

CITY of LA GRANDE, OREGON

Downtown Building Facade Grant Program

FOR

BUILDING REHABILITATION/ RENOVATION PROJECTS

PROGRAM POLICY

A. Program Overview & Purpose

The City of La Grande, Oregon, through its Urban Renewal Agency, has funding available to assist Downtown building rehabilitation and renovation projects. It is the City's intent to use Urban Renewal funds to match with private sector funding to incent and initiate a series of building renovations in the Downtown area, and specifically in the Historic District. Periodically, the City may also be the recipient of additional outside grant funding that will augment the funds available through the Urban Renewal Agency. This project will launch in July, 2009, and continue until funding sources are exhausted and/or when the Agency determines its value is no longer a priority. The essential goals of this program are to:

1. Improve the physical appearance and structural integrity of historic buildings in Downtown La Grande
2. Restore the historic character of these buildings
3. Make Downtown La Grande more attractive to local consumers and tourists
4. Encourage additional business investment opportunities and improvements

B. General Conditions:

1. Preference shall be given to Buildings located within the Historic District that are listed in the National Register of Historic Places or eligible as identified by La Grande's historic survey (National Register, Historic Contributing or Historic Non-Contributing)
2. Buildings outside the Historic District and those within the Urban Renewal District may be eligible for an exception granted by the District Manager, provided the project meets the following criteria:
 - i. Buildings are in reasonable proximity to Downtown La Grande, as defined by the Central Business Zone, Historic District and/or the Main Street boundaries, and
 - ii. Buildings have commercial as primary use, and
- b. Building was constructed within the same period dates of those recognized in the Historic District (1891 – 1948)

3. Private matching funds are required
4. An agreement between the building owner and the City must be developed
5. Projects may require approval by the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and Oregon Main Street (OMS), as well as local governing bodies
6. Invitation of local qualified contractors and suppliers is highly encouraged
7. Projects should generally be ready to proceed at time of application
8. Award not limited to single building

C. Key Criteria

1. Geographic Location

- a. Buildings must be located within the Urban Renewal District

2. General Project Eligibility Criteria

Funds may be used for the following purposes:

- a. Professional design and engineering services, provided the project is completed within the terms of the agreement
- b. Exterior improvements intended to restore facades, such as improvements to:
 - i. Windows
 - ii. Doors
 - iii. Storefronts
 - iv. Awnings
 - v. Alley-facing entrances
 - vi. Painting and cleaning
 - vii. Masonry repair, restoration or cleaning
 - viii. Appropriately repairing, restoring or replacing of cornices, entrances, doors, windows, decorative details and awnings
 - ix. Sign removal, repair or replacement
 - x. Building identification
 - xi. Critical maintenance, structural or code compliance
 - xii. Restoration projects, including removal of slip sheathing or other treatments
- c. If projects are in the Historic District or otherwise are under the purveyance of the Landmarks Commission, projects must:
 - i. Receive approval of “historic appropriateness” from the Commission prior to any grant award and/or disbursement of funds
 - ii. Follow “The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings”
 - iii. Follow any and all standards and guidelines prescribed by the City of La Grande, to include 2009 STANDARDS AND STANDARDS MANUAL FOR HISTORIC REHABILITATION AND PRESERVATION

- d. Project must comply with all relevant local, state and federal laws and codes

3. General Ineligible Activities

- a. Working capital
- b. Financing of inventory
- c. Financing of building acquisition
- d. Refinancing existing debt
- e. Inappropriate cleaning or other restoration activities
- f. Inappropriate or non-approved design or materials
- g. Interiors (unless directly related to an approved exterior project or part of a needed and approved structural improvement project)
- h. Professional design and engineering services except as part of an approved project

D. Applicant Criteria

1. Proposals may come from tenants or owners of buildings; if tenants, an authorization letter from owner must accompany proposal/ application
2. Approved renovation projects should be ready to begin within twelve (12) months of application and be completed within eighteen (18) months of application
3. Applicants must be willing to enter into an agreement with the City and work with City and State officials on their project
4. Applicant cannot have any outstanding or unresolved fine, fee, lawsuit or infraction with the City of La Grande

E. Funding Information

1. Projects should be a minimum of \$1,000.00, total cost
2. Funding for selected projects:
 - a. City of La Grande Urban Renewal – up to 1/2 of total, up to \$5,000.00
 - i. Urban Renewal funding may be up to \$7,500.00, if a majority of work performed is done with Union County vendors
 - ii. Private building owner(s)/tenant(s) – at least 1/2 of total project cost; contribution may come from commercial or other lenders on applicant's behalf
3. Funding is contingent upon budget approval and subsequent availability of funds
4. Local funds may at times be augmented by outside sources, such as State of Oregon grants
5. 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 District Manager or his designee will inspect the project to determine completion

7. City will make every effort to provide timely disbursements upon receipt of complete applications and proof of appropriate expenses
8. Disbursement requests older than twelve (12) months or from expenses incurred prior to application approval will not be honored
9. Work performed prior to award of the grant shall not be eligible for match or reimbursement consideration
10. 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) consecutive year period. 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.
11. 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.
12. Funding 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.

F. Application and Approval Procedure

1. Application must be on a form provided by the City of La Grande and must include all necessary and required supporting documentation so as to fully satisfy all of the above-stated criteria. Project applications may be submitted either as digital entries (Adobe Acrobat, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft PowerPoint or JPEG image files are acceptable formats) that are emailed or hand-delivered as a CD or as hard copies hand-delivered or mailed to City Hall. Faxed copies will not be accepted.
2. Any and all of the following bodies may be involved in the approval and/or review of a project:
 - a. City of La Grande staff
 - b. La Grande Landmarks Commission
 - c. La Grande Main Street Design Committee
 - d. La Grande Urban Renewal Advisory Commission
 - e. La Grande City Council/ Urban Renewal Agency
 - f. State of Oregon Main Street program
 - g. State of Oregon Historic Preservation Office

3. Upon receipt of a complete application, applicants will be notified within thirty (30) days of project approval or denial
4. Applications may be modified or approved with conditions by any of the bodies listed in Section F.2.
5. Applicants may be asked to present their projects to any of the bodies listed in Section F.2.
6. City staff will provide technical assistance and resources to applicants to help ensure successful applications to the extent possible

G. Specific Criteria for Selection:

1. Readiness to proceed
 - a. Preference will be given to projects that can begin work immediately upon award
2. Location
 - a. Preference will be given to 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
3. Code compliance and need
 - a. Preference will be given to projects that seek to restore deteriorated structures
4. Completeness and accuracy of application and supporting materials
 - a. Preference will be given to projects that include any combination of
 - i. Detailed drawings
 - ii. Third-party licensed contractor cost estimates
 - iii. Detailed project description
 - iv. Evidence of historic appropriateness, research, and compliance
 - b. Preference will be given to applications that are deemed complete
5. Multi-purpose
 - a. Preference may be given to projects that meet multiple District needs, such as:
 - i. Mixed-use development, to include housing
 - ii. Energy efficiency
 - iii. Re-use of vacant or underused buildings
 - iv. Projects that aid in streetscape development and/or bicycle-pedestrian friendly amenities
 - v. Projects which improve or increase access to disabled individuals
 - vi. Projects which leverage other future projects in the District

H. Submittal Requirements:

1. **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
 - e. Building historic name, if known
 - f. Current photograph of the building
 - g. Funding amount requested
 - h. Detailed project budget, including sources of funds
 - i. Detailed text and/or visual description of project
 - j. Historic photos, if available
 - k. Current building use, including tenant names and contact information
 - l. Project timeline
2. The submitted application and proposal for the project, once accepted as the final concept, shall become and wholly remain the property of the City. The City 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.

I. Names and Roles of Various Bodies

1. La Grande Main Street Design Committee

The Design Committee is one of the four Main Street Committees assisting the City to carry out a broad downtown revitalization effort. The Committee is comprised of community volunteers and is charged with making recommendations related to downtown design elements. It has no formal authority or budget, but acts to assist staff and make recommendation to other bodies, including the City Council. This committee is staffed by the Community & Economic Development Department.
2. La Grande Landmarks Commission

The Landmarks Commission was established by Ordinance and has the authority to review and approve projects located within the Historic District and render them as “historically appropriate” or not. It is comprised of citizen volunteers and is staffed by the City’s Planning Division.
3. La Grande Urban Renewal Advisory Commission (URAC)

The URAC is established by Ordinance and acts to advise staff and the Urban Renewal Agency and to review Urban Renewal District projects, funding and policy. It is comprised of volunteer citizens and is staffed by the Community & Economic Development Department.
4. La Grande City Council/ Urban Renewal Agency

The City Council also acts as the Urban Renewal Agency Board of Directors and makes all decisions related to District funding and policy.

5. Oregon Main Street

The Main Street program is a state agency that certifies communities into the state's program and offers technical and financial assistance to Main Street communities.

6. Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)

SHPO manages and administers programs for the protection of the state's historic and cultural resources. The agency provides technical assistance to City staff and directly to property owners.

Submittals and questions should be directed to:

City of La Grande – Urban Renewal Facade Grant Program

Attn: Charlie Mitchell or Barbara Trick

Community & Economic Development Department

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