

# Façade Improvement Grant Program Policy

## I. Overview

The goal of the Hutchins EDC Façade Improvement Grant Program is to encourage the rehabilitation, enhancement, and restoration of building façades of existing businesses. This aims to stimulate business and commercial activity, strengthen workforce development, increase tourism, and meet other priorities established by the Hutchins City Council. The program offers a reimbursement of a *Matching Grant* of up to \$10,000 for eligible façade and exterior improvements in the City of Hutchins.

Funding for this program is at the discretion of the Hutchins City Council and Hutchins EDC, and projects must meet the criteria outlined in this policy. Applicants must comply with the minimum requirements below and any additional requirements set by the HEDC Board of Directors and City Council. Appendix A contains definitions and relevant city contacts.

## II. Project Eligibility Requirements

- The building/site must be within the city limits of Hutchins.
- The property must be free of city liens or delinquent property taxes.
- The applicant must not be past due on sales tax remittance.
- The building/site must be for commercial use in non-residential zoning districts. Residential buildings are not eligible unless they are converted to commercial use with an approved Site Plan.
- The building/site must not have received grant funding within five years prior to the application date. Buildings with multiple tenants are eligible for one grant every twelve months following the completion of the previous grant.
- A complete application (Appendix B) must be received and verified by HEDC staff before construction begins. Construction started prior to the HEDC's grant consideration and approval is at the applicant's own risk and is ineligible for reimbursement.

## III. Eligible Improvements

Eligible improvements must be exterior, visible to the public, and comply with zoning design standards and all state and local requirements. These improvements include:

- Façade facelift: painting, trim work, cladding
- Front porch additions and enhancements
- New or enhanced attached signage and/or awnings
- Detached signage
- Exterior lighting
- New storefronts
- Window replacement and window framing
- Hardscape improvements like sidewalk pavers, concrete off-street parking, fencing, and lamp posts
- Landscaping improvements including design, installation, and permanent maintenance components (e.g., irrigation systems), subject to an ongoing maintenance agreement (see Appendix C)
- Permanent art, including sculptures and murals

Ineligible improvements include interior improvements, roof repairs, new building additions (except porches and entry features), and outdoor furnishings not permanently affixed. Regular building

maintenance and improvements addressing outstanding code violations are also ineligible unless included in a broader project scope.

#### **IV. Application Requirements**

- Meet all eligibility requirements in Section II.
- Complete the grant application (Appendix B), signed by the applicant and the property owner if different.
- Provide a written cost proposal from a tradesperson, contractor, or supplier registered with the City of Hutchins. Unregistered individuals must submit a "Contractor Qualification Form."
- Include exterior photos of the building and areas to be improved.
- Provide a written description of the proposed improvement or art and its impact on the overall project.
- Submit drawings or renderings of proposed improvements. Art proposals must include an art portfolio and cost proposal.

#### **V. Submittal and Review Process**

Applicants are encouraged to meet with city staff before applying. City staff will review applications for completion, eligibility, and considerations outlined in Section VI.

Only complete applications for eligible projects will be forwarded to the Hutchins Economic Development Board (HEDC) and Hutchins City Council. Incomplete applications will expire after six months, starting from the date of the most recent staff correspondence. A new application must be submitted to resume activity.

The HEDC considers requests and recommends grant awards and fund allocations to the City Council. The HEDC meets on the third Monday of each month, and complete applications must be received at least ten business days prior to the meeting. The City Council will consider the request at their first meeting following the HEDC meeting.

#### **VI. Considerations for Grant Awards and Fund Allocation**

Grant applications will be reviewed based on:

- Availability of grant funds for the fiscal year
- Compliance with policy terms and conditions
- Anticipated economic impact on Hutchins' revitalization and redevelopment
- Expected increase in taxable property value and economic activity
- Degree of visual improvement to the storefront and streetscape
- Design and quality of the proposed work and its compatibility within its business district
- Applicant's contribution to project costs outside the grant amount
- Use of Hutchins businesses in the project

Additional considerations may be considered by the HEDC on a case-by-case basis.

#### **VII. TXDoT Highway Signage Reimbursement**

The Façade Improvement Grant Program also offers a reimbursement grant of up to \$2,000 for TXDoT highway signage. To be eligible for this grant, the applicant must develop artwork and have a contract with TXDoT. The \$2,000 grant is provided as a reimbursement for the costs associated with TXDoT highway signage.

## **VIII. Approved Grant Process**

- An Economic Development Program Agreement (Chapter 380 Agreement) will outline the grant terms approved by the City Council and must be signed by the grantee and property owner if different.
- Changes to the approved grant request must be approved by the City Council.
- Obtain appropriate permits before construction, and all contractors must be registered with the City of Hutchins.
- Construction must begin within 90 days of grant approval and be completed within one year. Extensions for construction commencement and completion may be requested from the Director of Economic Development.
- Payment will be made after satisfactory completion of work according to the Chapter 380 Agreement terms, with submission of receipts, notarized lien releases, and photos of improvements.
- Payment will be a reimbursement not exceeding the amount specified in the Chapter 380 Agreement.
- A completed W-9 Form is required before payment.
- Improvements must remain permanent fixtures for at least 24 months without the City of Hutchins' consent.

## **Appendices**

The appendices provide administrative tools to streamline the application process. City staff may update appendices as necessary without City Council approval.

- Appendix A – Façade Improvement Grant Application

# City of Hutchins Façade Improvement Grant Program Application

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## **I. Applicant Information**

**A. Applicant Name:**

**B. Business Name:**

**C. Street Address:**

**D. Mailing Address:**

**E. Work Phone:**

**F. Cell Phone:**

**G. Email:**

## **II. Property Owner Information (if different from Applicant)**

**A. Owner Name:**

**B. Business Name:**

**C. Street Address:**

**D. Mailing Address:**

**E. Work Phone:**

**F. Cell Phone:**

**G. Email:**

## **III. Property and Project<sup>4</sup> Description**

**A. Address/Location of property to be considered for the City of Hutchins Façade Improvement Matching Grant Program:**

**B. Is the building currently occupied by a business?**

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, please list the business name(s) and Certificate of Occupancy numbers below.

**C. Is this a residential building that is being converted for commercial use?**

Yes ☐ No ☐

Please note: if a residential property is being converted to commercial use, a site plan is required. If a site plan has been submitted, please list the permit number below.

**D. Have building plans been submitted to the city for the project?**

Yes ☐ No ☐

Please note: building plans are required for some improvements but may not be necessary for all projects. If building plans have been submitted, please list the permit number below.

**E. Has the applicant and/or property owner been a recipient of this Façade Improvement Matching Grant before?**

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, please list the property address(es) and year(s) the grant was awarded below.

**F. Are there any current code enforcement actions, tax liens, or judgment liens against the property?**

Yes ☐ No ☐

**G. Grant Request**

1. Total Project Cost (for Façade Improvements Only): \$
2. Eligible Grant Request (50% of the eligible improvement up to \$10,000): \$

**H. Project Description**

*(Please describe the improvements that will be made to the existing property and how the award of this grant impacts the project. 1,000 words max. You may submit on a separate sheet of paper.)*

**I. What is the anticipated start and end date for the project? (Month/Year)**

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Start Date:

End Date:

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## Application Checklist

I, the applicant, verify that I have completed the following items to be considered for the City of Hutchins Façade Improvement Grant. I understand that the grant will not be processed if all items below are not met.

- ☐ Complete Façade Improvement Grant application.
- ☐ Written cost proposal with itemized improvements.
- ☐ Exterior photos of the building before any improvements have been made.
- ☐ Drawings or renderings of proposed improvements (proposed color palette requested, if drawings or renderings are not colored).
- ☐ Artist Portfolio and Art Renderings, if applicable.
- ☐ The proposed improvements have not been completed prior to receipt and verification of a complete application by city staff.

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## DISCLAIMER

I acknowledge that I understand the terms of the City of Hutchins Façade Improvement Grant Program, and it is my intent to meet the specified terms of this application if approved. I understand further that this project is approved for matching grant reimbursement only in strict accordance with the approved plans that are attached to this application and hereby made part of this agreement. I further understand that change orders on the work in progress require approval by the City of Hutchins City Council and that failure to comply with this agreement may jeopardize receipt of grant funds.

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**Applicant Signature:**

**Date:**

**Property Owner Signature:**

**Date:**

*(if different from applicant)*

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## Information Below to be Filled Out by City Staff Only

**Date Received:**

**Staff Initials:**

**Application**

Complete ☐

Incomplete ☐

**Missing Items:**