

# 2023-2024 Main Street Facade Grant Program Guidance

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## Main Street Façade Grant Program Guidelines & Application

### Purpose:

The objective of this program is intended to enhance existing façade structures in the Rio Grande City Main Street Commercial District by providing financial assistance to property owners and business operators and encourage restoration and utility of commercial property in the downtown district. This program is funded by the Rio Grande City Economic Development Corporation.

### Program Details:

A matching grant of up to \$5,000 will be provided for façade projects including, but not limited to:

- Incorporation of exterior façade (front of the building) visual characteristics that add to the visitor/or patron experience.
- Painting the exterior of the building.
- Awnings and canopies meeting the requirements of the Main Street Commercial District.
- Replacement of windows and/or doors meeting the requirements of the Main Street Commercial District. Signage may be considered but must be reviewed.
- Ineligible costs: awnings with logos, outdoor seating, benches, fencing, landscaping, lighting *(unless part of overall façade project). (Other ineligible costs to be determined by the City).*

**Grant Limitation** -- All façade improvements must be complete within ninety (90) days of the Board's approval. Failure to complete the façade improvement within ninety (90) days makes the project ineligible for the façade grant, terminates the grant and the grant will not be funded.

### Financial Assistance:

**Important: Project cost incurred prior to receiving the RGC EDC Board of Directors approval is NOT eligible for reimbursement.**

Projects that qualify may receive a grant with a maximum reimbursement of \$5,000 towards the total project cost. The grant is a 50% matching grant.

Example:

Total façade project cost:	\$10,000
Façade Program share:	\$5,000
Property owner/tenant:	\$5,000
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<b>Total façade project:</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>

- Total project cost may exceed programs portion – **project grant will receive no more than \$5,000.**
- The monies are distributed via reimbursement. All eligible work must be completed according to information submitted and approved in the original application. Vendor invoices must be returned along with verification of payment from the business or property owner.
- An inspection by the City of Rio Grande City is required to ensure the work has been completed satisfactorily.

The number of grants awarded each fiscal year (FY) will depend on the availability of funds and total number of project applicants.

#### **Qualifications:**

- Property shall be used for business and located within the Rio Grande City Main Street Commercial District. Priority consideration shall be applied to properties on Main or 2nd Streets.
- Applicant shall be the owner of the property or the business owner who will need to have the property owner's written approval.
- Be in active operation or open for business within 90 days of grant approval, and in good standing and current with City of Rio Grande City required permits; utilities; sales and tax permits.
- Maintain a minimum number of employees for effective business operations.
- Engaged in business activity that is legal under city and state law .
- Applicants who are currently under agreement for an EDC grant or who have previously received an EDC grant must satisfactorily complete those terms before applying for a new grant.

#### **Eligible Improvements:**

- Repairing original exterior architectural details
- Repairing and replacement of original windows, doors, and trim
- Cleaning and/or repointing of surface brick or stone
- Repainting of brick, stone or cement
- Removing paint from brick or stone
- Restoration or replication of signage
- Awnings
- Exterior lighting
- Roofing visible from street level
- *Murals and Art & Design Elements*

#### **Ineligible Improvements:**

- Project improvements which are underway or started prior to an executed agreement **are NOT eligible** under any circumstances to participate in the Main Street Facade Grant Program.

- Interior improvements
- Removal of original or architecturally important features
- Plantings or landscaping

### **Application Process:**

The application process presented below has been streamlined to facilitate rapid case processing.

1. Confirm the building is located in the eligible area within the RGC Main Street District.
2. Determine whether the project meets all criteria within this application & guidelines.
3. Gather required documents and supporting application material.
4. Fill out the Application in this packet, attach all required materials.
5. Sign and submit complete application to:

**Rio Grande City Economic Development Corporation**  
**Attn: Rio Grande City Main Street Program**  
**5332 E. US Hwy 83 Ste. B**  
**Rio Grande City, Texas 78582**

6. Façade applications are reviewed by the RGC Main Street Advisory Board to determine applicability, eligibility and scoring.
7. Verified applications go to Rio Grande City EDC Board meeting for approval.
8. The Rio Grande City EDC office informs the applicant of project approval and availability of funds.
9. Applicant requests up to three (3) estimates from contractors to perform work. In-kind service is not an allowable use.
10. Applicant selects a contractor.
11. Any changes to the original plans must have prior approval from the Rio Grande City EDC.
12. Contractor completes project in compliance with the submitted plan and Grant Program.
13. Applicant submits the Certificate of Occupancy, cost documentation (paid invoices, receipts, canceled checks) to the Rio Grande City EDC office.
14. The Rio Grande City EDC issues reimbursement to the applicant.
15. The file is closed and the Rio Grande City EDC office tracks the project requirements for two (2) years.

### ***Free Exterior Design Services***

Façade projects located within the Rio Grande City Main Street District, are eligible to receive a free exterior design drawing by a certified designer. This service is offered via the Texas Main Street Association. For additional information of these services, please contact the Rio Grande City EDC office at (956) 487-3476.

### **Application Scoring:**

Priority will be given to properties located within the City's commercial corridor, historically significant properties, vacant and underutilized properties, deteriorating properties in need of repair, tourism, cultural and public use properties, job creation projects, and mixed-use developments.

### **Applications & Deadlines:**

A completed Grant Program Application must be submitted along with an exterior photo of the building, a cost estimate, project narrative and scope of work to be performed. Applications will become available on October 1st through May 1st of each year at the Rio Grande City EDC office at 5332 E US Highway 83, Ste. B, Rio Grande City, Texas. Applications will be accepted as long as program funds are available. Projects must be completed and original receipts received at the Rio Grande City EDC office by August 1 so that grant reimbursement may be made in a timely manner.

### **Reimbursement of Funds:**

Applicants must apply for the grant before restoration or renovation work has begun. **No grants will be considered for improvements already performed.** If there is a hazardous situation that needs immediate work, please contact the Rio Grande City EDC office before beginning. Awards will be administered as a reimbursement once the project has been completed as agreed upon, and paid receipts are supplied to the Rio Grande City EDC.

### **Changes to Redevelopment & Use, and Recapture Clause:**

Participants must agree not to change or alter improved renovations without prior written approval from the Rio Grande City EDC office for two (2) years from the date of the applicant signing the facade agreement. The property must be put in commercial use within 90 days, if not already, and remain in active commercial use during the two (2) year period. Notification of changes in occupancy or use must be made to the Rio Grande City EDC office. If a change in use occurs and the property is not used for commercial purposes for longer than the 180 day period, then the following recapture clause may apply.

**Property not occupied for 180 days = payback 100%**

Applicants receiving funds from the Business Grant Program are encouraged to maintain ownership of said property for two (2) years immediately following the improvements. If they do not, the following recapture clause may apply.

**Property and/or business sold within 2 years = payback 25%**

**Property and/or business sold within 1 years = payback 50%**









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By signing below, the Applicant understands and agrees to the following:

1. All information contained in this application, the attached exhibits and other materials submitted in connection with this application are true and accurate to the best of the business owner's knowledge. Applicant understands and agrees that false or untruthful information may be grounds for the Rio Grande City EDC to stop processing this application or to withdraw any approval previously obtained based in whole or in part on such false or untruthful statements.
2. The Rio Grande City EDC is under no obligation to approve the request contained in the application. No promises of approval are conveyed with the acceptance of this application.
3. All tax obligations to the City of Rio Grande City are current.
4. The business is currently in good standing with the City, and has no pending municipal code violations.
5. The business is not currently occupying the property without a lease in place or proof of property ownership.
6. The APPLICANT hereby certifies that the APPLICANT does not and will not knowingly employ an undocumented worker. An "undocumented worker" shall mean an individual who, at the time of employment, is not (a) lawfully admitted for permanent residence to the United States; or (b) authorized under the law to be employed in that manner in the United States. APPLICANT understands and agrees that if, after receiving a Grant, APPLICANT is convicted of a violation under 8 U.S.C. Section 1324a(f), the APPLICANT shall be required to reimburse to the Rio Grande City EDC the grant amount received. Payments must be paid in full within thirty (30) days after the date of written notification by the Rio Grande City EDC. The form of such payment shall be a cashier's check or money order, made payable to the Rio Grande City Economic Development Corporation. The Rio Grande City EDC has the right to recover court costs and reasonable attorney's fees as a result of any civil action required to recover such repayment.
7. The applicant agrees not to begin any improvements for which it seeks reimbursement until it is first approved by the Rio Grande City EDC.
8. The applicant understands any amendment to this application must not be performed before it is presented to the Rio Grande City EDC Board of Directors for its approval.

