displays and lighting enhancements
- HVAC and trashcan screenings

- Other vibrancy projects may be considered

Eligible Signage Projects

- Sandwich board / A-frame signage
- Seasonal professional hand-painted window signage
- Window wrap/signage for unoccupied spaces
- Non-permanent signage that is not affixed to the building

Eligibility

- Building owner(s) or tenant(s) may request vibrancy grants separately; however, any tenant(s) must have the building owner's written permission attached to the application. Multiple projects can be applied for within one application.
- Owner(s) or tenant(s) of a building located within the Municipal Service District (MSD) only.

Funding

- Applicants are eligible to receive 50% matching funds for an approved improvement project, not to exceed \$3,500 per fiscal year. Applicants are also eligible to submit multiple individual projects, for up to a maximum of \$3,500 per fiscal year (July 1–June 30). For example, if a business has \$5,000 in project expenses, OxForward will match 50% (\$2,500 of the total project expenses). Funds are reimbursed following the completion of the project. If a

property is leased or currently under contract, all parties included on the lease or contract must agree in writing to the proposed project.

- 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

- Eligible projects must be visible from the public right-of-way. Top priority will be given to projects that will make a highly visible contribution to the commercial district.
- All vibrancy projects must meet local zoning or ordinance restrictions, including ADA sidewalk requirements. Permanent installations may require additional approval. To determine whether a project is a permanent installation, please contact the City of Oxford's Planning Department. For contact information, ordinances, and other inquiries, please see the Planning Department's [website](#) for additional information.

Application Process

The Vibrancy 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:** Applicants must submit project details before submitting a grant application. Applicants should also determine early in the planning phase any applications and/or permits needed for the project. Applicants are responsible for any permitting and necessary approvals prior to commencing work on the project.
2. **Application:** Within 90 days of the project completion, applicants must submit their applications via email to the Downtown Director (see the Contact section).
3. **Review:** OxForward's Design Committee reviews completed applications and selects grant recipients at its monthly meetings. Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application after the meeting date during which the application is reviewed. Applicants will receive prior notification of the meeting date during which their application will be reviewed.
4. **Reimbursement Request:** OxForward will review the receipts and process payment of the approved grant amount. Upon approval by OxForward, a reimbursement check will be distributed to the applicant equal to 50% of the approved project expenses up to the maximum amount of grant funding awarded (\$3,500 per fiscal year). The reimbursement check will be addressed to the applicant named on the grant application form.

Application Requirements

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

- A completed OxForward Vibrancy Grant application
- Before and after photographs of the project
- Copies of all receipts associated with the project, confirming payment of project expenses

Contact

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

Marley Spencer

Downtown Development Director, City of Oxford

marley.spencer@oxfordnc.org

Source of Funds

The OxForward Vibrancy Grants are made possible through private contributions, with OxForward's general funding coming from appropriations from the City of Oxford, Granville County, and MSD funding.

OxForward Vibrancy Grant – Application

Date of Submission	
Business Name	
Applicant's Name	
Property Address	
Applicant Mailing Address	
Email Address	
Telephone Number	
I am the...	<input type="checkbox"/> Tenant <input type="checkbox"/> Building Owner
If tenant, please list the property owner's name and phone/email	
Current building use <small>(e.g. vacant, retail, office, mixed use, etc)</small>	
Grant Request <small>(If multiple projects, please explain in the description below. Do not include any non-eligible costs)</small>	\$ _____
Expected Project Start & End Dates	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
- 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, if required.
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) before and after photographs of the project, and 2) copies of all receipts associated with the project, confirming payment of project expenses, and 3) 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: