



T H E E A S T S I D E . O R G

BUILDING A COALITION TO CREATE
MILWAUKEE'S MOST DYNAMIC NEIGHBORHOOD

East Side Business Improvement District #20

Staff - Executive Director, Ryan Laessig
director@theeastside.org

East Side Architectural Review Board

Chair - Matt Jarosz
Members - Chris Rute, Michael Vitucci

PROCESS, TIMELINE, AND TIPS FOR COA APPLICATION

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The purpose of this cover sheet is to help outline the Architectural Review Board (ARB) process for applicants so they can prepare business and construction timelines accordingly. It is not meant to create binding expectations on the ARB Board, Staff, or applicants.

This cover page is limited in scope to the East Side ARB process and does not speak to other City approvals, departments, or any other tangential processes.

OVERVIEW

In order to construct any exterior architectural feature or reconstruct, alter, or demolish any exterior structure or feature in BID No. 20, a **COA (Certificate of Appropriateness)** must be applied for and granted by the East Side Architectural Review Board.

A Certificate is required before the proposed work may be started and before a building permit can be issued by the Department of City Development. Certificate of Appropriateness application forms are available from the staff.

The Architectural Review Board consists of property owners, city representatives and architectural professionals and is appointed by the Mayor & Common Council. Staff assistance is provided by The East Side BID.

BACKGROUND

The ARB was formed by City Ordinance 200-61 to maintain and create an attractive place for customers, clients, residents, and business owners in the East Side.

The goal of the Board is to talk through outward-facing design proposals with business and/or property owners to create and maintain an aesthetically pleasing environment. The East Side ARB Guidelines outline these aesthetic components that will be considered.

PROCESS

1. Obtain and draft the appropriate COA application (sign or development). Applications can be found under “Do Business” “Building and Sign Guidelines” at theeastside.org. If there are any questions about what application is most appropriate, contact ARB Staff/Executive Director of The East Side BID, at director@theeastside.org.
2. Review ARB Guidelines (found via the same path on theeastside.org) against the proposed sign / development / improvement. Please note that any notes in the guidelines “discouraging” certain designs in the guidelines should be avoided. If there are questions about the guidelines, contact ARB Staff/Executive Director of The East Side BID, at director@theeastside.org.
3. Gather appropriate materials (the more comprehensive the better) and submit those with the COA Application to ARB Staff/Executive Director of The East Side BID, at director@theeastside.org. ARB staff will vet the proposal against the ARB Guidelines to ensure a quality application.
4. ARB Staff will review the application and use supporting materials submitted to produce an Executive Summary of the project, to be presented to the ARB Board, regarding how a project meets or falls short of the guidelines. This information will be communicated to the applicant before submission to the ARB Board and the applicant will have the opportunity to make revisions if desired.
5. ARB Staff will email the Application and supporting materials to the ARB Board and find/set a date for an ARB Meeting at which the application and materials will be presented to and discussed by the ARB Board. The Board will be expected to review the materials in advance and alert the ARB staff if major concerns arise, who will discuss these concerns with the applicant. This gives the applicant the chance to make additional revisions prior to the meeting if desired.
6. Depending on the discussion, the ARB Board may approve the application, or ask that reasonable adjustments are made and the business/property owner return to the ARB Board with adjusted designs, or that the applicant work with ARB Staff to adjust designs to obtain a COA.
7. Once an approved design is reached, ARB staff will create a COA with approved renderings that is submitted to the Department of Neighborhood Services.

TIMELINE

All timelines are estimates and depend on the specifics involved.

For signs, allow 1-2 weeks for ARB Staff review and approval.

For mid-level projects, allow 2-4 weeks for staff review and concept refinement, ARB meeting and discussion, and potential re-submission.

For larger or more complex projects, allow 6-8 weeks total for staff review and concept refinement, ARB meeting and discussion, and re-submission.

- After project development, allow 1-2 weeks for ARB Staff review, depending on the complexity of the design.
 - If the application is relatively simple (a sign update, for example) and all applicable design guidelines are met, ARB Staff may review and approve within 1 week of receiving the application and accompanying materials.
- After ARB Staff review and if Board review is recommended, allow 1-2 weeks for an ARB meeting. ARB meetings are scheduled on the first and third Tuesdays of the month but may be rescheduled as needed.
- After the ARB meeting (1-1.5 hours, depending on the project proposed), allow for another iteration of the project to be requested, to either come back to the Board, or worked through with Staff.
 - If another ARB meeting is requested, allow 2-3 weeks for another meeting to be set after a new design is completed and submitted.
 - If Staff work and approval is requested, allow 1-2 weeks to work through a new design. This timeline is largely dependent on the applicant's speed of revision.
- Once approved, allow 1 week for Staff to issue a COA. Approved renderings will accompany the COA.

TIPS AND NOTES

- Submit the most recent and accurate renderings for review and approval. This is what ARB Staff will review to work through with the applicant, and/or use as a base to issue an approval. The ARB Board will review these prior to the meeting. Last-minute changes may delay the review and approval process.
- It's generally better to submit more information than less to give the best idea of the whole project.
- Be prepared to answer questions on materials, colors, dimensions, elevations, distances, sound emissions, etc. Every element of the proposed project will be reviewed.
- Consider asking an ARB Board member to review the project in advance to help anticipate feedback. Contact ARB Staff/Executive Director of The East Side BID, at director@theeastside.org for referrals.
- If the project may affect other nearby businesses and/or residents, consider reaching out to gain their input and support before submitting the project for review.
- This is a process subject to interpretation of guidelines by the Board, applicants, and staff. We all (Board, applicants, Staff) have opinions. The process of talking through design and development ideas is meant to be collaborative and open. We are all here to help this area meet its highest potential.
- For any questions regarding the ARB procedures, processes, timelines, meetings, approvals, etc. please contact ARB staff/East Side BID Executive Director, at director@theeastside.org.