



City of Graham Residential Appearance Award Guidelines

What is the Graham Residential Appearance Award?

The City of Graham Appearance Commission recognizes the hard work and pride exhibited by residents who beautify their yard and contribute to the aesthetic appeal of our community. This award is intended to inspire others in their yard and to improve the overall quality of life in Graham.

What are the rules?

- Only residential properties, either owner-occupied or rented, are eligible
- The upkeep of the yard can reflect the efforts of the residents themselves or that of a professional landscaper
- Anyone may nominate a yard, whether they live in the City or outside the City, but the yard needs to be located within the City limits or ETJ
- The judges may also nominate yards
- Each yard is limited to winning the award only once in any two consecutive calendar years

What are the evaluation criteria?

Graham Appearance Commission members will judge residences using the criteria in the Residential Appearance Award scoring matrix. After narrowing it down to three properties based on the highest score the Commission will discuss each choice to determine a winner. All judge's decisions are final.

When will judges decide?

Each season Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter a new home will be selected for the award. Award winners will be selected in May, July, September, and December.

What happens if I win?

Winners are honored as follows:

- A Residential Appearance Award yard sign will be provided by the City to the award recipient for one month following the award, to be placed in the front of the house or in the side yard.
- A picture of the yard with the award recipient's permission will be placed on the City's Facebook page as well as a congratulations note on the City water bill. A press release will also be sent with a request for publication to local news outlets.

How do I nominate a yard?

You may nominate your own yard or someone else's yard by filling out a Residential Appearance nomination form is available below, and can also be found on the City of Graham website at <http://www.cityofgraham.com/city-hall/boards-and-commissions/appearance-commission/> or it may be picked up at the Graham Municipal Building located at 201 South Main St., Graham, NC.

Awards are given out for recognition during the following months:

- May (Nominations must be submitted by May 9)
- July (Nominations must be submitted by July 4)
- September (Nominations must be submitted by September 5)
- December – For Holiday Yard Decorating (Nominations must be submitted by December 5)

Nomination forms may be emailed to Alexa Powell, Planner, at planner@cityofgraham.com or they may be mailed or dropped off at City Hall, 201 S. Main St. Graham, NC 27253.

**Thank you for your interest in the City of Graham Appearance Commission
Residential Appearance Award Program.**

Residential Appearance Award Nomination Form



Nominator's Name _____

Nominee's Name (if different) _____

Nominee's Address _____

Contact phone number and/or email

Residential Beautification Award – Scoring Matrix

Property Address:		
Criteria	Scoring	Scores
Landscape maintenance	0 = High grass, or no landscaping 1 = No trees, just bushes and grass 2 = Plants are alive but could use some attention watering or pruning 3 = Neatly trimmed grass, pruned bushes and trees 4 = Mature landscaping, neatly trimmed, beds are mulched, edged, and free of tree limbs 5 = Not a single plant out of place all appear healthy, perfect	
Litter, junk, debris, & weeds	0 = Property has inoperable vehicle or vehicle parked on grass 1 = Property has some litter or junk (ie. appliances or indoor furniture on porch) 2 = Property has minimal litter, weeds, or debris in yard 3 = No litter, junk, or debris 4 = Property free of weeds 5 = Not a single thing out of place, perfect	
Use of sound landscape practices	0 = No landscaping 1 = Has minimal landscaping 2 = Some organization in the landscape but has a limited variety of plants 3 = Property is nicely landscaped with a variety of plants 4 = Uses a variety of plants including a mix of colors, textures, and varied heights to create visual interest 5 = In addition to plant variety the property incorporates hardscape like walls, paths, or rocks to enhance the landscape	

Appearance of home façade	0 = Building not well maintained 1 = Paint and building siding are well maintained with no chips, cracks, or major damage. 2 = Paint or siding color is complementary, not garish. 3 = Cohesive design elements improve the building aesthetics creating a warm inviting atmosphere 4 = The facades decorative features accentuate the buildings architectural details 5 = The building, fence, and porch are in good repair 6 = The façade is visually appealing and enhances the character of the surrounding neighborhood	
Overall appearance from curb	0 = No curb appeal 1 = Ok 2 = Good 3 = Excellent 4 = Almost perfect 5 = Perfect	
Seasonal display (In December ONLY Criteria)	0 = No seasonal decorations 1 = Good use of seasonal color 2 = Fantastic seasonal decorations 3 = Impressive use of decorative lighting 4 = Overall display is visually pleasing 5= Over the top level of holiday/seasonal spirit displayed	
Extras	5 = Use of attractive art pieces (ie. pottery, ironwork), potted plants, birdhouses, patio or lawn furniture, fountain, decorative mailbox, hanging baskets, or ornate house numbers	