

The Iowa Economic Development Authority's (IEDA) Iowa Downtown Resource Center (IDRC) helps communities learn more about the importance of downtown development and specifically how a community can implement strategies to make downtown more viable.

A downtown or traditional commercial district represents a community's history and helps define the community. Does your downtown present a unique identity with features and strengths to draw residents, visitors, businesses and commerce? Would you be proud to show your downtown to potential new business prospects? If downtown development or downtown revitalization is not an active segment of your community's economic or community development plans, your efforts may be incomplete. What are your downtown's strengths? Weaknesses? What can be done to make it more attractive to customers? The IDRC offers a variety of services to help communities identify these strengths, weaknesses and solutions.

ASSESSING DOWNTOWN

Downtown Assessment (\$2,500) — Experienced IDRC staff perform an intense, on-site study of your downtown, and offer a public presentation and written report that provide short- and long-range recommendations to use for planning. This service is typically valued at \$20,500 in the private sector. Applications are accepted annually.

Downtown Walk-Around (\$300) — This visit offers an honest first impression of a downtown by helping to identify strengths, challenges and basic revitalization strategies.

FUNDING

The **Community Catalyst Building Remediation** program assists communities with the rehabilitation of buildings to stimulate economic growth or reinvestment in the community. This competitive grant awards up to \$100,000 for the rehabilitation of one commercial building per community or two adjacent buildings with common ownership. Strong projects show potential for catalytic economic growth and serve as a model for future projects.

DOWNTOWN NETWORKING

Iowa Downtown Conference is the premier statewide conference for professionals and volunteers involved with downtown revitalization in Iowa. Learn the latest trends and network with peers involved in downtown economic development.

Iowa Downtown Forums take place annually across the state to provide communities an opportunity to network and discuss downtown ideas, successes and challenges.

DOWNTOWN RESOURCES

Street Grid™ is a living file library with downtown revitalization resources to help downtown organizations streamline organizational efficiency, springboard planning efforts and empower advocacy. Examples of promotional activities, fundraising, market analysis, downtown housing, public spaces, etc. are available for download at iowaeda.com/downtown-resource-center/networking/.

Downtown Design Guide assists community stakeholders working on historic commercial district revitalization across the state. This is a great tool for any community interested in preserving/maintaining the historic character of its physical assets while embracing diversity, quality design, sustainability practices and accessibility for all.

Main Street Iowa helps Iowa communities use their historic downtowns and neighborhoods as a vehicle for economic development. As a Main Street America™ Coordinating Program, more than 50 communities in Iowa are connected to a network of 40 programs across the country that represent more than 1,200 communities. The program works with a select group of communities that successfully complete a competitive application and commit to exceptionally high standards for downtown economic development. Utilizing the Main Street Approach™, communities capitalize on the unique identity, assets and character of their historic commercial districts. The Main Street Iowa team offers training workshops, architectural and design assistance, business assistance, grant funding and a number of other technical assistance opportunities.

For more information contact James Engle, Director, Iowa Downtown Resource Center, at james.engle@iowaeda.com or visit iowaeda.com/downtown-resource-center/.



MAIN STREET IOWA

Main Street is a time-tested movement. Main Street Iowa is a leading voice for preservation-based economic development and traditional commercial district revitalization. Working together, local leaders have implemented practical strategies that have been producing fundamental changes in Iowa's main streets for nearly four decades.

Main Street is a process. The Main Street Approach™ consists of tightly integrated components making up a common-sense, strategy-driven framework to guide community-based downtown revitalization efforts. Locally developed strategies are implemented through comprehensive work in four broad areas known as the Four Points: Economic Vitality, Organization, Promotion and Design.

Main Street is a resource. Main Street Iowa provides a variety of services and training opportunities for designated Main Street programs to build the capacity of the local revitalization effort. During the start-up phase of a Main Street program, Main Street Iowa invests approximately \$120,000 in technical assistance and training for local programs. Throughout the life of a Main Street program, Main Street Iowa invests an average of \$15,000 annually.

MAIN STREET IOWA DESIGNATION

Basic requirements for the Main Street program application and ongoing accreditation processes:

- Broad base of public support for the Main Street district revitalization efforts.
- Nonprofit organization focused on the Main Street district revitalization efforts.
- Main Street staff dedicated to the Main Street program efforts.
- Operating budget to manage the Main Street program.
- City financial support for the operation of the Main Street program.
- Long-term commitment to Main Street district revitalization demonstrated through continuing education requirements, annual National Main Street Accreditation expectations and regular economic impact reporting by each local Main Street program.

INVESTIGATING MAIN STREET

The Main Street Iowa program may not be right for all communities. Communities typically invest one to two years learning about the program and its process. Application rounds are typically every other year. For more information and suggestions for a community looking to investigate Main Street Iowa community designation, contact Carol Lilly, state coordinator, Main Street Iowa, at carol.lilly@iowaeda.com. For more information visit iowaeda.com/main-street-iowa/.



MAIN STREET IOWA COMMUNITIES

