



Oelwein Downtown Improvement Program

2026

The City of Oelwein has a program in the downtown that uses Tax Increment Financing (TIF) dollars to provide forgivable loans for improvements and business development in the downtown. Downtown Buildings are eligible for funding on renovation, reconstruction, updating, maintenance, façade improvement, and upper story housing. Downtown Buildings are properties within the Downtown TIF district. A map of this district is available upon request. Applicants will receive a forgivable five (5) year loan that will be forgiven on an annual basis. \$25,000 is available for projects that do not include upper story housing, and \$50,000 for projects that include upper story housing.

Applicants must show how the funds will be used and provide a detailed timeline. Funding request can range from \$5,000 to the full \$25,000 or \$50,000.

Applicants will be reviewed by the Oelwein Area Chamber and Development (OCAD) Housing Committee. The OCAD Housing Committee will provide recommendations to the City Council. The City Council will make the final decision in awarding the funds. The City reserves the right to not provide grants if the applicants do not meet the goals of the downtown improvement program. Should funding no longer be available through TIF or the city not receive adequate funding, the city will not provide funding for projects.

The City Council created this program to show how improvements can bring old buildings, new life. The City Council wants improvements to make each building unique. City Council is looking for applications that have a wow factor and will make an impact in the downtown. Applications which incorporate art and design are encouraged. Additional points will be provided to applicants that have professional plans and designs accompanied with their application.

Successful applications have the following:

- Contractor estimates or estimates showing cost of the project
- Pictures that show material that will be used for the improvements
- A clear understanding of the Downtown Central Business District Design Guidelines
 - <https://www.cityofoelwein.org/about/page/downtown-central-business-district-design-guidelines>
- Typed, clear, consistent, and concise

Applications are accepted starting in January of 2026 and are due February 19 at 4:30 PM CST to City Hall. They can be hand delivered to City Hall or emailed to dmulfinger@cityofoelwein.org.



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Name:	
Contact Information: (Email, Phone)	
Person or business receiving the funds:	
Business Address: (If different, please include mailing address too)	
Amount of funds Requested from the City Program:	
Cost Sharing from the Property Owner:	
Total Cost of the Project:	
Exterior/Façade Improvements:	



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Interior Improvements:	
Housing:	
Vision:	
Feasibility Plan:	
Awesomeness Factor:	



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Applicants are encouraged to attach supporting documents including, but not limited to pictures, timelines, professional quotes, history of buildings, and projected improvement photos.

The City will provide this loan to a successful applicant in one payment at the start of the project. Once the funding is approved, the applicant will have six (6) months to start their project. The applicant will have one year from the start of the project to complete the improvements. Failure to complete the improvements will require repayment of the loan to the City of Oelwein. The loan will be forgiven when all of the work is completed and inspected a year from the award date.

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Funds will be awarded once a project has started. Special exceptions can be made for projects which are occurring during application. Once funding is received, the applicant will sign a promissory note and a lien will be taken on their property for the duration of five years. Applicants may be required to provide proof of purchase and paid invoices from the project. The City of Oelwein will require re-payment of the loan should the applicant not start in time or complete their proposed project.

The City of Oelwein will require an inspection one year after awarding the funds. This inspection will be to ensure all improvements have been made. During the inspection the city will require a copy of receipts or checks that show how the downtown funds were spent.

Should the building owner sell, the loan will stay with the building and a new lien will be singed by the new owners. If the loan holder's improvements do not stay with the property, the loan holder must pay the city back in a repayment agreement signed off by the loan holder and the city.

Applicant Signature:	
Date:	



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The OCAD Housing Committee will score applications then provide a recommendation to City Council.

Scoring Matrix

	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points
Cost Sharing	None	1-50 percent	Greater than 50 percent	90-100 percent match
Exterior/Façade	No work completed on either	Minor work	Significant work	Complete refresh
Interior	No work completed on either	Minor work	Significant work	Complete refresh
Housing	No housing Option	Refresh	Complete remodel	Adding and a complete remodel
Vision	No vision	Can see the impact	Can see the future of the downtown	Can see the future of Oelwein and the program goals
Feasibility Plan	Unrealistic	Plausible	Success is possible	Success guaranteed
Awesomeness Factor	Not awesome	Pretty awesome	Really Awesome	Awesome Possum
Number of times applied and turned down	0	1-6	7-8	9-10

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