

**CITY OF EAST RIDGE, TN**  
**Building & Facade Improvement Grant Program**

**OVERVIEW & PURPOSE**

The City of East Ridge recognizes that a strong business district directly influences the overall health of the community by providing employment opportunities, public and private amenities, and goods and services to City residents and businesses.

The *purpose* of the Building & Facade Improvement Grant Program, (the "Program") which targets commercial district businesses, is to revitalize the City's central business corridor, beautify the center of East Ridge, and promote high-quality redevelopment in the City, all elements of the City's economic and community development strategy.

The Building & Facade Improvement Grant is intended to assist new & existing businesses and property owners in East Ridge within the commercial business district to make their property and business more attractive to both consumers and potential tenants.

The primary objective of the Building & Facade Improvement Grant is to remove blight by assisting commercial property owners with improving building appearance and by bringing grandfathered signs, parking and landscaping as well as internal equipment & finishes into conformance with current codes within the commercial business district corridor.

**Grant Program Funding**

The City of East Ridge budgets funds annually to finance the grant program. The grant program entails providing businesses with 50/50 matching grant funds up to \$10,000 per project for eligible projects such that businesses can apply for up to \$10,000 to be reimbursed under the grant program after the eligible project is completed and approved by the staff. No costs shall be reimbursed unless the activity occurs after an application has been submitted and approved.

Projects shall be accepted and approved on a first-come-first-serve basis and will be accepted until all available funds are allocated. The Building & Facade Improvement Grant Program is based on a fiscal year and will be available for application starting July 1 of each fiscal year.

Applications may be submitted throughout the year. Grants will be awarded and property owners notified within two (2) weeks of submitting an application.

**Eligible Applicants**

Eligible applicants will be applicants that are located in the commercial business district corridor (see-attached map for C-1/C-2 zoned bushiness). To see if your business is eligible, please call 423-867-7711 or come by City Hall, 1517 Tombras Avenue, East Ridge, TN 37412 during business hours.

Eligibility requirements are:

- If business is leased, the building/property owner must sign off on application and enter into the grant contract independent of any arrangements that a non-owner/business operator may make with the property owner.
- Businesses/buildings must meet current building inspection/code compliance at the time of application. Applicants that meet previous code regulations or "grandfathered" structure should meet existing code requirements once the project is completed .

- All real property taxes must be paid in full at the time of application.
- The business must have obtained an East Ridge Business License to operate within the City limits at the time that the application is received.
- The Program applies to business/commercial premises, whether occupied or not.

### **Ineligible Applicants**

Prohibited businesses include adult-oriented businesses, new construction projects, businesses operating from residential property or residential uses and any structure not in compliance with City codes and regulations.

A single business tenant located within a multiple tenant building with regards to façade work.

Businesses or properties owned by City employees or City officials are not eligible for grant funds.

### **Eligible Projects**

Projects that are eligible under the Building & Façade Improvement Grant program are:

- Masonry work – colors must be in the earth-tone family and sample colors/materials must be submitted at time of application or approved before application is submitted.
- Window & door replacement
- Awnings that meet adopted design standards.
- Roof Façade – if the roof can be seen as part of the Façade, it is eligible for funding. Roofs that are flat or cannot be seen as part of the Façade are not eligible.
- Signage – signage must meet City Code requirements. If signage is part of a multi-tenant building, all signs must match in element and look.  
**Note:** Unused pole/billboard signs must be removed as part of the project.
- Architectural Façade Renovation
- Improvements to ceilings & walls
- Installation or removal of fixed walls
- Internal architectural changes
- Interior and exterior lighting
- Permanent fixtures
- Aesthetic detailing
- ADA Improvements
- Installation of new HVAC systems (for buildings that never had one)

- Electrical and plumbing alterations for bringing a structure up to required codes
- Additional new construction to an existing structure for expansion

### **Ineligible Projects**

Projects that are ineligible to receive Building & Façade Improvement Grant Project funds are:

- General maintenance projects – i.e. leaky roof replacement, rotten/broken boards, brick, glass, painting of buildings, etc. – consideration will be given if the replacement elements are part of a paint/masonry project.
- Landscaping only – if a building does not meet the Façade Improvement Grant Program standards (color/materials), then a landscaping project is ineligible.
- Parking lot repairs and sealants only – parking lot improvements can be included with a landscape/paint/masonry project. If the building already meets Façade Improvement Grant program standards, then the landscape/parking lot project will be eligible for funding.
- These funds are not eligible for routine repairs & maintenance.

### **Design Guidelines**

Applicants must follow all architectural & design standards as adopted by the City of East Ridge.

### **Project Reimbursement**

Once City staff approves an eligible project, the applicant business owner and the City must execute a grant contract.

The total allowable matching reimbursement amount per project shall not exceed \$10,000.

Reimbursement shall be made only after the grant recipient has completed the eligible project and has incurred the eligible project costs and receipts properly submitted to the City of East Ridge Department of Finance and Administration.

Businesses may only be eligible for grant funds once every twenty-four (24) months.

### **REQUIRED DRAWINGS:**

Although small projects may not require a formal rendering (also referred to as an elevation), most often a drawing will be required for your project. Keep in mind that to give your application full consideration, City staff needs to understand definitively what you are proposing to do to your building and site. Having a conceptual drawing, and particularly one in color, will assist with this and will help facilitate the review and approval of your application.

### **PERMIT INFORMATION:**

#### **Building Permits**

Permits are required for all additions, alterations and new construction, as well as many types of repair work. For example, replacing window frames & windows, or a change in the number of doors and windows, requires a building permit. Building permits must be clearly displayed at the

construction site. Building permits are issued at East Ridge City Hall, 1517 Tombras Avenue, East Ridge, TN 37412 Monday-Friday 8am-5pm, holidays excepted.

### **Land Development Reviews & Permits**

Projects involving site work or a change-of-use may require additional permits. Call the Codes/Building Inspection Department at 867-7711 or visit City Hall at 1517 Tombras Avenue, East Ridge, TN 37412 Monday-Friday 8 a.m. -5 p.m., except holidays.

### **Sign Permits**

All new signs and most sign alterations require a permit. Information about sign permits can be obtained by calling the Codes/Building Inspection Department at 867-7711 or visit City Hall at 1517 Tombras Avenue, East Ridge, TN 37412 Monday-Friday 8 a.m. -5 p.m., except holidays.

### **Fire Prevention Inspections**

Fire inspections are required for all projects and may be required for your specific project. Project owners are encouraged to schedule the inspection before work commences and particularly if the building has not been inspected in the last 12 months. Contact the Codes/Building Inspection Department at 867-7711 to schedule an inspection.

### **BUILDING & FACADE IMPROVEMENT GRANT FUNDS APPLICATION PROCESS**

No improvements are to begin prior to City of East Ridge approval. Improvements started before board approval will not be reimbursed.

1. Completed application packets are to be submitted to the City of East Ridge. Email, mail or hand deliver the application with all attachments to:

Melissa Mahoney  
City of East Ridge  
1517 Tombras Ave.  
East Ridge, TN 37412  
[mmahoney@eastridgetn.gov](mailto:mmahoney@eastridgetn.gov)

2. Design Review Committee staff will review application for consistency with Building & Facade Improvement Grant Program criteria.

3. Award of funding is subject to approval by the City of East Ridge.

### **REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS:**

1. If approved by the City of East Ridge, property owner may then proceed to begin work (proper City of East Ridge building permits required before any reimbursement is processed).

2. Upon full completion of the improvements, property owner should deliver copies of any eligible project receipts for the improvements listed on the initial application to the City of East Ridge.

3. Receipts must clearly demonstrate that the contractors and/or suppliers have been paid in full by the applicant. Each receipt must clearly cite the applicant as the payor. If the applicant's name is not listed on the receipt as such, any costs contained therein will not be reimbursed. Additional improvements not approved as a part of the original application and contract will not be reimbursed.

4. Copy of the release of contractor lien on property, if applicable.
5. Property owner must provide copies of all applicable City of East Ridge building permits and completed inspection reports obtained for improvements when submitting receipts to ensure that the status with the Building and Codes Inspection Division is in compliance.
6. Any documentation submitted by the property owner becomes public record and will be kept on file with the City of East Ridge.

**CITY OF EAST RIDGE  
BUILDING & FACADE  
IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM  
APPLICATION**  
*(PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT)*

Applicant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Property Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Description of Planned Improvements** (You may attach additional typed/printed sheets if needed):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Total Cost of Project:** \_\_\_\_\_

**East Ridge Funds Requested:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDITIONAL SITE DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED**

Please attach the following:

\_\_\_\_ Color sample(s) specifying exterior surface treatment.

\_\_\_\_ Color photographs of subject site features and adjacent properties and buildings.

For signage, attach the following:

\_\_\_\_ Dimensions, lettering style and sizes, materials and mounting details.

\_\_\_\_ Color samples and colors noted on drawings.

\_\_\_\_ Lighting details including type, intensity and mounting specifications.

\_\_\_\_ Building elevations for all wall signs-illustrating dimensioned location of sign.

\_\_\_\_ Survey showing location of free-standing sign. Landscape drawings must also be provided indicating size, type and location of material for all free-standing signs.

\_\_\_\_ Photos of signs on abutting and subject properties.

*Please Read: By signing below, I hereby acknowledge that I have read and understand the instructions associated with this program. I understand that if I fail to abide by the instructions, my application may be disqualified and repayment of some or all funds shall be required per provisions herein. I further acknowledge that I understand that funding for the Façade Improvement Grant Program is limited. As such, there is a risk that even if my application meets all requirements, I may not be approved for funding in this program year.*

**Signature & Date** \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date

**END OF APPLICATION**

PROPERTY OWNER AUTHORIZATION PAGE

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am the owner of the land that is subject of this application, and I hereby authorize the applicant/agent, \_\_\_\_\_, to make this application and to act on my behalf in regards to this application.

Dated this \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Day) (Month) (Year)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Owner

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Owner

\*If an agent is authorized in the above section, all correspondence will be sent to said owner.

**CHECKLIST**

Before you submit the application, verify that you have attached/completed each of the following. Incomplete applications will not be considered for funding.

- \_\_\_\_ Copy of Deed/Proof of Ownership
- \_\_\_\_ Copy of business licensee of business operating on the property
- \_\_\_\_ Estimates/quotes/bids for all costs associated with the project from a licensed architect, engineer or contractor ("Sweat equity" hours will not be credited).
- \_\_\_\_ Complete, written description of all rehabilitation work planned (typed or printed).
- \_\_\_\_ Additional site documentation requested in application.
- \_\_\_\_ Proof of insurance coverage (Please ask your insurance agent for the Insurance Coverages Form).
- \_\_\_\_ Signature and date on application.

**REMEMBER:**

**Do not begin any improvements prior to the City of East Ridge approval and building permit issuance.**