FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Town of Oakland Announces Awards to Three Local Businesses Through Inaugural Façade & Downtown Improvement Grant Program

OAKLAND, ME - June 25, 2026 – Launching its inaugural round of grant funding to support downtown revitalization, the Town of Oakland has awarded $25,000 to three local businesses. This financial support is distributed through the Oakland Façade & Downtown Improvement Grant Program (OFDIG) to directly spur business and facility investments and strengthen community vibrancy. Funded by the town's Downtown Tax-Increment Financing (TIF) District, OFDIG provides financial assistance for exterior building and site improvements that enhance the visual appeal, accessibility, and long-term vitality of the commercial center. Structured as a 1:1 required matching reimbursement program, this initial $25,000 grant allocation is expected to stimulate a total of $81,607 in capital improvements within the downtown district.

This new initiative builds upon recent investments and expanding businesses in the downtown district. This growing momentum includes the recent redevelopment and enhancements of the historic Bank Block building on Main Street (located at 46 Main St. and 48-52 Main St.). “These projects represent Oakland’s ongoing commitment to creating a vibrant, welcoming, and resilient downtown,” said Town Manager Kelly Pinney-Michaud. “Investments like these help ensure that our downtown continues to grow, evolve, and thrive.”

“The launch of Oakland’s first year of the Façade & Downtown Improvement Grant Program marks a major milestone for the community’s commercial core. With $81,607 in direct investment funded, this inaugural cycle is catalyzing new economic activity, stimulating revitalization, and strengthening the district’s long-term vibrancy,” said Garvan D. Donegan, President & CEO of the Central Maine Growth Council. “Representing the operations and management of the downtown TIF district, we will see firsthand how essential these grant programs are in providing the capital necessary for property owners - and business owners - to enhance their buildings and attract customers. This initiative is a critical economic development tool, highlighting the importance of place-based investment to attract new

enterprises and stimulate broader private capital investment throughout Oakland's commercial downtown core."

These grants were awarded following a competitive review process that evaluated applicants based on project readiness, community impact, and alignment with Oakland's downtown revitalization goals. To encourage widespread economic growth, the program awards bonus points to new businesses and investors. In future funding rounds, bonus points will also be given to businesses and property owners who have not yet received an award. The selected improvements reflect OFDIG's mission to help businesses reinvest in their storefronts, restore architectural character, and enhance the usability of their properties. Building on this initial success, the Town looks forward to making future façade and building improvement awards to continually increase the vibrancy of the downtown district.

2026 Grant Recipients & Project Summaries

Together, the following three businesses represent the first round of awarded funding from the OFDIG program. Each business is undertaking improvements that will collectively elevate Oakland's downtown experience for visitors and residents alike.

HB Insurance

Project: Façade Building Repainting

HB Insurance will receive OFDIG funding to repaint the front façade of their building. This project will refresh the property's appearance, contributing to a more cohesive and visually appealing downtown aesthetic while preserving the building's structural integrity.

"Thank you to the town of Oakland for this program. This investment helps our businesses maximize our investment and keep our building looking great for years to come." - Matt Marquis, CPCU Agency Principal, HB Insurance.

Maine-ly Docks

Project: Signage and Safety

Maine-ly Docks has been awarded funding to install a new free-standing roadside sign, a building-mounted sign, and install exterior security cameras. These updates will significantly improve customer visibility, enhance wayfinding, and bolster on-site safety—areas emphasized within OFDIG as essential to supporting business growth and creating a welcoming commercial corridor.

"We truly appreciate this opportunity and the confidence the Town has placed in our business. Enhanced signage and security will help us better serve our customers and create a more welcoming presence in the community. This support makes a real difference, and we're thankful for the chance to continue growing in Oakland." - Shawn Stevens, Owner, Maine-ly Docks.

Central Maine Footcare

Project: Signage, Awning, and Exterior Improvements

Central Maine Footcare will receive funding for a comprehensive series of improvements designed to strengthen both the aesthetics and signage of their property. The project includes re-siding the building's front façade, installation of a new awning, and relocation of the business sign to improve site circulation and parking functionality.

We are grateful to the Town of Oakland for their investment in the small business community. This grant will help us improve the appearance of our business." - Lisa Nelson, RN, BSN, CFCN, Founder, Central Maine Footcare.

More information, including eligibility, on the Oakland Façade & Downtown Improvement Grant Program may be viewed here: *https://oaklandme.gov/downtown-tif*

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