

VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE
REPORT FOR THE VILLAGE COUNCIL MEETING
MARCH 20, 2012 AGENDA

SUBJECT:	TYPE:	SUBMITTED BY:
Ogden Avenue Site Improvement Strategy (OASIS) Grant Program	Resolution Ordinance Motion ✓ Discussion Only	Tom Dabareiner, AICP Community Development Director

SYNOPSIS

At the February 14, 2012 meeting, the Village Council requested a report regarding the OASIS Program.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

The Strategic Goals for 2011-2018 include *Strong, Diverse Local Economy*.

FISCAL IMPACT

The 2011 Budget included up to \$750,000 from the Ogden Avenue TIF fund for funding a matching grant program. The 2012 Budget included \$350,000 from the Ogden Avenue TIF fund to continue the program.

Maximum grants to individual properties/businesses would be as follows:

- Interior Properties less than 1 acre = \$50,000
- Corner Properties and Properties greater than or equal to 1 acre = \$75,000
- Comprehensive Improvements Eligible for a 25% Bonus

RECOMMENDATION

Staff requests that the Village Council discuss the program and provide input on what, if any, changes should be made to OASIS. Any changes requested will be presented to the Village Council at a future meeting.

BACKGROUNDProgram Goals

The Village Council approved the OASIS Program on September 14, 2010. OASIS provides a dollar-for-dollar matching grant for exterior improvements to properties within the Ogden Avenue TIF District. The program was based from the Ogden Avenue Corridor improvement strategy, prepared in 2005 recommends that the Village use the Ogden Avenue TIF fund's accumulated real estate tax increment to make aesthetic improvements in the corridor including providing more attractive sites, improving pedestrian and vehicular traffic circulation, landscaping improvements and reducing visual clutter including signage updates and overhead utility burial.

In 2010, Village staff met with members of the business community located along Ogden Avenue, the Economic Development Corporation and the Chamber of Commerce to discuss potential right-of-way projects. During these meetings, the business owners and organizations expressed an interest in a site improvement matching grant program for the corridor. The groups indicated a grant program would be more beneficial to the property and business owners along the Ogden Avenue Corridor.

The Economic Development Corporation sponsored several meetings to develop the program. Representatives from the Ogden Avenue business community, Economic Development Corporation, Chamber of Commerce and Village staff collaborated to create OASIS. The goals of the OASIS program are:

- Provide more attractive sites
- Improve traffic circulation for vehicles and pedestrians (on private property as well as access to public streets)
- Improve existing building appearance
- Improve signage and reduce visual clutter

This program provides business and property owners with a dollar-for-dollar matching grant for certain site improvements. The goals of the program and eligible improvements generally follow the recommendations of the 1999 Ogden Avenue Master Plan. Successful projects include one or more of the following elements: new landscaping, façade improvements, sign improvements, new stormwater detention facilities, sidewalk installation, parking lot improvements and improvements to site access (i.e. curb cut reductions). While the Village Council adopted the program prior to approval of the Comprehensive Plan, OASIS is consistent with the Plan. The Comprehensive Plan includes recommendations to improve landscaping, reduce curb cuts and improve business signage on Ogden Avenue. The Comprehensive Plan also recommends the Village use financial incentives to encourage commercial property owners to make improvements.

OASIS applications are reviewed by a group comprised of business/property owners, Economic Development Corporation staff and Chamber of Commerce staff (the OASIS Team). Village staff organizes the applications and prepares summary reports of the grant requests. Staff makes recommendations regarding the grant applications, but does not vote on whether or not to fund a particular project. Grant applications are reviewed based on the number of eligible features being improved, the quality of those improvements and how well the proposal addresses the goals of the program. Grant applications are judged against other applications made during the award period. The OASIS Team makes a recommendation for approval to the Village Manager or Village Council. Grants less than \$15,000 can be approved by the Village Manager. Grants of \$15,000 or more require approval from the Village Council.

Projects are reviewed in the context of the recommendations contained within the Comprehensive Plan, 1999 Ogden Avenue Commercial Corridor Master Plan and Village’s Strategic Plan. The categories described below are used to judge applications.

- **Category 1 – Site Improvements:**
Examples of site improvements include consolidating driveway accesses to Ogden Avenue, removal of nonconforming parking spaces, installing stormwater management strategies, removing pavement and adding landscaping, providing cross-access between properties, installation of public sidewalks and installation of exterior site lighting.
- **Category 2 – Landscaping:**
Examples of landscaping include screening of off-street parking areas with shrubs, ornamental grasses and shrubs, installing landscaping to improve water run-off quality, installation of foundation plantings, installing ornamental fences, construction of outdoor café spaces and

installation of shade trees. Installing the minimum required landscaping for a sign project does not constitute a “landscaping” project.

- **Category 3 – Building Façade:**

Examples of improvements to building facades include major renovations that update a building’s appearance (a “major renovation” affects more than 50% of existing exterior walls fronting Ogden Avenue or adjacent side streets), installation of a canopy or awning, adding transparent windows, adding pedestrian-friendly doors and shrubs, installing parapet walls and decorative cornices that hide mechanical equipment and installation of decorative lighting fixtures on the building.

- **Category 4 – Signs:**

Examples of improvements to signage include removal of non-conforming signs and installation of code-compliant signs and removal of box-type wall signs and replacement with channel letter signage.

If no public sidewalk exists, applicants are required to either install a public sidewalk or provide the Village with an easement for a public sidewalk. In both cases, additional funds are awarded to the applicant for up to 50% of the cost of completing the sidewalk or \$1,000 for the easement. Projects that are deemed to be comprehensive site improvements (i.e., completing improvements in multiple categories) are eligible for a 25% bonus.

Program to Date

As noted above, OASIS allows property owners to receive matching grants for eligible projects. The OASIS Team sets deadlines based on the amount of funds remaining from the budgeted amount. The submittal deadlines are advertised by the Economic Development Corporation. The OASIS Team began reviewing applications in December 2010. The first OASIS grants were awarded by the Village Council on August 2, 2012. A total of \$409,961 was awarded from the 2011 program out of a total of \$750,000. There were five review periods for the 2011 program.

The Village Council re-authorized the OASIS Program as part of the 2012 Budget. The Council allocated \$350,000 from the Ogden Avenue TIF Fund. There has been one review period in 2012. The next grant submittal deadline is April 2, 2012. The first submittal deadline was January 31, 2012. Only two grant applications were submitted for that period. The OASIS Team only recommended funding one of the applications; however, that grant has not been formally awarded because the applicant has not returned the signed OASIS Agreement. The other application required some revisions before the Team makes a formal recommendation.

The table below provides a list of approved grant projects, the type improvements made and the amount of the grant:

Project Name	Address	Project Type (see codes below)	Grant Amount	Estimated Total Investment
DG Animal Hospital	631-635 Ogden Ave	SI, F, S, L	\$48,737*	\$169,624
Bill Kay Nissan	1601 Ogden Ave	SI	\$40,000	\$120,000
Helmut & Vito's	1430 Ogden Ave	S	\$3,350	\$6,700
Merlin 200,000 Mile Shop	1711 Ogden Ave	S, L	\$6,589	\$15,159
Prestige Liquors	739 Ogden Ave	SI, F, S, L	\$29,234.38*	\$68,020
Skuddlebutts Shopping Center	436-440 Ogden Ave	S	\$2,105.75	\$4,900
United Limo	432 Ogden Ave	SI, S	\$12,700^	\$25,400
Phillips Flowers	1512 Ogden Ave	S	\$4,409	\$9,795
A-Len Radiators & Auto Services	333 Ogden Ave	SI, F, S, L	\$93,750*	\$423,855
Door & Window Superstore	1740 Ogden Ave	S	\$7,500^	\$16,400
Mr. Trim	946 Ogden Ave	SI, F, S	\$34,250.50	\$149,127
Apartment Building	1614 Ogden Ave	F	\$10,000	\$44,376
Apartment Building	1602 Ogden Ave	F	\$10,000	\$30,995
Auto Zone Shopping Center	237-245 Ogden Ave	S	\$7,500	\$30,124
Jay's Plumbing	1509 Ogden Ave	S	\$3,500^	\$5,658.09
Mr. Submarine	1322 Ogden Ave	SI, F, S, L	\$48,621.88*	\$98,000
Shopping Center	1530-1552 Ogden Ave	S	\$6,942.50	\$13,885
Radio Shack/Soccer 2000	220-224 Ogden Ave	SI, S	\$22,395^	\$43,661
Midwest Auto Body	534 Ogden Ave	SI, F, S, L	\$14,952.14^	\$39,641.77
Shopping Center	406-414 Ogden Ave	S	\$3,423.90	\$6,847.80
Totals			\$409,961.05	\$1,322,168.66

* = 25% Bonus Applied; ^ = \$1,000 awarded for sidewalk easement

SI = Site Improvement, F = Façade Improvement, S = Sign Improvement, L = Landscape Improvement

While the OASIS Program was relatively successful in its initial year more applications are anticipated. In 2011, the OASIS Team reviewed 33 applications and 20 grants were awarded. However, many businesses are still making conscious efforts to defer construction and other site improvements due to weak economic conditions. Also, several projects did not move forward because of concerns about the State's Prevailing Wage laws, which are required for all projects except sign-only applications.

Sign-Only Applications

During the discussions for the extension of the Sign Ordinance's amortization date, the Council discussed the merits of sign-only applications. To date, eight sign-only grants have been awarded. The Council originally allowed sign-only requests, but required the OASIS Team to consider all other applications first. The first time that sign-only requests could be considered was the third review period May 2011 review period. The May submittal deadline was originally intended to be the final review period for 2011.

In 2011, demand for the funding was lower than anticipated and there was a significant amount of funding available. Due to the significant amount of funds remaining, the OASIS Team added two submittal deadlines for grant applications. No projects received a recommendation for a grant award prior to the May 2011 review period; and no grants were awarded until August 2, 2011. Sign-only grants were awarded after the funds were allocated to the projects that included other eligible expenses.

The Village Council also asked the OASIS Team to weigh in on merits of awarding funds for sign. The OASIS Team stated grant applications for signage should be allowed beyond the original May 2012 sign amortization deadline. The Team indicated that signs are important elements that contribute to or detract from the attractiveness of the Ogden Avenue Corridor and consistent with the Ogden Avenue Master Plan. Also, staff recently sent notices to 84 property owners with nonconforming signs in the Ogden Avenue TIF district. These letters promoted the use of the OASIS Program to help off set the costs of installing new signs.

The Economic Development Corporation has been promoting the OASIS Program to owners in the Ogden Avenue Corridor. The EDC will likely be sending postcards to owners next week. EDC staff has also sent letters and gone door-to-door to promote the program, which to date includes sign-only eligibility. The OASIS Team still supports the program and believes it is and will continue to make a positive change to the Ogden Avenue Corridor. The next OASIS review deadline is April 2, 2012. No sign-only applications have been submitted for the April deadline.

ATTACHMENTS

OASIS Grant Policy

OASIS Grant Application Packet

Map of OASIS Projects



Village of Downers Grove

Official Village Policy Approved by Village Council

Description: **Ogden Avenue Site Improvement Strategy Program**

Res. or Ord. #: **Ord. 5150**

Effective Date: **09/14/10**

Category: **Planning & Community Development**

New Council Policy

Amends Previous Policy Dated: _____

Description of Previous Policy (if different from above):

ORDINANCE NO. 5150

**AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING AN OGDEN AVENUE
SITE IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY PROGRAM**

WHEREAS, the Village has the authority, pursuant to the laws of the State of Illinois, to promote the health, safety, and welfare of the Village and its inhabitants, to prevent the spread of blight, to encourage private development in order to enhance the local tax base, to increase employment, and to enter into contractual agreements with third parties for the purpose of achieving these purposes.

WHEREAS, the Village is authorized under the provisions of the Tax Increment Allocation Redevelopment Act, 65 ILCS 5/11-74.4-1, *et seq.*, as amended (the "TIF Act"), to finance redevelopment in accordance with the conditions and requirements set forth in the TIF Act.

WHEREAS, to stimulate and induce redevelopment pursuant to the TIF Act, the Village has, after giving all notices required by law and after conducting all public hearings required by law, adopted the following ordinances:

1. Ordinance No. 4247, adopted February 6, 2001, titled "*An Ordinance Approving the Ogden Avenue Corridor Redevelopment Plan and Project*" (the "Redevelopment Plan");
2. Ordinance No. 4248 adopted February 6, 2001, titled "*An Ordinance Designating the Ogden Avenue Corridor Redevelopment Project Area*";
3. Ordinance No. 4249, adopted February 6, 2001, titled "*An Ordinance Adopting Tax Increment Financing for the Village of Downers Grove*".

WHEREAS, in an effort to promote revitalization of the Ogden Avenue commercial corridor the Village wishes to establish the Ogden Avenue Site Improvement Strategy Program ("OASIS Program");

WHEREAS, the OASIS Program is made available to provide a significant impact on the exterior of properties, thus improving the economic vitality of the Ogden Avenue commercial corridor;

WHEREAS, the goals of the OASIS Program are to provide financial assistance to property and business owners in order to provide more attractive sites, improve traffic circulation for vehicles and pedestrians, improve existing building appearance, and improve signage, in accordance with the Ogden Avenue Commercial Corridor Master Plan and the Village's Strategic Plan;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the Village of Downers Grove, DuPage County, Illinois, as follows:

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS:

A. SITE IMPROVEMENT

1. Lighting Fixtures, Fencing, utility burial

- This includes installation of exterior lighting fixtures which are associated with a building façade or within a parking area. Decorative fencing around parking areas, adjacent properties and refuse screening are also included in this category and sidewalks.
- The burying of overhead power lines, telephone lines or other above-grade utilities.

2. Access Consolidation, Cross Access, or Pedestrian Improvement

- This includes driveway consolidation on Ogden Avenue, cross access between businesses, and installation of pedestrian walkways and sidewalks.

3. Stormwater

- This includes the installation of detention area or best management practices.

B. LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENT

1. Landscaping

- This includes the installation or replacement of new landscaping and green space to comply with current ordinance requirements.

2. Stormwater

- This includes the installation of detention area or best management practices.

C. FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT

1. Exterior Woodwork and Architectural Materials

- This includes improvement or repair, cleaning, refinishing, restoring, or replacement of exterior woodwork or architectural materials.

2. Masonry

- This includes masonry improvements, repairs, restoration or tuckpointing.

3. Windows and Doors

- This includes the replacement, installation or restoration of windows (including display, ornamental, upper-story and storm windows) and exterior doors.

4. Cornices, Parapets, Awnings, Canopies and Roofs

- This includes the installation or repair of cornices, parapets, awnings, canopies or roofs when part of the facade renovation; or independently, when it is a visible part of the façade from Ogden Avenue or required by Village ordinance to screen rooftop mechanical units and vent stacks.

D. SIGNAGE IMPROVEMENT

1. Signs

This includes the installation or replacement of signs to comply with current Village ordinances.

2. Financial Assistance: Property owners and business owners (“Owners”) located within the Ogden Avenue TIF District may be eligible for a grant award from the Village for up to fifty percent (50%) of the total cost of the work for certain improvements made to their buildings or property in accordance with the following guidelines:

a) Interior Parcels less than 1 acre

Type of Project	Eligible for a Grant Award up to 50% of the Cost of Work (up to the maximum noted herein) The total maximum award shall not exceed \$50,000
Signage Improvement - coordinated for retail center or monument sign	\$2,500 for parcels less than 100 ft. wide; \$5,000 for parcels between 100 ft. and 259 ft. wide; \$7,500 for parcels 260 ft. wide or greater
Wall Signage for Single Tenant (only for business that were in operation before May 2005)	\$3,000
Landscape improvement	\$20,000
Site improvement	\$20,000
Façade improvement	\$10,000

b) Corner Parcels or Parcels Greater than 1 Acre or individual Tenant Spaces in Excess of 5,000 sq. ft.

Type of Project	Eligible for a Grant Award up to 50% of Work (up to the maximum noted herein) The total maximum award shall not exceed \$75,000
Signage Improvement - coordinated for retail center or monument sign	\$7,500
Wall Signage for Single Tenant (only for business that were in operation before May 2005)	\$3,000
Landscape improvement	\$40,000
Site improvement	\$40,000
Façade improvement	\$15,000

c. Conditions:

1. Only exterior improvements to properties and buildings as described above will be eligible for a grant award. Internal elements will not be eligible. Generally, exterior maintenance (e.g.

painting, parking lot resurfacing, seal-coating, replacing dead landscaping, etc.) will not be considered; however, in some cases maintenance may be eligible if it is an essential component of a project and is a permanent improvement to the property (e.g. tuck-pointing, replacing windows and doors).

2. Improvements to buildings, parking lots and uses which do not meet current zoning requirements will not be eligible.
3. Improvements requiring zoning variations may be eligible for project funding; however, no part of the zoning variation process will be funded.
4. A bonus of 25% of the maximum grant award amount for particular project categories may be provided for projects combining multiple categories. For example, a 10,000 square foot tenant on a 1.5-acre lot proposing landscape improvements and façade improvements would be eligible for up to \$68,750 ($\$40,000 \times 1.25 + \$15,000 \times 1.25$) assuming a total project cost of \$137,500.
5. For single tenants in multi-tenant buildings, the maximum grant award for the tenant will be limited by the percentage of space the tenant occupies in the building. For example, if a tenant occupies 25% of a building on a parcel less than 1 acre in size, the maximum façade improvement grant award would be \$2,500.

3. **Sidewalk Easement or Construction Required as a Pre-Condition:**

In order to promote the Ogden Avenue Master Plan, and prior to receipt of any grant award, the applicant must either grant a sidewalk easement approved in a form acceptable to the Village and receive an additional \$1,000 of grant funds and/or install a sidewalk on the property along Ogden Avenue and receive an additional 50% of grant funds for the cost of the installation.

4. **Procedures:**

The OASIS Team will evaluate all submittals. The OASIS Team is comprised of Village staff, Economic Development Corporation representatives and Downers Grove Area Chamber of Commerce and Industry representatives. Only complete applications will be evaluated by the review team. Projects will be evaluated on a qualitative basis and will be evaluated against one another. The intent of the initiative is to encourage comprehensive development in the TIF district. One or more application deadlines will be established by the Village.

1. Pre-Application Meeting (OPTIONAL)

Prior to making a formal application, the prospective applicant is encouraged to meet with the OASIS Team. During this meeting, the prospective applicant is familiarized with the program and the application process. A general discussion of needs and ideas of all parties, design alternatives and general cost parameters will be discussed. An application packet may be obtained at this time, as well as, information about the *Ogden Avenue Master Plan*.

2. Complete and Submit Application

The first round of applications should be completed and submitted to the Community Development Department by an established due date included in the application packet. The OASIS Team will review the application for completeness within 10 working days of application deadline.

3. Approval of Project by the Village

Within 30 days of the application deadline, the OASIS Team will meet to review and rank the complete grant applications against each other in order to establish an order of merit. By ranking projects the OASIS Team will recommend funding of the highest ranked projects first. The OASIS Team will utilize the review criteria included in the application packet to rank applications. Recommendations from the OASIS Team will be forwarded to the Village Manager for consideration. Grant awards recommended by the OASIS Team less than \$15,000 may be authorized by Village Manager; however, grant awards in excess of \$15,000 must be authorized by the Village Council.

4. Execution of the Site Improvement Reimbursement Grant Agreement

In conjunction with the award of the grant, the applicant will be required to enter into a Site Improvement Reimbursement Grant Agreement with the Village specifying the responsibility of the grant recipient. This agreement must be completed prior to the commencement of funded improvements. A typical agreement will reimburse the applicant, up to the agreed upon maximum, with the submittal of cancelled checks and final inspection.

5. Begin Work

After the Site Improvement Reimbursement Grant Agreement has been executed, a "Letter of Approval and Notice to Proceed" will be sent to the applicant from the Community Development Department, including an estimate of the total grant amount the applicant is eligible to receive once work is completed and cancelled checks for said eligible work have been received.

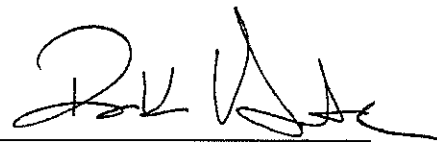
The applicant may begin work once all necessary permits have been issued. Prior to, or during construction, any on-the-job changes to the approved design must be reviewed and approved by the OASIS team and the Community Development Department. If changes involve permit related work, the Community Development department must also review and approve the change.

6. Complete of the Project

Upon completion of the project, the work is to be approved by an inspector(s) in the appropriate departments for compliance with the original design drawings, including any approved on-the-job changes and Village ordinances. In the event the Village finds the finished work product does not meet ordinance requirements or is not consistent with the approved grant application and any approved on-the-job changes, the Village will not be obligated to provide reimbursement for any of the work completed.

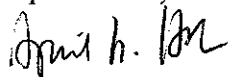
7. Payment of the Grant

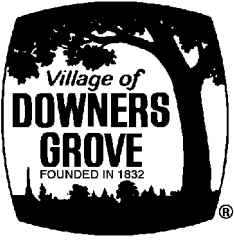
Once the grant recipient receives final approval, he/she shall provide a request for reimbursement and all receipts (including copies of cancelled checks) for grant eligible work to the Community Development Department. The Village of Downers Grove will provide reimbursement up to the agreed upon maximum after eligible grant work has been inspected and certified as to its completion and compliance with the approved grant application.



Ronald L. Sandack, Mayor

Passed: September 14, 2010

Attest: 
April K. Holden, Village Clerk



OASIS Program

Ogden Avenue Site Improvement Strategy – Matching Grant Program

The Ogden Avenue Site Improvement Strategy (OASIS) Initiative is an incentive program for site, property, landscaping, signage, and façade improvements along Ogden Avenue, within the boundaries of the Ogden Avenue Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District in Downers Grove, IL.

The OASIS initiative is a community based revitalization effort to improve the economic vitality of the Ogden Avenue Commercial Corridor throughout Downers Grove in accordance with the recommendations of the Ogden Avenue Corridor Enhancement Initiative Team. It is funded by the Village of Downers Grove through the Ogden Avenue TIF District (map of district attached).

This workbook contains the following:

- Introduction and Background
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Geographic Boundaries
- Eligible Projects and Activities
- Evaluation and Approval Process
- Application
- Program Summary and Evaluation Criteria

Introduction

In an effort to enhance the appearance and stimulate the economic performance of the Ogden Avenue corridor within Downers Grove, the Village of Downers Grove, in conjunction with the Downers Grove Economic Development Corporation, the Downers Grove Area Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the property and business owners along Ogden Avenue in Downers Grove, has elected to initiate a site improvement matching grant program.

Recognizing that an attractive image and functionality are of key importance to the success of any commercial area, the Village of Downers Grove has elected to re-invest T.I.F. resources in order to enhance the image of the Ogden Avenue T.I.F. corridor. That image depends upon the appearance of the commercial area's individual building's appearance, property appearance, signage and site landscaping. These components are the most effective ways of upgrading the image and ultimately attracting more business. The OASIS initiative also affords a business or property owner the opportunity to reverse inappropriate past architectural improvements.

Many improvements do not need to be costly. Often time new landscaping or a new sign or awning canopy may be all that is needed.

In addition to building, signage and landscaping improvements, site modifications to improve vehicle access and navigation between businesses will also help customers patronizing businesses along the corridor. The flow of traffic has been cited by many Ogden Avenue business owners along the corridor as one of the most important assets to their business location as it allows many prospective customers to pass by and see their business. Sufficient and efficient ingress and egress to their businesses is essential to their success. Balancing this need for vehicular access with the Ogden Avenue Master Plan call for reduction in curb cuts can often times be costly.

The Ogden Avenue Corridor Site Improvement Reimbursement Grant Program is designed to provide matching grants to commercial property owners or business tenants with property owner approval. These matching grants are intended to encourage site, property or building improvements generally including: building façades, landscaping, lighting, consolidation of driveway access, cross access between properties, construction of public sidewalks, improvements of public sidewalks and signage improvements.

Any projects recommended for approval should be in accordance with the recommendations contained within the 1999 Ogden Avenue Commercial Corridor Master Plan and current Village ordinances. General site, building and property maintenance will not be included in this program unless proposed maintenance is an essential part of a larger improvement project.

The program offers matching grants to serve as an incentive to stimulate private investment in improvement projects. The implementation of the Ogden Avenue Corridor Site Improvement Grant Reimbursement Program should result in a more attractive, functional, competitive and economically viable business district within Downers Grove.

Approved projects will entitle the property owner (or the business owner with property owner's approval), to receive a post completion funding grant for 50% of the eligible project costs. Sign-only applications are subject to maximum grant amounts which may not equal 50% of the total project cost. Maximum award eligibility depends on the scope of the project. Additional information is provided in this packet. This program is designed to work as a re-imbursement program. Details of re-imbursement criteria are provided in this packet.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is your site appearance important?

Your site is part of a larger corridor. The Village of Downers Grove has invested a significant amount of time and financial resources in an effort to improve its appearance. Examples of these improvements include new sidewalks, curb closures and street signage. The Village believes in business, first impressions are lasting impressions and the Village would like to maximize the first impression of your business. It is the storefront, signage, and landscape curb appeal that helps to sell a business and a business district to customers. An attractive appearance, combined with quality products, competitive prices and good service, creates a compelling image that will increase commerce, profits, and community pride.

Who's eligible for an Ogden Avenue Site Improvement Strategy Grant?

Owners of property with conforming buildings and parking lots and uses within the Ogden Avenue TIF District are eligible to participate in the OASIS initiative. Those who are tenants of buildings in this same area are also eligible if the building owner's consent is provided in writing. Improvements to non-conforming buildings, parking lots and uses which do not meet current zoning requirements will not be considered. Projects which propose changes to meet conforming usage and zoning requirements must complete the entitlement process prior to consideration and must be approved by the appropriate authority prior to award of eligibility. For multi-tenant buildings, the most successful applications will include the entire property, site, building façade, site landscape area, or signage design. The dollar amounts granted to single tenants in a multi-tenant are based on that tenant's occupancy percentage and listed later in this packet.

Why are there no specific design guidelines listed?

The Ogden Avenue Corridor in Downers Grove is currently a unique mix of commercial, residential and retail properties. Within each of these commercial, residential and retail property categories are several additional classifications. For example, the retail category includes grocery, automotive and general merchandise. These uses, while all approved and encouraged within the corridor, have different and unique characteristics that support their success. To apply one set of guidelines across these categories would potentially hamper their efforts and could work against the goals and objectives of corridor enhancement. Additionally, while the Ogden Avenue TIF District has defined boundaries, the Ogden Avenue Corridor does not. Specific design guidelines applied to the T.I.F. District that do not and can not be applied to the rest of the corridor could potentially create a disjointed, inconsistent appearance and be counter productive to the corridor enhancement goal.

How are projects judged?

There is no point system used to evaluate projects. Rather, projects will be judged based on a qualitative analysis. Each category provides general guidance to applicants as to what elements the review team is looking for.

Are certain categories worth more than others?

Generally, the review team will not put more weight on specific categories. However, the review team will place priority on projects that pay special attention to the recommendations of the 1999 Ogden Avenue Corridor Master Plan. The plan has many elements that are still pertinent today. Corridor beautification, site improvement, curb cut reduction, landscaping and pedestrian access are a few examples of these elements. By prioritizing projects with an emphasis on these categories, the Village believes that these goals will be more readily met.

Do I need another component to qualify for signage funding?

No, upgrading signage are eligible expenses. However, sign-only applications will not be funded until the third submission period if funds are still available. The Village undertook a major initiative for signage in 2005. Sign compliance must be achieved by May 2012 per the existing Village ordinance. Many in the corridor and the T.I.F. District have already taken steps to comply. The Village recognizes the cost associated with new signage and the importance of new and attractive signage throughout the corridor. However, this program is intended to improve the overall appearance of properties in the T.I.F. District.

What if I need a variance?

If your project requires a variance to the Municipal Code, you are still required to complete the variance review process. Any grant application would be contingent on the variance being approved. If a variance request is subsequently denied, the grant applicant may modify the application to comply with code requirements for re-evaluation. If the applicant does not wish to modify the request, the application will not be considered. Under no circumstances will the costs associated with any variance process be eligible for grant award.

What types of projects are eligible for funding?

The following projects are eligible for assistance under the program:

- Site Improvements
 - Consolidating of driveway access
 - Parking lot re-construction
 - Storm water management
 - Removal of nonconforming parking lot spaces and replacement with landscaping
 - Installation of vehicular access to adjacent parcel
 - Installation of public sidewalk
 - Improvement of public sidewalk
 - Installation of exterior site lighting

- Landscaping
 - Off-street parking lot screening with shrubs and ornamental grasses
 - Installation or replacement of building foundation plantings
 - Off-street parking lot screening with ornamental fences
 - Installation of perimeter trees
 - Installation of landscaping features to improve stormwater quality
- Building Façade
 - Major façade renovation (more than 50%)
 - Façade maintenance if part of a larger façade improvement project
 - Installation of awnings or canopies
 - Window and/or door replacement
 - Screening of rooftop mechanical equipment visible from Ogden Avenue or an Ogden Avenue cross street
- Signage
 - Replacement of non-conforming free standing signs with code-compliant monument sign(s)
 - Replacement of non-conforming building sign(s) with code-compliant building sign(s)
 - Replacement of box-type wall sign with internally illuminated individual channel letters
 - Note: Sign-only applications will not be funded until the **final** application period if funds still remain.

What types of projects are NOT eligible for funding?

Work financed under this program excludes:

- Interior remodeling
- Sprinkler system installation/upgrades
- Fire detection system installation/upgrades
- Parking lot resurfacing/seal-coating/re-stripping
- Roof replacement
- Demolition or acquisition of property
- Improvements completed or expenses incurred *prior* to improvements related to new construction or approval of application for grant award

How much grant money is available?

The Village of Downers Grove will determine the annual budget amount for the program. For FY2011, \$750,000 has been approved for the program to stimulate private investment. Total reimbursement, per applicant, is based on the project type. The table included herein provides a summary of grant amount eligibility. All listed below eligible for a grant award up to one-half the cost of the work up to the maximum award listed herein. See Appendix A and Table 2 for additional details.

1. Interior parcels less than 1 acre size	Potential Grant Award
• Landscape Improvement	\$20,000
• Site Improvement	\$20,000
• Façade Improvement	\$10,000
• Signage Improvement	
Parcels <100 ft. wide	\$2,500
Parcels >100 ft. and <259 ft.	\$5,000
Parcels >260 ft. wide	\$7,500
• Wall Signage (Single Tenant Only) (Business in operation pre 2005)	\$3,000

Total Grant may not exceed \$50,000 or 50% of the total project cost, whichever is less.

2. Corner parcels, parcels greater than 1 acre or individual tenant spaces > 5000 square feet	
• Landscape Improvement	\$40,000
• Site Improvement	\$40,000
• Façade Improvement	\$15,000
• Signage Improvement	\$7,500
• Wall Signage (Business in operation pre 2005)	\$3,000

Total Grant may not exceed \$75,000 or 50% of the total project cost, whichever is less.

Why are Sidewalks Required?

In order to promote the Ogden Avenue Master Plan, and prior to receipt of any grant award, the applicant must either grant a sidewalk easement approved in a form acceptable to the Village and receive an additional \$1,000 of grant funds and/or install a sidewalk on the property along Ogden Avenue and receive an additional 50% of grant funds for the cost of the installation.

EXAMPLES

EXAMPLE 1:

If a petitioner, with a property less than 1 acre in size and less than 100 feet wide and not on a corner is seeking a grant for signage improvements to install a new monument sign and complete site landscaping. The maximum grant award would be up to \$2,500 or half the project cost (whichever is less) for the sign and up to \$20,000 for landscaping (whichever is less). If the total cost of the proposed sign improvement is \$2,500 and the landscaping is \$10,000, the petitioner would be eligible for a \$1,250 grant from the Village for the sign and \$5,000 for landscaping for a total of \$6,250.

EXAMPLE 2:

If a petitioner, with a property less than 1 acre in size and not on a corner is seeking a grant for both façade and landscape improvements the maximum award amount would be up to \$30,000 or half the project cost (whichever is less). If the total cost of the façade and landscape improvements is \$60,000, the petitioner would be eligible for a \$30,000 grant from the Village.

EXAMPLE 3:

If a single tenant occupying a space within a multi-tenant building, located on a property less than 1 acre in size and not on a corner, is seeking a facade grant, the maximum grant award amount would be reduced to equal to the percentage of the building occupied by the tenant or half the project cost (whichever is less). Therefore, if the tenant occupied half of all the multi-tenant building space, the maximum grant award for the subject facade would be \$5,000 or half the project cost (whichever is less).

What is the application process for the program?

After participating in an optional pre-application meeting with the Community Development Team, obtain an application from the Community Development Department or online at www.downers.us and www.dgedc.com.

The next submittal deadline is January 31, 2012. A total of \$350,000 is available for 2012.

Submit the completed application by **January 31, 2012** to the Village of Downers Grove Community Development Department. Prior to submitting a completed application, it is *strongly* recommended that you contact the Downers Grove Economic Development Corporation to ensure your application is complete.

Complete applications will include:

- Applicant identification and property owner identification
- Proof of property ownership if applicable
- Property location
- Written project description, site plan or architectural rendering as appropriate
- Written consent from the property owner if the applicant is a lease tenant
- Two cost estimates of the project
- Schedule for completion of the project

The OASIS team will review all applications for completeness and require additional submittals as necessary. Within 10 days of submittal deadlines, applications are reviewed and ranked by the OASIS team. Upon recommendation by the OASIS team, grant awards less than \$15,000 may be approved by the Downers Grove Village Manager.

Grant awards greater than \$15,000 will require review and approval by the Village Council prior to grant award distribution. Upon final approval by the Village Manager or the Village Council, written notification will be provided to those individuals whose projects are chosen to receive funding through the OASIS program within 10 business days.

How do you get reimbursed?

- Adhere to the design plan on which the funding agreement was based.
- Have written pre-approval by the Community Development Department of any changes of the work in progress.
- Complete the project within 12 months of the year following the award approval.
- Submit cancelled checks to the Community Development Department for re-imbusement of pre-approved, eligible grant amount.
- Upon completion of final inspection the applicant will be reimbursed for up to 50% of the total actual, eligible and approved cost.

Site Improvements

1. Lighting Fixtures, Fencing, utility burial
 - This includes installation of exterior lighting fixtures which are associated with a building façade or within a parking area. Decorative fencing around parking areas, adjacent properties and refuse screening are also included in this category and sidewalks.
 - The burying of overhead power lines, telephone lines or other above-grade utilities.
2. Access Consolidation, Cross Access, or Pedestrian Improvement
 - This includes driveway consolidation on Ogden Avenue, cross access between businesses, and installation of pedestrian walkways and sidewalks.
3. Stormwater
 - This includes the installation of detention area or best management practices.

Landscape Improvements

1. Landscaping
 - This includes the installation or replacement of new landscaping and green space to comply with current ordinance requirements. Note: required landscaping associated with signage does not constitute a landscape improvement.
2. Stormwater
 - This includes the installation of detention area or best management practices.

Façade Improvements

1. Exterior Woodwork and Architectural Materials
 - This includes improvement or repair, cleaning, refinishing, restoring, or replacement of exterior woodwork or architectural materials.
2. Masonry
 - This includes masonry improvements, repairs, restoration or tuckpointing.
3. Windows and Doors
 - This includes the replacement, installation or restoration of windows (including display, ornamental, upper-story and storm windows) and exterior doors.
4. Cornices, Parapets, Awnings, Canopies and Roofs
 - This includes the installation or repair of cornices, parapets, awnings, canopies or roofs when part of the facade renovation; or independently, when it is a visible part of the façade from Ogden Avenue or required by Village ordinance to screen rooftop mechanical units and vent stacks.

Sign Improvements

1. Signs

- This includes the installation or replacement of signs to comply with current Village ordinances. Note: Sign-only applications will not be funded until the **final** application period if funds still remain.

Evaluation and Approval Process

The OASIS Team will evaluate submittals. The OASIS Team is comprised of Village staff, Economic Development Corporation representatives and Downers Grove Area Chamber of Commerce, Industry representatives and a member of the Downers Grove Architectural Design Review Board. Only complete applications will be evaluated by the review team. Projects will be evaluated on a qualitative basis.

Projects will be evaluated against one another. The intent of the initiative is to encourage comprehensive development in the TIF district. As such, projects with multiple components will receive highest priority. Projects will not receive partial funding.

1. OPTIONAL: Pre-Application Meeting

Prior to making a formal application, the prospective applicant is encouraged to meet with the OASIS Team. During this meeting, the prospective applicant is familiarized with the program and the application process. A general discussion of needs and ideas of all parties, design alternatives and general cost parameters will be discussed. An application form may be obtained at this time, as well as, information about the *Ogden Avenue Master Plan*. To schedule an appointment, please Community Development Department at 630-434-5515. No meetings will be held without an appointment.

2. Complete and Submit Application

Applications should be completed and submitted to the Community Development Department by **January 31, 2012**. The OASIS Team will review the application for completeness within 10 working days of application deadline.

3. Approval of Project by the Village

Within 30 days of the application deadline, the OASIS Team will meet to review and rank the complete grant applications against each other in order to establish an order of merit. By ranking projects the OASIS Team will recommend funding of the highest ranked projects first. The OASIS Team will utilize the review criteria included in this packet to rank applications.

Grant awards recommended by the OASIS Team less than \$15,000 may be authorized by Village Manager.

The Downers Grove Village Council is responsible for approving any grant reimbursement application in excess of \$15,000. Village Council action will occur within 60 days of the application deadline, recommendations from the OASIS Team will be forwarded to Village Council for approval.

4. Execution of the Site Improvement Reimbursement Grant Agreement

A Site Improvement Reimbursement Grant Agreement specifying the responsibility of the grant recipient and the Village of Downers Grove must be executed after the Village Manager or Village Council selects award winners. This agreement must be completed prior to the commencement of funded improvements. A typical agreement will reimburse the applicant, up to the agreed upon maximum, with the submittal of cancelled check and final inspection.

5. Begin Work

After the Site Improvement Reimbursement Grant Agreement has been executed, a "Letter of Approval and Notice to Proceed" will be sent to the applicant by the Community Development Department, including an estimate of the total grant amount the applicant is eligible to receive once work is completed and cancelled checks for said eligible work has been completed.

Assuming the Village has issued all necessary permits, work may begin. Prior to, or during construction, any on-the-job changes to the approved design must be reviewed and approved by the OASIS team and the Community Development Department. If changes involve permit related work, the Community Development department must also review and approve the change.

6. Complete of the Project

Upon completion of the project, the work is to be approved by an inspector(s) in the appropriate departments for compliance with the original design drawings, including any approved on-the-job changes, Village building codes, zoning ordinances, and sign ordinances. In the event the Village finds the finished work product does not meet code requirements or is not consistent with the approved grant application and any approved on-the-job changes, the Village may not provide reimbursement for work completed.

7. Payment of the Grant

Grant recipients shall provide a request for reimbursement and all receipts (including copies of cancelled checks) for grant eligible work to the Community Development Department. The Village of Downers Grove will provide reimbursement up to the agreed upon maximum after eligible grant work has been inspected and certified as to its completion and compliance with the approved grant application. If you have specific questions about payment, please contact the Community Development Department at 630-434-5515.

Application

A printable version of the Ogden Avenue Site Improvement Reimbursement Grant Application is available on-line at www.downers.us or www.dgedc.com. A paper copy of the application is available on the next page. Three (3) copies of the complete application, including any support documentation are due by the application deadline(s).

Applicant is:	_____ Tenant _____ Owner
Name of Business/Building:	
Address/Property ID # of Project Property:	
Owner's Name AND TITLE:	
Owner's Mailing Address:	
Owner's Business Phone:	
Owner's Fax:	
Owner's E-Mail:	
<i>PLEASE ONLY COMPLETE THE REST OF THIS TABLE IF TENANT IS THE GRANT APPLICANT.</i>	
Tenant Name AND TITLE:	
Tenant Mailing Address:	
Business Phone for Tenant:	
E-Mail for Tenant:	

Project Information

Project Description:

- Landscape plan, if applicable (e.g. access, driveway consolidation, etc)

3. If you are proposing a new sign/awning/canopy the following documents must be submitted (collated and stapled into packets) with the applicants name and address on the front page:

- Color drawing of the sign/awning including measurements of free-standing sign and site plan showing sign location on a site
- Façade elevation showing sign/awning placement, if plan applicable

Schedule Information:

Anticipated Project Start Date: _____

Anticipate Project Completion Date: _____

NOTE: Completion Date must be prior within one year of the year following application.

Architect / Designer for the Project (If Applicable):

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Contractor for the Project (If Known):

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Itemized Activity Estimated

	Total Site Improvement Costs	Grant Eligible Project Costs*	TO BE COMPLETED BY CITY	
			Grant Contribution	Bonus Award
ESTIMATE 1 Contractor Name:				
ESTIMATE 2 Contractor Name:				

Two detailed contractor estimates are required. Please provide additional sheets with supporting detail as necessary.

This application for a Site Improvement Reimbursement Grant is hereby believed to be complete and accurate.

Owner Signature:

Tenant Signature:

Print Owners Name:

Print Tenant Name:

*NOTE: Tenant Signature only necessary if
Tenant is applying for a Grant*

STATE OF ILLINOIS
COUNTY OF DUPAGE
VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE

The foregoing petition was acknowledged before me by on this _____ day of _____, 20 ____.

Notary Public: _____

Notary Public

3 Copies of the completed application should be submitted to the Village's Community Development Department.

Applications may be dropped off at the Village Hall from 8:00 am and 5:00 pm Monday – Friday, or mailed to:

Village of Downers Grove
ATTN: Community Development Department
801 Burlington Avenue
Downers Grove, IL 60515

Disclosure of Beneficiaries/Trust Disclosure:

The information requested below must be completed and attached to any grant application submitted to the Village of Downers Grove. This form is used to ensure that the applicant has a recognized, vested interest in the property. This form is required by persons applying for permits, licenses, approvals or benefits from the Village of Downers Grove
Village of Downers Grove

DISCLOSURE OF BENEFICIARIES

1. Grant Applicant: _____

2. Address: _____

3. Nature of Applicant (Please circle one):

- a. Natural Person
- b. Corporation
- c. Land Trust/ Trustee
- d. Trust/Trustee
- e. Partnership
- f. Joint Venture

4. If applicant is an entity other than described in Section 3, briefly state the nature and characteristics of applicant:

5. If in your answer to Section 3 you checked box b, c, d, e or f, identify by name and address each person or entity which is a 5% shareholder in the case of a corporation, a beneficiary in the case of a trust or land trust, a joint venture in the case of case of a joint venture, or who otherwise has a proprietary interest, interest in profits and losses or right to control such entity:

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

6. Name, address and capacity of person making this disclosure on behalf of the applicant:

IMPORTANT NOTE: In the event your answer to Section 5 identifies entities other than a natural person, additional disclosures are required for each entity.

VERIFICATION I, _____, being first duly sworn under oath, depose and state that I am the person making this disclosure on behalf of the applicant, that I am duly authorized to make this disclosure, that I have read the above and foregoing Disclosure of Beneficiaries, and that the statements contained therein are true in both substance and fact.

Signature: _____

Subscribed and Sworn to before me this _____ day of _____, 20 ____.
_____ Notary Public

Program Summary and Evaluation Criteria

The Ogden Avenue Site Improvement Strategy (OASIS) is a program that offers matching grants to business and property owners seeking to make improvements to their sites in the Ogden Avenue TIF Corridor. The goals of the OASIS program are:

- Provide more attractive sites
- Improve traffic circulation for vehicles and pedestrians (on private property as well as the street)
- Improve existing building appearance
- Improve signage and reduce visual clutter

These goals are based on the findings of the 1999 Ogden Avenue Commercial Corridor Master Plan and Village's Strategic Plan. Projects will be reviewed in the context of the recommendations contained within those documents. The categories described below will be used to judge applications.

Applications are judged on a qualitative basis. The OASIS Program is competitive and all applications will be judged against one another – regardless of the number of improvements proposed. The OASIS team will judge applications based on the number of features being improved by an application, the quality of those improvements and how those address the goals of the program. The best projects will be awarded a matching OASIS Grant. Each category contains examples of improvements that are identified as important components to fulfill the goals listed above. The successful project will include multiple elements of the categories below.

Category 1 – Site Improvements:

Examples of site improvements include consolidating driveway accesses to Ogden Avenue, removal of nonconforming parking spaces, installing stormwater management strategies, removing pavement and adding landscaping, providing cross-access between properties, installation of public sidewalks and installation of exterior site lighting.

Projects should seek to beautify the property and improve traffic circulation on site and on Ogden Avenue. The OASIS Team will give special consideration to projects at major intersections (Main St, Saratoga Ave, Fairview Ave and Lee Ave).

Improvement proposed: Yes No

Comments:

Category 2 – Landscaping:

Examples of landscaping include screening of off-street parking areas with shrubs, ornamental grasses and shrubs, installing landscaping to improve water run-off quality, installation of foundation plantings, installing ornamental fences, construction of outdoor café spaces and installation of shade trees.

Projects should seek to beautify the property and improve green space. The OASIS Team will give special consideration to landscaping projects that combine elements to improve on-site stormwater management.

Improvement proposed: Yes No

Comments:

Category 3 – Building Façade:

Examples of improvements to building facades include major renovations that update a building’s appearance (a “major renovation” affects more than 50% of existing exterior walls fronting Ogden Avenue or adjacent side streets), installation of a canopy or awning, adding transparent windows, adding pedestrian-friendly doors and shrubs, installing parapet walls and decorative cornices that hide mechanical equipment and installation of decorative lighting fixtures on the building.

Projects should seek to use high-quality materials and designs. Building façade improvements should enhance the commercial nature of the corridor and complement nearby high-quality buildings. Examples of high-quality buildings include: 42-76 Ogden Avenue, 217 Ogden Avenue, 225 Ogden Avenue, 400 Ogden Avenue, 401 Ogden Avenue, 639 Ogden Avenue, 807 Ogden Avenue, 1000 Ogden Avenue, 1148 Ogden Avenue, and 1601 Ogden Avenue.

Improvement proposed: Yes No

Comments:

Category 4 – Signs:

Examples of improvements to signage include removal of non-conforming signs and installation of code-compliant signs and removal of box-type wall signs and replacement with channel letter signage. Note: sign-only applications will not be funded until the third submission deadline. At that time, sign-only requests will only be funded after all other requests

The successful project will bring the property into compliance with the Village’s sign ordinance. Projects should seek to use high-quality materials and designs. The signage should be designed to enhance the business’ visibility from Ogden Avenue while removing visual clutter from the corridor.

Improvement proposed: Yes No

Comments:

Overall Project Comments:

OASIS Team Recommendation:

Grant Distribution

Interior Parcels less than 1 acre		Corner Parcels or Parcels Greater than 1 Acre or individual Tenant Spaces in Excess of 5,000 sq. ft.	
Type of Project	Eligible for a Grant Award up to One-Half the Cost of Work (total grant may not exceed \$50,000)	Type of Project	Eligible for a Grant Award up to One-Half the Cost of Work (total grant may not exceed \$75,000)
Signage Improvement (e.g. coordinated for retail center, single use buildings, & monument/site signage)	\$2,500 for parcels less than 100 ft. wide \$5,000 for parcels between 100 ft. and 259 ft. wide \$7,500 for parcels over 260 ft. wide	Signage Improvement (e.g. coordinated for retail center, single use buildings, & monument/site signage)	\$7,500
Landscape improvement	\$20,000	Landscape improvement	\$40,000
Site improvement	\$20,000	Site improvement	\$40,000
Façade Renovation (e.g. access, lighting, etc.)	\$10,000	Façade Renovation	\$15,000
Wall Signage for Single Tenant (only for business that were in operation before May 2005)	\$3,000	Wall Signage for Single Tenant (only for business that were in operation before May 2005)	\$3,000

Table 2: Grant Distribution

Notes:

1. Only exterior improvements to properties and buildings as described above will be eligible. Internal elements will not be considered. Exterior maintenance (e.g. painting, parking lot resurfacing, seal-coating, replacing dead landscaping, etc.) will not be considered. Some maintenance may be considered if it is an essential component of a project and is a permanent improvement to the property (e.g. tuck-pointing, replacing windows and doors)
2. Improvements to buildings, parking lots and uses which do not meet current zoning requirements will not be considered.
3. Improvements requiring zoning variations will be considered for project funding, however, zoning variation application will not be funded.

4. Grant awards up to \$15,000 will be approved by the Village Manager. Grant Award applications over \$15,000 will be the approved by the Village Council.
5. A bonus of 25% of the maximum grant award amount for particular project categories may be provided for projects combining multiple categories. For example, a 10,000 square foot tenant on a 1.5-acre lot proposing landscape improvements and façade improvements would be eligible for up to \$68,750 ($\$40,000 \times 1.25 + \$15,000 \times 1.25$) assuming a total project cost of \$137,500.
6. For single tenants in multi-tenant buildings, the maximum grant award for the tenant will be limited by the percentage of space the tenant occupies in the building. For example, if a tenant occupies 25% of a building on a parcel less than 1 acre in size, the maximum façade improvement grant award would be \$2,500.

OASIS Grant Overall Site Map

