

Neighborhood Empowerment Zone Program (NEZ)

Promote housing, economic development and quality services in Fort Worth.



Background

Chapter 378 of the Texas Local Government Code, effective since May 1999, authorizes municipalities to create NEZs and provide tax and other incentives to promote affordable housing and economic development, and improve the quality of social services, education, or public safety for residents of the NEZ. Pursuant to this law, the Fort Worth City Council created the NEZ program in 2001 to encourage redevelopment activities in Fort Worth's central city, particularly target areas such as commercial corridor urban villages.

Eligibility to Apply for NEZ Certification

- The property/project location must be in a NEZ
- Owner/developer must submit a complete NEZ application to the City
- Owner/developer must not be delinquent in paying property taxes for any property owned by them
- Owner/developer must not have any City liens filed against any property owned by them
- Rehabilitation projects must equal 30% of the TAD appraised value of the improvements

Incentives Available in a NEZ

Municipal Property Tax Abatement

The following properties/development projects **may** qualify for municipal property tax abatements if approved by City Council:

- Owner-occupied single family property
- Single family development project to be owner occupied
- Multi-family development project
- Commercial, industrial or community facilities development project
- Mixed-use development project

Fee Waivers

The following fees are waived for **NEZ certified projects**:

- Building permit fees (including plans review and inspections)
- Plat application fee
- Board of Adjustment application fee
- Demolition fee
- Structural moving fee
- Community Facility Agreement (CFA) application fee
- Zoning application fee
- Street and utility easement vacation application fee
- Ordinance Inspection fee
- Consent/Encroachment Agreement Application fee
- Transportation Impact fee
- Urban Forestry Application fee
- Sign Permit fees

Impact Fee Waivers

The following impact fees are waived for **NEZ certified projects**:

- Water and wastewater impact fees 100% for single family and multi family, up to \$55,000 or equivalent to two 6inch meters, whichever is less for commercial, industrial, mixed-use or community facility projects.

Release of City Liens

The following City liens may be released for **NEZ certified properties or projects**:

- Weed liens
- Demolition liens
- Board-up/open structure liens
- Paving liens
- ◆ **All other City liens will not be waived.**

Timeline and Fees

- The certification process takes approximately 14 to 21 business days from the receipt of a **complete** application packet. The certification process includes checking taxes and liens and completing the Public Notification requirement.
- There is a \$25.00 non refundable application fee to apply for NEZ incentives.
- All requests for tax abatement are processed **after** NEZ project certification and must go before the City Council for a vote. House Bill 3143 took effect on September 1, 2019, which requires at least 30 days advance notice be given of the tax abatement. Due to compliance with HB 3143, the **minimum time** to process a tax abatement to be on the City Council agenda for vote is 12 to 14 weeks after the date of certification. Applicants requesting tax abatement may not submit for a building permit until the abatement has been approved by the City Council and the applicant has signed a contract.
- There is a non refundable tax abatement application fee of \$100.00 per single family house or 0.5% of the capital improvement budget, minimum \$200, maximum \$2,000 for all other development projects.

Design Guidelines

All applications for NEZ incentives must meet the following design requirements for certification.

- No metal buildings except for industrial projects.
- All new construction projects must contain 70% masonry product.
- Exceptions to the masonry product will be made at the City's discretion for design district overlays (where applicable) and approved planned development projects.
- Compliance with design guidelines for Council adopted NEZ Strategic Plans is required for certification.
- Attached garages for new single family homes may not extend more than 4 feet past the front building wall.

What if I Don't Want to Apply?

If you do not wish to apply for NEZ incentives owners/developers may fill out and sign an Opt Out form.

Ineligible Projects

The following Projects or Businesses are not eligible for any NEZ incentives.

- Sexually Oriented Businesses
- Non-residential mobile structures
- Stand alone bars
- Single family investor owned projects
- Package stores or liquor stores
- Projects to be constructed on property purchased or to be purchased under contract for deed.

NEZ Application Intake Checklist

This checklist must be attached to the NEZ application at time of submittal

Note to Applicant:

Please be advised that all New Construction must adhere to the NEZ Design Guidelines per the NEZ policy. Some addresses may also be located within a Strategic Plan Area. Those areas have additional design requirements. For more information on Design Guidelines and Strategic Plans, please visit <http://fortworthtexas.gov/neighborhoods/NEZ/>

NEZ Area (Please circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 6

Strategic Plan Area (if applicable) _____

The above items can be located at <http://oneaddress.fortworthtexas.gov/>

Applicant Initials	Staff Initials
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Completed and signed application (including Zoning sign off)

*If the property is owned by a corporation, corporation papers noting all principles, partners and registered agents is required *

\$25.00 application fee (Non-refundable)

Proof of ownership such as:

- A warranty deed
- Purchase agreement signed by both the seller and the buyer
- Affidavit of ownership, probated will or evidence of site control such as option to buy
- A registered Warranty Deed is required for applications that are applying for Tax Abatement.

Itemized construction budget for all projects

Plans no larger than 11x17 showing dimensions and square footage of the following:

- Site plan with structure or proposed structure
- Floor plan (existing and proposed if different)
- Elevations (North, South, West and East View for New Construction)
- Elevations effected by the project are required for Rehabilitations

These plans will be retained by staff and cannot be used for Building Permit submittal

Submitted plans meet NEZ Guidelines or applicable Strategic Plan Guidelines? _____

List of Properties (By address) owned by the owner/developer

If no additional properties are owned within the City of Fort Worth, please check here



Application# _____

City of Fort Worth Neighborhood Empowerment Zone (NEZ) Application for Incentives

Applicant Information

Property Owner/Developer

Address:

Phone:

_____ **Email:** _____

Contact:

(If different)

Phone:

_____ **Email:** _____

Project Information

NEZ certifications are project and owner specific. Please describe your project: _____

Project Type

- Single Family
 Multi- Family
 Commercial
 Industrial
 Community Facilities
 Mixed-Use

Please be advised if the project address is zoned as a designated historical property (HC) and your project consists of new construction or exterior renovations, approval of your project is required prior to NEZ application submittal. Written approval from the Historic and Cultural Landmarks Commission (HCLC) must be attached to the NEZ application. For questions or further information concerning historic projects, please contact the HCLC at (817) 392-8000

Project Address:

Legal Description:

New Construction / Addition:

	YES	NO		YES	NO
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	Remodel / Rehab:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Total New Sq. Ft.

Total Development Cost:

For a single family project, will the NEZ certified property be occupied by the property owner as a primary residence?

YES NO

If you selected No, please specify if this property will be sold to a homeowner as a primary residence or used as rental property. _____

If your project is a Commercial or Mixed Use project, please list all specific uses that are being proposed:

Incentives

Do you wish to apply for a Municipal Property Tax abatement for this project?

YES NO

If the above answer is yes, please contact the City of Fort Worth Neighborhood Services Department at (817) 392-7316 or visit <http://fortworthtexas.gov/neighborhoods/NEZ/> for additional information. **Tax Abatements are processed after NEZ project certification and must go before the City Council for a vote. House Bill 3143 took effect on September 1, 2019, which requires at least 30 days advance notice be given of the tax abatement. Due to compliance with HB 3143, the minimum time to process a tax abatement to be on the City Council agenda for vote is 12 to 14 weeks after the date of certification. Applicants requesting tax abatement may not submit for a building permit until the abatement has been approved by the City Council and the applicant has signed a contract.**



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Do you wish to apply for a release of NEZ Policy eligible City liens? YES NO

Weed, Paving, Demolition and Board Up / Open Structure liens may be released for qualifying projects.

For Zoning Office Use Only

Will a Zoning Change application be necessary for this project? YES NO

Current Zoning: _____ **Proposed Use:** _____

Signature of Zoning Staff: _____ **Date:** _____

Acknowledgements

PLEASE INITIAL NEXT TO EACH STATEMENT

_____ I understand that my application **will not** be processed if it is incomplete. I agree to provide any **additional** information for determining eligibility as requested by the City. If the additional information is not submitted within 30 days, the application will be denied and application fees paid will not be reimbursed.

_____ I hereby certify that the information provided is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

_____ I hereby certify that all documents and information required by the Application Submittal Checklist is attached.

_____ I hereby acknowledge that I have read the NEZ Basic Incentives and Tax Abatement Policy, which governs the granting of tax abatements, fee waivers and release of City liens, and that any VIOLATION of the terms of the NEZ Basic Incentives or MISREPRESENTATION shall constitute grounds for rejection of an application or termination of incentives at the discretion of the City.

_____ I understand that the approval of fee waivers and other incentives shall not be deemed to be approval of any aspect of the project. I understand that I am responsible for obtaining required permits and inspections from the City and in ensuring the project is located in the correct zoning district.

_____ I understand that if there are taxes due or liens against any property I own in the City of Fort Worth I may not be eligible for NEZ incentives.

_____ I hereby certify that the project plans submitted with this application meet the NEZ design guideline requirements as listed below **or** meet Strategic Plan guidelines for the Berryhill/Mason Heights, Oakland Corners and Stop Six areas as outlined on the NEZ webpage. I understand that if the project plans do not meet these design requirements, all permits will be put on hold pending correction. If I choose to relinquish my NEZ certification instead of meeting the design requirements, payment for all fees waived by the City up to that point will be due immediately and the building permit will not be issued until payment is made.

- a. No metal buildings except for industrial projects.
- b. All new construction projects must contain 70% masonry product
- c. Exceptions to the masonry product will be made at the City's discretion for design district overlays (where applicable) and approved planned development projects.
- d. Compliance with NEZ design guidelines for Council adopted NEZ Strategic Plans (Berryhill/Mason Heights, Oakland Corners and Stop Six) is required for certification.
- e. Attached garages for new single family homes may not extend more than 4 feet past the front building wall.

_____ I understand that I must pay all associated fees at the time of project application and/or permit submittal if I wish to submit permits prior to determination of NEZ eligibility. This includes setting up an escrow account with the City. I understand that some permits may not be issued while NEZ eligibility is being established. Example: Applications that are requesting Tax Abatement.

**Printed Name of Property
Owner/Developer**

**Signature of Property
Owner/Developer**

Date



Application# _____

City of Fort Worth
Neighborhood Empowerment Zone (NEZ) Application for Incentives

**Please submit your completed application in person to:
City of Fort Worth Planning and Development Department
200 Texas Street, Fort Worth, Texas 76102**

To apply online please go to: <http://fortworthtexas.gov/neighborhoods/NEZ/apply>

For more information on the NEZ Program Incentives, please visit our web site
at <http://fortworthtexas.gov/neighborhoods/NEZ/> or contact our office at (817) 392-7744 or nez_NS@fortworthtexas.gov

For more information on Tax Abatements, see the above website or contact the
Neighborhood Services Department at (817) 392-7316.



NEZ Property Ownership List

Please list all properties owned in the City of Fort Worth by the owner/developer

Address:
Address:
Address:
Address:
Address:
Address:
Address:
Address:
Address:

(PRINTED OR TYPED NAME)

(AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE)

(DATE)



NEZ Construction Budget

Single Family projects



Project address: _____

Eligible rehabilitation or new construction costs include only physical improvements to real property. Real Property Improvements—means a habitable structure as defined by the Fort Worth Building Code. It does **NOT** include: personal property such as furniture, appliances, equipment, and/or supplies. Carports, solid or chain-link front fences, parking lots, accessory structures such as sheds and incidental out buildings are only eligible if included in original project budget. These items do not qualify as a stand alone project.

Item description : (add further description if needed)	Unit price
Demolition :	
Roof Repair/ Replacement/Installation :	
Mechanical (Heating/ Air conditioning) :	
Electrical :	
Plumbing :	
Flooring (Carpet, Tile , etc):	
Additional Room(s) / Additions —Total additional square feet to be added: _____	
Interior Improvements (Walls, etc) :	
Foundation :	
Materials :	
Exterior (Paint, Siding, Masonry, etc) :	
Landscaping :	
Other :	
<i>If homeowner labor only</i> : total # of hours: _____ x ___ per hour :	
Total	

I, _____, hereby certify that the above estimate of costs for the proposed rehabilitation or new construction of my property at : _____ is true and correct.

Date

Owner/Developer signature

City of Fort Worth Planning and Development Department
Neighborhood Empowerment Zone (NEZ)

NEZ INCENTIVES OPT-OUT

Owner Name and/or Company Name: _____

Owner Phone No. and Address: _____

Property Address: _____

Property Legal Description: _____

Neighborhood Empowerment Zone (NEZ): _____

Project Description: _____

By signing this Waiver Form, I acknowledge that I was notified about the NEZ program and all of its incentives including **Development Fee Waivers, Impact Fee Waivers, Municipal Tax Abatement, and Release of City Liens.**

I understand that if I decide to obtain a building permit for this specific project before applying for NEZ incentives, I am voluntarily forfeiting any claim(s) I have or may have to those incentives and **I understand that I will not receive any refund** for development fees paid, such as building permit fees, plat application fees, board of adjustment application fees, agreement application fees, street and utility easement vacation application fee, or impact fees such as water and sewer impact fees, transportation impact fees, or any other fee waivers afforded by the NEZ.

I also understand that this Waiver Form pertains to this specific project only, and by my signing this form I am signing for all partial or full co-owners of the above mentioned property and that no owner, full or partial may lay claim for a refund and/or NEZ incentives for this project after this form has been signed and fees paid.

I also understand that if I apply for a building permit or begin construction for this project without a building permit before submitting an application for NEZ incentives, **I will not be eligible to apply for municipal tax abatement.**

Reason For Waiving Incentives: _____

Print Owner or Co-Owner Name: _____ Print Agent Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please Note: Only the Owner, Co-Owner or Agent can sign this form. If agent signs or brings in the waiver for the owner or co-owner they must have letter of authorization from owner, and a copy of owner's driver's license as proof that he/she has the power to act for Owner or Co-owner. A copy of the Registered Warranty Deed is only required if the owner's name listed in TAD is different from the current owner of the property.

For City Use Only

Comments:

I, _____, discussed NEZ incentives **and** this Form
Signature of City Employee with the Owner, Co-Owner, or Agent below.

Print Name: _____
Owner, Co-owner or Agent Who Signed Form

Driver's license submitted: Yes _____ No _____
Deed submitted: Yes _____ No _____
Authorization letter submitted: Yes _____ No _____