



La Grande Urban Renewal Agency (URA)

(Approved December 4, 2024)

Downtown Building Façade Grant Program

A. PROGRAM OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

The La Grande Main Street Downtown (LGMSD) Façade Restoration Grant Program (Program) offers matching grants to commercial property owners who wish to restore the exteriors of their buildings. The Program is managed by LGMSD(Program Manager) with funds provided by the City of La Grande Urban Renewal Agency (Agency). Goals of the program are:

- a. Improve the physical appearance and structural integrity of historic buildings in Downtown La Grande
- b. Restore the historic character of these buildings
- c. Make Downtown La Grande more attractive to local consumers and tourists
- d. Encourage additional business investment opportunities and improvements

Grants are available for buildings located within the Historic District (see attached map). This includes buildings that are listed in the National Register of Historic Places, or identified by La Grande's historic survey (including National Register, Historic contributing or Historic non-contributing). All grants require a 50% match: grant funds dispersed as reimbursements at the successful completion of the project.

While the Program is primarily aimed at historic structures within the downtown business district, commercial buildings outside the Historic District may also be considered for grants based on the following criteria at the discretion of the District Manager or their designee:

- a. Buildings are in reasonable proximity to Downtown La Grande, as defined by the Central Business Zone, Historic District and/or the Main Street boundaries
- b. Building has commercial as the primary use

Building was constructed with the same period dates of those recognized in the Historic District (1891-1948)

B. PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

Eligible Projects:

- a. Only exterior projects are eligible. Eligible exterior improvements, include (but are not limited to):
- b. Exterior rehabilitation and restoration.
- c. Painting.
- d. Brick, masonry, and stucco repair.

- e. Window restoration and repair.
- f. Awnings.
- g. Signs and graphics.
- h. Exterior lighting.
- i. Architectural fees or other items as approved in the Grant Review process.

The building must be primarily in commercial use or intended for commercial use. Proposals from tenants must include a letter of authorization from the building owner. All applicable fire, safety, disabled accessibility, and permit requirements must be met. All projects must comply with the City of La Grande Urban Renewal Plans building and zoning codes; and all other City, State and Federal regulations (see "Application Process" below for details).

Ineligible Projects:

- a. Non-façade improvements such as roofs, structural foundations, billboards, security systems, non-permanent fixtures, parking lot or paving improvements, security bars, fencing, sidewalks, and interior window display lighting and window covering.
- b. Interior improvements and modifications.
- c. Improvements to single-family residential property.
- d. Items related to business operations, i.e., inventory, business equipment, etc.
- e. Financing of building acquisition.
- f. Refinancing existing debt.
- g. Working capital.
- h. Inappropriate cleaning or other restoration activities:
 - a. Windows may not be replaced unless the replacement is constructed of like materials and duplicates the original window per the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.
 - b. Sandblasting and power washing are not allowable treatments, per the Secretary of Interior's Standards.
- i. Inappropriate or non-approved design or materials.
- j. In-kind labor, materials and/or services provided by applicant.
- k. Tools or equipment.

Specific Criteria for Selection:

Projects are funded on a first come first served basis dependent upon fund availability and will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- a. Code compliance and need
 - i. All work must comply with City Codes including obtaining any required permits before work begins.
 - ii. Preference will be given to projects that seek to restore deteriorated structures
- b. Completeness and accuracy of application and supporting materials
 - i. Project application must include the following :
 - Detailed project description and drawings
 - Third-party licensed contractor cost estimates
 - Evidence of historic appropriateness, research, and compliance
 - ii. Applicant may be asked to submit additional details for application to be deemed complete
- c. Readiness to proceed
 - i. projects should be able to begin work immediately upon award
- d. Location

- i. projects that have high visibility in La Grande’s Historic District and/or are compatible with surrounding uses and contribute to the enhancement of the District
- e. Multi-purpose
 - i. Projects that meet multiple District needs, such as:
 - Mixed-use development, to include housing.
 - Energy efficiency.
 - Re-use of vacant or underused buildings.
 - Projects that aid in streetscape development and/or bicycle-pedestrian friendly amenities.
 - Projects which improve or increase access to disabled individuals.
 - Projects which leverage other future projects in the District.

C. FUNDING INFORMATION

- a. Projects should be a minimum of \$2,500 total cost.
- b. The maximum grant amount for a single project is \$7,500. Preference will be given to Projects using contractors and/or individual tradespersons from within Union County.
- c. Private matching contribution may come from commercial or other lenders on applicant’s behalf.
- d. Local funds may at times be augmented by outside sources, such as State of Oregon grants.
- e. Up to two (2) façade grants or a maximum of \$15,000 may be awarded to any one applicant or building frontage during a rolling four (4) year period, five (5) years if the applicant also received a Call for Projects Grant during the rolling five-year period based on the award date. These must be new projects. Applications for additional grants for any single building must document previous projects and submit evidence that the new project will further contribute to the historic integrity of the structure.
- f. Projects cannot be awarded both Call for Projects and Building Façade grant funds related to the same project and site location during any 12-month period.
- g. Projects related to the same site location cannot receive combined awards totaling more than \$165,000 in Building Façade and Call For Projects grant funding in any rolling 5-year period based on the award date. Façade Grant funding may be combined with other Urban Renewal funding programs including Call for Projects (subject to the restrictions in g. above).
- h. Projects will not be allowed for a project previously funded within a seven (7) year period. Examples include changes of business name, color changes, other changes due to changes of owner/occupant and/or damages sustained through acts of nature, vandalism, negligence, etc.
- i. Exceptions for new renovations/ restorations MAY be considered and as recommended by the Urban Renewal Advisory Commission (URAC). Additional project funding may be considered under other Urban Renewal Agency programs.
- j. Funds will be disbursed on a reimbursement basis ONLY; accurate and timely receipts are required to receive funds from the City of La Grande upon completion of the project; the Program Manager or designee will inspect the project to determine completion.
- k. The Agency will make every effort to provide timely disbursements upon receipt of complete applications and proof of appropriate expenses.
- l. Disbursement requests older than twelve (12) months or from expenses incurred prior to application approval will not be honored
- m. Work performed prior to award of the grant shall not be eligible for match or reimbursement consideration

- n. A project is defined as a body of work to be performed during the same time frame by the same contractor or series of contractors on the same section of a building.
- o. Applicants may not request grant funding or reimbursement for work and/or expenditures which occurred prior to the approval of a grant application by the Agency.
- p. Applications are accepted on continual basis. Please note that funding for the program follows the Agency fiscal year: July 1 to June 30. Applicants are encouraged to submit their materials early in the grant cycle as projects are reviewed on a first- come first-served basis.

D. APPLICATION AND APPROVAL PROCEDURES

Forms and instructions are available at the LGMSD office at 102 Depot Street, or on-line at www.lagrandemainstreet.org. Completed applications may be submitted either as hard copies or digital files to the Main Street office.

All submissions must be accompanied with the following information:

- a. Building owner name & contact information.
- b. Project applicant name (if different from above) & contact information.
- c. Letter of authorization from building owner, if owner is not applicant.
- d. Building address, Building historic name, if known.
- e. Current photograph of the building.
- f. Funding amount requested.
- g. Detailed project budget, including sources of funds.
- h. Detailed text and/or visual description of project.
- i. Historic photos, if available (A collection of historic photos is available in the City Planning office).
- j. Current building use, including tenant names and contact information.
- k. Project timeline.

All projects must comply with the Secretary of Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (available at <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/standguide/>) and Section 109-117, Standards and Guidelines for historic rehabilitation and preservation of the City of La Grande Land Development Code. PLEASE REVIEW THESE DOCUMENTS CAREFULLY TO MAKE SURE YOUR PROJECT IS CONSISTENT WITH STANDARDS AND ORDINANCES. Projects that do not meet these requirements will be rejected.

Façade Review Panel: A Façade Review Panel appointed by the La Grande Main Street Board of Directors composed of at least five members reviews applications, makes determination of project eligibility, and submits funding recommendations to the Agency. Applicants may be contacted and/or a site visit scheduled if additional information or clarification is needed. The Façade Review Panel will meet as needed, with a quorum of three required to take action.

E. APPLICATION SUBMITTAL PROCESS

Pre-Project Consultation: Applicants must meet with a Façade Review Panel representative for an informal review of the proposed project prior to submitting their application. This representative may be a member of the Main Street staff, the Façade Review Panel, or an individual designated by the Façade Review Panel to conduct these meetings. This meeting is intended to resolve obvious design problems, answer questions about historic restoration regulations and assure all application materials are complete prior to submittal. ***Note that the pre-project consultation and any Façade Review Panel review does not constitute Landmarks Commission Review.*** When applicable, the Landmarks submittal checklist will be reviewed with the applicant at the pre-project consultation to assure that all documents required by the Commission are included in the application packet.

Once the pre-project consultation has been successfully completed, the applicant may submit their application to the Façade Review Panel.

Façade grant projects proposed for historic properties, and for all (historic and non-historic) properties within the Historic District, are subject to review and approval by the La Grande Historic Landmarks Commission. The applicant is responsible for submitting their application to Landmarks for a determination of appropriateness. Contact the City of La Grande Planning department to schedule review.

- a. Projects requiring Landmarks Commission review will be returned to Main Street with a determination of appropriateness within 5 business days of that review. Please note that the Landmarks Commission meets once a month. Should the Landmarks Commission impose any conditions or requirements that affect the estimated cost of the project, the applicant may revise their application prior to the Façade Review Panel's action.
- b. The Façade Review Panel will typically act upon the application within 10 days of receipt of the application for those not requiring Landmarks Commission approval and within 10 business days of receipt of a Landmarks Commission determination or the receipt of a revised application, whichever is later, and notify the applicant of their recommendation.

Any and all of the following bodies may be involved in the approval and/or review of a project:

- c. City of La Grande staff
- d. La Grande Landmarks Commission
- e. La Grande Main Street Design Committee and Board of Directors
- f. La Grande City Council/- Urban Renewal Agency
- g. Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)
- h. The Façade Review Panel will forward the completed application, any Landmarks Commission approval, and their recommendation for funding to the Agency.

F. FUNDING APPROVAL

The District Manager, or their designee, will, on behalf of the Agency, make the final funding decision and enter into an agreement with the applicant for the completion of the project.

G. GRANT CONDITIONS

Grant recipients must agree in writing to abide by all conditions contained in the grant, including:

- a. Grant recipients must display a sign identifying the project as having received a URA grant (sign provided by URA).
- b. All necessary building permits must be in place before project startup. Failure to obtain required permits in advance of commencing work will void the grant and the project will not be eligible for any reimbursement. This requirement cannot be waived under any circumstances.
- c. All contractors must be licensed and bonded.
- d. Reimbursement will occur only after 1.) The project is complete and inspected by Main Street staff (as well as Landmarks Commission and/or Public Works, as necessary) and 2.) all receipts for labor and materials have been submitted and approved.
- e. The submitted application and proposal for the project, once accepted as the final concept, shall become and wholly remain the property of the Agency. The Agency will retain the reproduction rights to use images of the artwork to prepare and distribute marketing materials, web site materials or for any other use in promotional materials.

- f. It shall be the responsibility of the applicant to provide the Facade Review Panel with BEFORE, DURING, and AFTER photographs of the structure. Main Street has the right to use these photographs for promotional and educational materials.
- g. Any and all correspondence involved with and/or related to the specific project shall become the property of LGMSD and the Agency. Copies of the file information are available to the recipient by request.
- h. The Agency retains the right to withhold any or all funding if the project is not proceeding according to the project outline or is not following the agreed-upon plan in design, construction or materials.
- i. Granting period is 12 months from the date of award; the District Manager may grant extensions of up to 12 months. The grant recipient must request the extension in writing, including the basis for the request and revised timeline for completion.

H. IN-PROGRESS REVIEW

The Facade Review Panel may meet with the project proponent and/or contractor on-site to assure that all activities and materials are consistent with the approved plan.

Grant recipients may be required to stop work or procure appropriate materials if the work is not in alignment with the approved plan.

I. DISTRIBUTION OF GRANT FUNDS

- a) When the approved project is completed, the work will be inspected by Main Street staff to determine consistency with the terms and conditions of the Grant Agreement. If the project meets the agreement conditions, Main Street will recommend payment to the Grant recipient for the amount funded in the Grant Agreement.
- b) Once the project is completed and inspected grant funds will be paid to the grant recipient provided the provisions in the Grant Agreement have been followed and, a completed Request for Disbursement and Closing Report is received along with the required supporting information. Supporting information includes such items as invoices, receipts and digital photographs showing the project work.
- c) Reimbursement Requests, along with receipts, invoices and other information should be submitted in person or by regular mail to: City of La Grande, Urban Renewal 1000 Adams Ave (P.O. Box 670) La Grande OR 97850.
- d) The District Manager may refer any compliance issue to LGMSD for discussion and resolution.

Robert A. Strope
District Manager