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IOWA Economic Development

Community Catalyst Building Remediation Grant Scoring Criteria

The Community Catalyst Building Remediation grant program assists in the comprehensive, appropriate rehabilitation of important but underutilized buildings that will create new business and upper floor residential uses. These small to mid-level, city endorsed projects will come with broad based community support and serve as models for future investment in adjacent properties, downtowns or communities.

Existing Building

The proposed project will rehabilitate an important building(s) in a community and/or district. Importance will be measured by the building's architecture, location, size, history and commercial importance. The impact of the project based on this building's current condition, use and potential are extremely important.

10 Points Maximum

A strong application will:

- Will clearly describe the building and why it is important to the downtown/community.
- Will represent an impactful improvement to the building.
- Will clearly describe the current condition of the building an indicate a need for rehabilitation.
- Will clearly describe the current use of the building on all floors.
- Makes use of a property that is largely underutilized (vacant or inappropriate uses).
- Involve a building in an extremely important location such as the heart of the downtown.
- Will exhibit an important process for selecting this building for the catalyst grant and indicate that this project fits into local priorities.

A weak application will not communicate the importance of the building to the community/district or will represent a building with less potential to impact the community visually or economically. Building location is of lesser importance to the community. Current use and condition is not specifically and thoroughly described. A meaningful and strategic selection of this specific building for the catalyst grant has not been communicated or executed.

Proposed Building Improvement

The proposed remediation will use appropriate rehabilitation practices and techniques. This well-planned project represents a substantial rehabilitation that capitalizes on the unique character and development opportunities of the building(s). When appropriate, conforms to historic preservation practices. The project is shovel ready and when complete will represent significant visual impact.

20 Points Maximum

A strong application will:

- Will clearly and concisely describe the proposed scope of work.
- Thoroughly explain treatment of specific features of the building.
- Exhibit sympathetic treatment of historic structures.
- Will improve the appearance of the building/district/community.

- Will improve safety in the district/community.
- Involves a complete rehab of a building (entire building).
- Show appropriate recycling and diversion of materials from the landfill. This includes a remediation plan, including abatement of hazardous materials such as asbestos.
- Exhibits that the project is shovel ready with a reasonable timeline for completion.
- Shows plans/designs for all element of the improvement including interior floor plans, façade designs, color schemes, etc.
- Includes historic current photographs of the building (exterior and interior).

A weak application will not make a case for appropriate design base on scope of work, design description and plans. The scope of work is not thoroughly described. Rehabilitation of historic buildings do not indicate that historic preservation standards are met. The project does not represent a total rehabilitation, for example, upper story spaces are left untouched. Photos are not included or are inadequate. The project does not appear to be ready to go. No mention is made of recycling and abatement of hazardous materials.

Economic Impact

The building rehabilitation will spur true economic impact in the community by filling underutilized space with appropriate uses that meet local demand. This includes first floor business growth and upper story residential. Economic impact can also be measured by jobs created and customers drawn to the district. Actual, committed uses represent the perfect scenario.

30 Points Maximum

A strong application will:

- Will clearly show what economic development will occur as a result of the project.
- Will at the very lease bring a commercial space to a “white box” stage of development. Committed business are always better.
- Uses will meet a local market void with information that backs this market void up.
- Will add housing units to a downtown/community.
- Will likely stimulate additional investment.

A weak application will give little evidence of economic impact for example, no new businesses, no new housing, or uses that do not match up with local market needs. The future use of the building is unknown or questionable. Because of location, the project will not significantly impact other business development.

Funding, Budget and Partnerships

The proposed project will exhibit ample and reasonable funding from a number of sources. The property owner is significantly involved in the funding of the project. The City is a financial and/or in-kind contributor and supporter of the project. Funding is secured and the applicant has done due diligence in investigating funding sources and partners. Likely project partners are identified and defined. Indicates that the Catalyst Grant clearly fills a funding gap and that the project is dependent on it.

30 Points Maximum

A strong application will:

- Explain what financial/feasibility analysis has been completed to justify the project.
- Shows that there is financial and perhaps in-kind support from the property owner, City and community.
- Shows solid estimates of proposed work based on project plans.
- Shows excellent local financial match. At least 60% of the project will be funded with local sources. More is better.
- If in-kind support is used, specifically show sources. These sources are legitimate.
- Complete financial form in its entirety.
- Shows a reasonable project budget.
- List any other financial incentives/programs that are being used on this project.
- Clearly define property owner's involvement.
- Show that funding is secured (in-hand). For example, show legitimate letters from financial institutions that clearly outline terms of financing.
- Indicates that the Catalyst grant truly fills a gap and the grant is needed for project completion.

A weak application will fail to identify funding sources necessary to carry the project out. In-kind support is poorly defined. Numbers do not add up. Cost estimates appear to be too low. Applicant does not consider additional funding sources. Involvement by the property owner is vague or unknown. The project does not appear to need the grant for completion. For example, it is difficult to make a case for a $100,000 grant on a multi-million project. Funding or segments of funding is not secured for example, "grant applied for" or no letter from bank indicating financing.

Impact on Area/District

The proposed project will have an immediate impact on the district/community and serve as a model and catalyst for future development. The project will provide a boost to an underperforming district, a difficult block or perhaps be a model for upper story housing development. The project will occur in a community that has design recommendations, maintenance ordinances and ordinances that ban downtown, storefront housing.

10 Points Maximum

A strong application will:

- Be a catalyst for future projects in the vicinity of the project address.
- Describe how the project will be a "best practice" model for future projects.
- Indicate that the area in which the project is being done, is underperforming defined by building maintenance problems and vacancy.
- Indicate that this investment will be protected because the community has ordinances that ban storefront housing; require minimum maintenance standards; and guide design in downtown buildings.
- Have economic impact on underperforming district or block

A weak application provides no evidence that the project can be a model for future success. Perhaps the district that the building is in has seen much success and there are few remaining red flags. The applicant community has made no attempts to limit safety and maintenance problems in the district.

Sustainability/Smart Growth Principles

Proposed project promotes sustainability and smart growth principles including the goals and intended outcomes of the project relative to green development/sustainable development practices.

Required but not scored

A strong application will:

- Promote sustainability and smart growth principles.
- Clearly state goals and intended outcomes relative to green development/sustainable development practices.
- Describe how project will meet the IEDA Green Street Criteria.

A weak application will show little or no adherence to smart growth principles or green streets criteria.

Scores

Existing Building (0-10 Points)	_____
Proposed Building Improvement (0-20 Points)	_____
Economic Impact (0-30 Points)	_____
Funding, Budget and Partnerships (0-30 Points)	_____
Impact on the Area/District (0-10 Points)	_____
Total Score	_____
Sustainability/Smart Growth Principles	Required but not scored