



Facade Improvement Grant Program 2026

Grant Application Form

An investment in the further enhancement of Historic Downtown Oak Harbor is an investment in the further economic growth and prosperity — and overall quality of life — of the entire North Whidbey and Island County community.

**Oak Harbor Main Street Association
P.O. Box 851
Oak Harbor, WA 98277
360-279-8995**

SUMMARY

Oak Harbor Main Street Association is sponsoring a Facade Improvement Grant Program. The intent of this program is to stimulate improvements to the exterior of Downtown commercial buildings.

Who is eligible: Owners and/or tenants of existing buildings within the *Oak Harbor Main Street Association* (OHMSA) catchment area are eligible. Applicants must be members of Oak Harbor Main Street to apply. Tenant applicants are required to submit written evidence of building owner's approval of the application. Properties listed for sale are not eligible.

Maximum grant amount: Maximum \$15,000 per grant request. This grant requires a 1:1 match. The applicant must pay for at least 50 percent of the cost of the project.

Facade Improvement Grant Program: Approved applicants must allow the Oak Harbor Main Street Association to post a sign stating, "This project is partially funded by Oak Harbor Main Street Facade Improvement Grant" during time work is being done and for 30 days after the completion of the project.

Application Process and Timeline: Completed applications are due to OHMSA, P.O. Box 851, Oak Harbor, WA 98277 **by 5:00 pm, MAY 15, 2026**

Once the applications are received and reviewed for completeness, the Grant Review Committee will convene to review each application. Based on the project and the funding available, the Committee may recommend full funding, partial funding or no funding for each proposed project. The Committee's recommendations will then be forwarded to the OHMSA Board of Directors for final review and approval.

OHMSA will notify applicants of the status of the grant request either by mail or email. All applicants will be contacted regarding the status of their grant request. Fulfilled grant applications will be announced on the OHMSA website, Facebook page, Main Street Minutes Newsletter and notifications will be sent to the local newspapers.

DETAILS

Program Statement

OAK HARBOR MAIN STREET ASSOCIATION WOULD LIKE TO ASSIST YOU IN IMPROVING YOUR BUILDING FAÇADE.

Oak Harbor Main Street Association (OHMSA) is a member of the nationally successful Main Street Program that coordinates activities in the areas of organization, promotion, design, competitive management techniques, business recruitment and the effective re-use of vacant space. The ultimate success of Downtown Oak Harbor however, is dependent upon the private sector commitment. Merchants, building owners, residents, professionals and investors can all benefit by improving the condition of their buildings and therefore the general condition of Downtown.

The program is intended to stimulate improvements to Downtown commercial buildings by providing an innovative financing mechanism. This program represents an opportunity for OHMSA to support facade improvements that preserve and beautify Downtown structures resulting in a more secure and attractive Historic Oak Harbor.

Purpose of Grant Program

The purpose of the grant program is to preserve Historic Downtown Oak Harbor structures and to stimulate improvements which stress the historic significance and uniqueness of Downtown Oak Harbor.

Grant Use

1. Grants provided by this program are to be used for exterior restorations/repairs of permanent structures.
2. All improvements submitted to the OHMSA Grant Review Committee and approved by the OHMSA Board of Directors should be in accordance with the Oak Harbor Historic Preservation Design Guidelines and with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.
3. Applicants who deviate from the approved application may be disqualified from this grant program.
4. The structure must not be slated or under consideration for demolition by any government agency, developer, or property owner.
5. All work done shall comply with applicable City, County and State codes. The project may be required to obtain Certificate of Appropriateness from Oak Harbor's Historic Preservation Board of Directors prior to receiving building permits and/or beginning work. It is strongly recommended that you contact the City Development Services Department at 360-279-4515 in the project planning stage, before starting any exterior work on the building.
6. Successful applicants should prioritize the preservation and repair of original/historic materials in accordance with the Secretary's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and the Oak Harbor Design Guidelines.
7. In accordance with sustainable practices, removed materials should be recycled wherever possible.
8. **Funds provided by this program shall not be used for materials purchased or work begun prior to grant approval.**
9. Examples of eligible and ineligible activities:

Eligible Improvements

Projects include, but are not limited to the following:

- Repair and restoration of architectural detail of exterior facades (front and side facades are eligible)
- Exterior Painting
- Masonry work
- Architectural assistance
- Repairing or replacing cornices, entrances, doors, windows, decorative detail or awnings. In the matter of historic materials and/or historic look, OHMSA will work with Oak Harbor Historic Preservation to assure compliance and compatibility.
- Sign removal, repair or replacement
- Other repairs that may improve the aesthetic quality of the building

Ineligible Activities

Projects include, but are not limited to the following:

- Interior improvements (except window display areas)
- Inappropriate cleaning methods, such as sandblasting or power washing
- Landscape projects, lawn care
- Additions to existing structures
- Sidewalks
- Purchase of furnishings, equipment, or other personal property which does not become a part of the real estate
- Improvements completed or in progress prior to notification of approval
- Roof repair or replacement
- Repair or creation of features not compatible with original architecture

Program Implementation

Application process:

- a) Applications and Guidelines for the program will be available at the OHMSA office or by contacting OHMSA's Executive Director, Margaret Livermore, at 360-279-8995 or via email at director@oakharabormainstreet.com.
- b) The Grant Committee will review completed grant applications along with design plans, cost estimates and construction schedules. Completed architectural drawings and plans of the building, which illustrate all proposed work, including any structural work or repair, awnings, signage, cost estimates, construction schedules and paint colors must be submitted to the Grant Review Committee. Grant applications must be complete and submitted by the deadline. The decision to grant is based on adherence to the OHMSA Design review Guidelines, the applicant's readiness to take action, project impact and historical significance of the building. All projects are asked to be submitted with a before photograph and when completed an after photograph of the funded project is required.
- c) The OHMSA Grant Review Committee will recommend the application for approval by the OHMSA Board of Directors.
- d) The OHMSA Board of Directors will have final approval of the project and expenditure of grant funds.
- e) If not approved, the OHMSA Grant Review Committee will explain by letter to the applicant, the reasons for rejection and what, if any, steps can be taken to receive approval.
- f) Individuals/Organizations with approved applications will be notified and will sign an agreement with Oak Harbor Main Street Association (OHMSA). The intent is to assist property owners by providing reimbursement for major elements as they are completed. No funds will be issued without proof of payment.
- g) Grant agreement signed.
- h) Grantee is responsible for obtaining any permits required for the project.
- i) The Grant Review Committee must approve all changes in approved work specifications; deviations from an approved plan may disqualify the applicant from this grant program.
- j) Projects not completed within one year after initial application approval will be reviewed for possible extension of up to one year.
- k) When the project is completed, proof of payment must be submitted before the full amount of grant allocated.

1) Post-Application Procedure

- a. The OHMSA Executive Director will monitor the progress of the project.
- b. Changes in approved work specifications must be approved by the OHMSA Grant Review Committee.
- c. Approved changes in work verifications will be attached to the original applications, dated, and signed by the OHMSA Executive Director.
- d. The applicant and the OHMSA Grant Review Committee will conduct a final inspection before the final payment will be made to the applicant. When applicable, a Preservation Credential will be issued to the applicant.
- e. OHMSA Grant Review Committee may give input on design change should variations made from original design be required.

Funding

Facade Improvement Grant: Based upon the budget, these will be \$20,000 grants or smaller and the board will determine the amount available for each individual grant applicant. Recipients are required to pay for at least half of the total cost of the project.

Program Amendments

The details of the OHMSA Grant Program may be amended subject to the formal approval of a majority of the OHMSA Board of Directors.

Overall Goals

The goal of Oak Harbor Main Street Association (OHMSA) is to preserve the historic structures and to revitalize the downtown district in Oak Harbor. OHMSA encourages renovations and improvements which create a unique and attractive street-side face for each business while respecting the original design parameters of its facade as well as those of its neighbors. Finally, while OHMSA values high design standards and creativity it also encourages solutions that achieve these goals affordably so business and property owners are benefitted rather than burdened by the revitalization process.

In general:

All improvements must be compatible with applicable zoning codes, satisfy permit requirements, and conform to any other regulatory restrictions.

If a building retains historic integrity, improvements should be designed to preserve and reveal the building's original style, form, and materials.

A building's distinguishing elements should be identified and preserved.

Previous renovations are sometimes evidence of a building's history and use. In instances where alterations have acquired their own significance and contribute quality of character to the building and the Historic District as a whole, they should be recognized and preserved. However, when they are not integrated into the building's design, added elements should be removed.

In the case where original building elements have been removed or substantially altered, compatible contemporary treatments may be suitable. However, they should not appear to be of poor quality, or

temporary in nature, or ill-suited to the area (e.g., vinyl or aluminum siding). All new facade designs within the Historic Downtown area shall follow the Oak Harbor Design Guidelines.

Individuality within a standardized or unified appearance is encouraged for single buildings containing multiple storefronts. Separate buildings — even in cases where several adjacent to each other are occupied by a single tenant or owner — should remain visually distinct.

Colors of exterior materials, signs, window frames, cornices, storefronts and other building features should be coordinated. Choice of colors should be determined by the nature of the building. The exterior colors of historic buildings should be chosen with their historic character in mind.

Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

The Standards are applied to projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize historic property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Application Assistance

We strongly recommend you submit your application several days before the final deadline so any errors or omissions in the application may be corrected in time.

Assistance from OHMSA's Executive Director, Margaret Livermore, is available by calling 360-279-8995 or via email at director@oakharbormainstreet.com.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: MAY 15, by 5:00 pm

COMMITTEE REVIEW: no later than May 20

PRESENT TO BOARD FOR APPROVAL NO LATER THAN: May 22

APPLICANTS CONTACTED REGARDING STATUS OF APPLICATION: May 25

PROJECT COMPLETED: May 2026

OAK HARBOR MAIN STREET ASSOCIATION
FACADE IMPROVEMENT
GRANT PROGRAM

STATUS OF PROPERTY

___ NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES: LISTED AS CONTRIBUTING IN THE WHIDBEY ISLAND
NATIONAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

___ WASHINGTON STATE HERITAGE REGISTER

___ DON'T KNOW

Please give a brief summary of the known history of the subject building. Feel free to include any community or anecdotal stories associated with the property.

OAK HARBOR MAIN STREET ASSOCIATION
FACADE IMPROVEMENT
GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- _____ Application guidelines reviewed
- _____ Application Signed by the Property Owner and Lessor
- _____ Project bids or cost estimates attached
- _____ Project photos showing the scope of work to be done
- _____ One signed original application submitted for advisory committee review.

A thumb drive with additional photos may be included if applicant so chooses.

Oak Harbor Main Street Association
FACADE IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM
Grant Application Form

Name of Applicant: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Project Address: _____

Does the applicant own the building? Yes _____ No _____

If the answer is no, please attach a letter from the owner showing approval of the project.

Is this a historic building? Yes _____ No _____

Write a brief description of the proposed project; please attach a copy of the project design _____

Will you be using the services of an architect? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, list your architect of preference _____

Will you be using the services of a builder? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, list your builder of preference _____

Will you be using the services of a graphic artist for signage? Yes _____ No _____

Estimated Project Cost (**attach estimates**): _____

Proposed project start date: _____

Proposed completion date: _____

What is (are) the existing use (s) of the building? _____

Will this project proposal correspond with a change in the building's use? _____

Institution Address Phone: _____

The undersigned applicant affirms that:

A. The information submitted herein is true and accurate to the best of my (our) knowledge.

B. I (we) have read and understand the conditions of the Oak Harbor Main Street Association Facade Improvement Grant Program and agree to abide by its conditions and guidelines.

Signature of Applicant: _____

Date: _____