

# FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM GUIDELINES

## PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Design changes that take place at downtown commercial properties are a critical part of a successful revitalization strategy. Customers want to shop in an attractive and inviting environment. Property owners want to generate adequate rents from their commercial properties while lessees want to have pride in their well-designed and maintained place of business. The City of Eden Economic Development Corporation (EEDC) wishes to maintain and improve the quality of life for its citizens by fostering economically viable commercial districts. In order to reach this goal the EEDC has established a Façade Improvement Program. This program will be initiated through the EEDC and will offer technical and financial assistance to property owners seeking to renovate or restore building façades in the downtown area, informally known as “the square”.

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Eligible participants can receive one five-year matching grant per building. The grant, in an amount up to \$3,000 and equal to 75% of the total cost of eligible improvements, depreciates at a rate of 20% per year if the building remains in active use or available for market based sale, lease or rent. Over a five-year period of such use and/or availability, the grant will be 100% forgiven. The grant must be secured by mortgage on the subject property and available properties must agree to be listed as such on the EEDC's website. If the property remains vacant for more than two (2) months after renovations are complete, the EEDC maintains the right to request the property owner to show evidence of active marketing efforts.

Within the grant period, the property must maintain compliance with all applicable city codes. The EEDC maintains the right to request any balance of funds be returned if violations are not corrected as per order from the City of Eden.

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

All improvements must comply with standards set forth in the City's Zoning Ordinance, the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Properties, Façade Improvement Program Guidelines, and all applicable Building Codes. Improvements to buildings without significant architectural features shall be carefully designed and constructed to be in scale with the existing structure. Buildings appearing to have significant architectural features that have been covered or removed are required to, as closely as possible, restore and maintain those features. ADA requirements must be observed.

Applicants for participation in the program must meet the following eligibility criteria.

- Applicants must be property owners.
- Commercial properties must be up to date on all taxes and property insurance must be held by the owner prior to participation in the program.

## ELIGIBLE IMPROVEMENTS

Removal of elements, which cover original architectural details

Removal of billboards and obsolete signs and hardware

Repair of original architectural details

Replacement of original architectural details

Window replacement and window framing (must match original in size, style and scale)

Removal of handicapped barriers (e.g.: steps)

New signs and awnings

Cleaning, repainting and repair of buildings

Exterior lighting

Roof replacement

Gutters and downspouts

Correction of code violations

Other improvements can be made if they meet the objectives of the program and have prior written approval of the EEDC.

### INELIGIBLE IMPROVEMENTS

Interior improvements

Removal of architecturally important features

Removal of architectural features

New construction and additions

Sidewalk repairs other than those required for conformance with ADA requirements

Planting or landscaping

Projects underway prior to June 1, 2009 or started prior to an executed agreement

### SIGNAGE

Signage is an integral component of storefront design. It should be designed to compliment the architectural integrity of the façade and fit within architecturally allotted space. Because signage is an architecturally sensitive element, the EEDC or its designee must approve all signs. In addition, the following signs are ineligible under the program: interior lit signs, exterior neon signs, oversized signs (signs not in proportion with the façade or allotted space).

### PROCEDURE

The application process presented below should facilitate case processing.

1. Applicant files an application with the EEDC. Application must include a budget estimate, an income statement from the responsible parties, and a detailed description of the proposed work. Dependent upon the extent of the proposed work, construction drawings may be requested by the EEDC or its designee.
2. Eligibility for financing is determined by the Economic Development Coordinator before drawings are presented to the EEDC for approval. Applicant must be present at an EEDC regular meeting. Application will not be approved without EEDC approval of façade improvements.

3. Upon EEDC's approval of design, the applicant must meet with the Economic Development Coordinator and should obtain **three** construction cost estimates. The lowest, responsible bidder will be considered for the project. City of Eden bidding procedures will be followed.
4. Applicant selects a contractor.
5. City/ Owner contracts and mortgage are signed at the office of the Economic Development Coordinator.
6. Owner/ Contractor contracts are signed, with copies provided to the Economic Development Coordinator.
7. Once construction begins, a Façade Improvement Program sign should be installed at project location during construction.
8. The Economic Development Coordinator will conduct a final site inspection. Any changes in the approved work must have prior approval of the EEDC.
9. Applicant must submit cost documentation (invoices, etc.) to the Economic Development Coordinator for reimbursement. Payments are to be made in increments according to agreement.
10. The Economic Development Coordinator certifies to the EEDC that improvements comply with the submitted and approved plans and specification.
11. File closeout of the application upon completion of improvement.

#### FUNDING AVAILABILITY

The EEDC has determined that the Façade Improvement Program will promote new and expanded business development in the downtown area, informally known as "the square". Type B sales tax money has been budgeted for the Façade Improvement Program. The funding is limited and the application will be considered on a first come, first served basis. Should funding for the Program be reduced any time in the future, the EEDC reserves the right to discontinue or modify funding for this program.

#### CHANGES TO THE FAÇADE AFTER COMPLETION

Participants must agree not to change or alter the improved façade without prior written approval from the EEDC for five years from the date of Final Closeout of the application.

#### APPLICATION AND INFORMATION

If you wish to participate in the Façade Improvement Program, or would like additional information, please contact the Eden Economic Development Coordinator at (325) 869-2211.