



CDBG Downtown Revitalization (DTR) Application Workshop

November 2024

Agenda for the Session

- Definitions & Application Logistics
- What is Allowable Work Under the Program?
- Application First Steps
- Documenting Blight
- Other Program Requirements
- Application & Score Sheet Walk Through (2024 Updates)
- Next Steps

What is CDBG-DTR?

- **DTR: Downtown Revitalization**

- New economic life to downtown/“main street” areas
- Exterior repairs to commercial/mixed use spaces (no first floor residential)

- **CDBG: Community Development Block Grant**

- Funded by HUD (Department of Housing and Urban Development)
- Comes with federal requirements
- Ideal: highly visible outcomes; Required: addressing blight

Who Applies?

- City is both applicant and recipient
 - Responsible for ensuring that all HUD requirements are met
 - Usually involves contracting with a grant administrator
 - City is still the Responsible Entity
 - City procures for architect, contractor, etc.

Who Applies?

- A city is the applicant on behalf of a group of buildings:
 - Minimum of 6 to receive any funding at all
 - Minimum of 8 to receive maximum award of \$650,000
 - Possible to apply on behalf of a single “iconic” building
- *What is “iconic”?*
 - *Large in comparison... high visibility from several directions...*
 - *Distinct historic/cultural/architectural features... local landmark...*
 - *Vacant/underutilized... important to downtown redevelopment...*
 - *Very unlikely to have more than one or two in a city*

Application Cycle Logistics

- Dates and deadlines:
 - Applications will open today (November 19, 2024).
 - Deadline for submittal is January 31, 2025.
 - Apply online via IowaGrants.gov
- A few notes...
 - Award 5-6 projects per year, on average
 - Cannot apply if a current DTR is still underway
 - Buildings previously receiving DTR funding cannot receive it again

What Kind of Work is Allowable?

- Exterior... and exterior only(!) that addresses blight
- Which facades?
 - Front facades mainly
 - Sides eligible if viewable from adjacent street
 - Rears only if there is a business entrance *and* it's viewable from adjacent street
 - Roofs can be included with other facades
- No other work!
 - From time application is submitted until close out
 - Only exceptions: routine maintenance, emergency repairs, previously initiated (with agreements)

Why Care about Blight?

- Foundational HUD requirement
 - Two baseline HUD criteria: eligible activity + national objective
 - National objective: elimination of blight on an area basis
- Documented in three phases:
 - Application (“blight exists”)
 - Environmental/historic review post-award (“our plan for this building will adequately address it”)
 - Final photos at grant close out (“blight is gone”)

What is Blight?

○ Let's talk about what it is... and what it isn't...

-
- Deterioration/dilapidation
 - Decay
 - Broken, damaged
 - Missing
 - Environmental contamination
 - Rusted, peeling, flaking, crumbling
 - Structural issues
 - Public health and safety concern (faulty wiring, falling plaster)

- “Approaching end of useful life”
 - Energy inefficient
 - “Outdated/non-historic paint scheme/design”
 - Old
 - Ugly
 - “Likely to...”
 - Anticipated/future blight
 - Slipcovers
-

Building Rehab: what, where, how (much)?

- Main building components
 - Exterior wall surface
 - Upper story windows
 - Storefront
 - Doors/entryways
 - Porch/stairs/deck/ramp
 - Foundation
 - “Other”

Building Rehab: what, where, how (much)?

- How to prioritize where to spend funds?
 - Expectation to address 51% of blighted components
 - The less blight that exists, the less competitive the application
- Optional extras
 - Signage, lighting, etc. where there wasn't any before – if other blight is addressed
 - ADA compliance issues

Initial questions thus far?

Application First Steps: Potential Building Owners

- Don't promise inclusion until funds are secured and blight is confirmed
- Discuss requirements and expectations
 - City holds contracts
 - Davis Bacon prevailing wage applies
 - All work subject to Secretary of Interior Standards
 - No additional work allowed other than routine maintenance and emergency repairs
 - Long timelines

Application First Steps: Potential Building Owners

- Ideally construction starts fall 2025...
- Draft, circulate, collect owner interest letters, acknowledging:
 - Total cost estimate
 - Eventual financial contribution (percentage and/or not to exceed)
 - Applicability of federal requirements
 - Post-award (post-environmental review & bidding) agreements
 - Addressing blight is highest priority

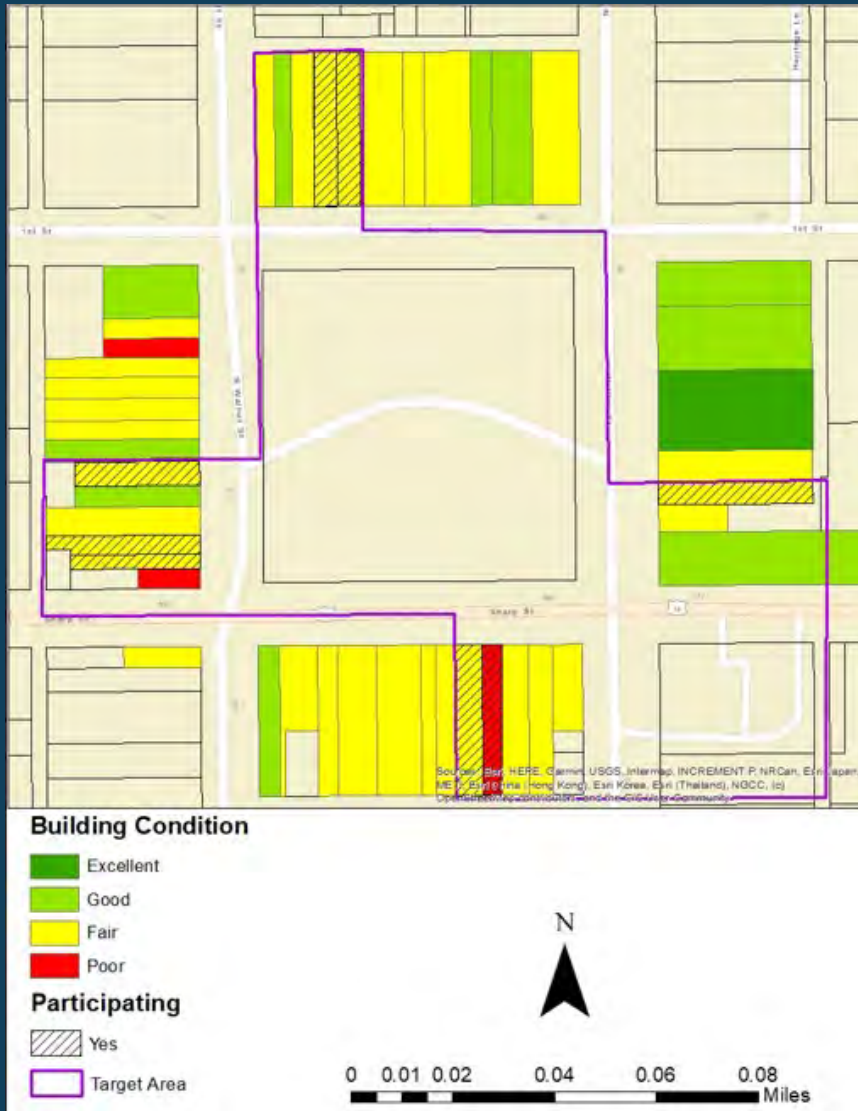
Application First Steps: Procuring an Architect

- Architect has roles pre- and post-award
 - Documenting blight and drafting an initial design rendering
 - Creating the final design, and later the bid specs
 - Reviewing/approving pay applications, facilitating change orders, etc.
- How to procure?
 - RFQ – public procurement (see CDBG Management Guide)
 - Two different agreements
- This is often a monitoring concern; now part of application

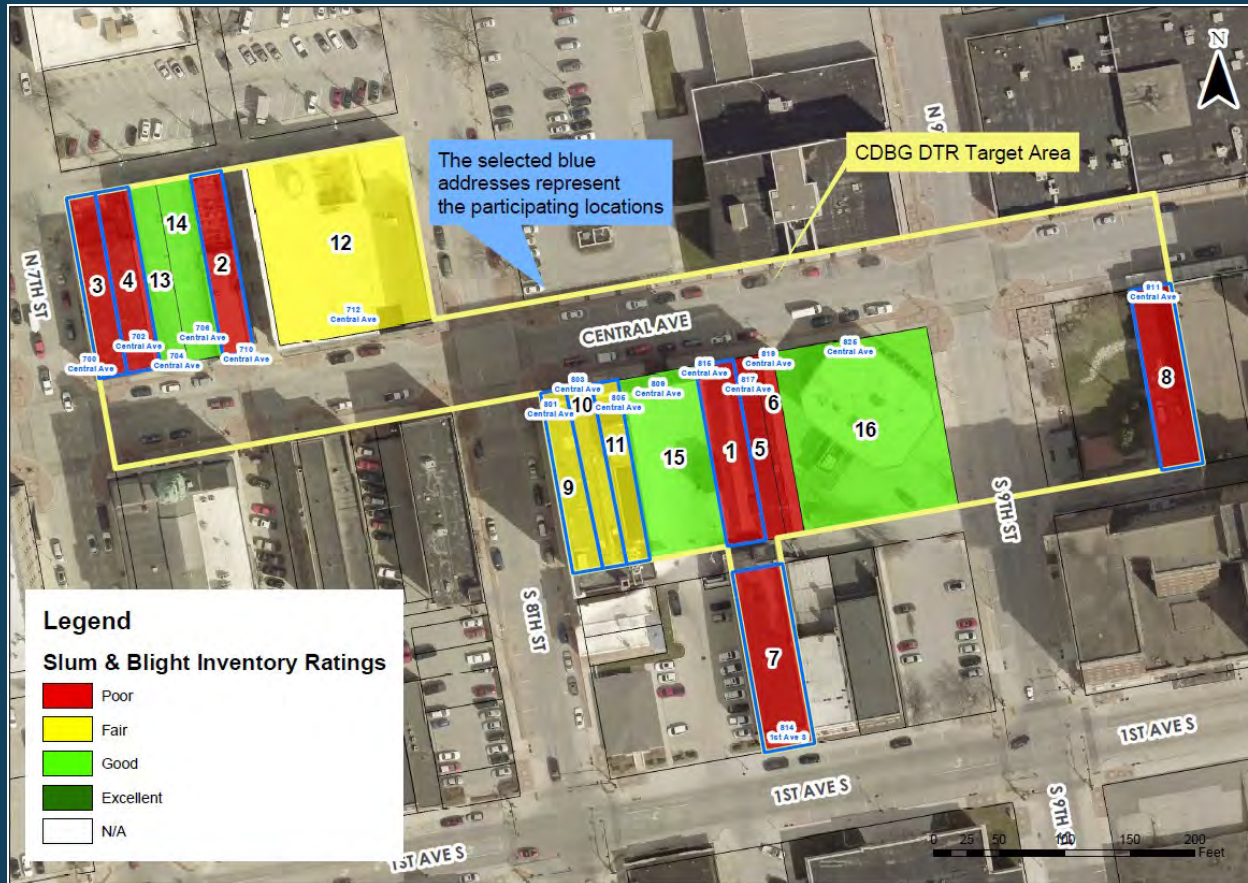
Application First Steps: Identify Target Area

- Mapped within core downtown, basically rectangular in shape
- Meet requirements of Iowa Code Chapter 403
 - Resolution adopted by Council within past 2 years, states:
 - *One or more slum, blighted or economic development areas exist*
 - *The rehabilitation, conservation, redevelopment, development, or a combination thereof, of the area is necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, or welfare of the residents of the municipality*
- At least 25% of buildings in entire target area are “fair” or “poor”

Application First Steps: Identify Target Area



Application First Steps: Identify Target Area



Identifying Blight

- Every building in the target area must be classified as being in either “excellent,” “good,” “fair,” or “poor” condition.
- Buildings proposed for funding need the blight in the individual components (e.g., exterior wall surface, upper story windows, etc.) to be described and documented as well.
 - Photos
 - Descriptions
 - Rankings

Identifying Blight

CDBG Downtown Revitalization Program – Nov 2024

CDBG Slum and Blight – Initial Documentation

An activity in a Downtown Revitalization program must meet certain criteria in order to meet the national objective of elimination or prevention of slum and blight. This is documented in three phases: first, the application, in which the blight conditions are established; second, the Section 106 historic review process, in which the final designs containing plans to address that blight are reviewed and approved; third, the final “before and after” photos, in which the finished product shows successful eliminated of blight.

Within the initial application phase, there are four main tasks to establishing slum and blight conditions:

- ✓ The city must **complete the requirements of Iowa Code chapter 403** for the target area, including **adoption of a resolution** within two years prior to the time of application submittal.
- ✓ A **map of the slum and blight target area** is created with locations of buildings proposed for funding identified.
- ✓ A **Slum and Blight Summary** narrative response is completed within the lowagrants.gov application.
- ✓ A **Slum and Blight Inventory** form is completed within the lowagrants.gov application for every building in the slum/blight area. High-level data is required for every building and more specific data and photos are required for any building proposed for improvements with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds.

All the documentation listed above must be uploaded into lowagrants.gov in the community’s Downtown Revitalization program application. The Council resolution and the target area map must be added to the “Required Uploads” page of the application. The Slum and Blight Summary questions are answered within the “Project Information” page of the application. The Slum and Blight Inventory is completed within the “Individual Building Detail” page of the application.

Identifying Blight

Definition of Excellent Condition

Buildings in excellent condition require little or no exterior work. Buildings that are in excellent condition may be of any age or style. They demonstrate consistent, planned maintenance and repair, components appear to be code-compliant and energy efficient.

Definition of Good Condition

Buildings in good condition have cosmetic deficiencies or other early signs of aging and wear.

Example indicators:

- Building components appear to meet code, but energy efficiency improvements such as storm doors and windows and caulking may be needed.
- Decorative features may need to be secured but items are in place.
- Materials do not need replacement but do need some minor maintenance and repair. For example, roofs may be of older composition but not yet deteriorated or leaking; siding may need spot painting or other “touch-up”; foundations and chimneys appear structurally sound but may show beginning signs of voids or loose mortar joints.

Identifying Blight

Definition of Fair Condition

Buildings in fair condition show **clear signs of deterioration** indicative of a property that has not been maintained for 5 to 10 years. A determination of fair for a building component means that the extent of defective conditions or deficiencies applies to **at least 25% of the component**.

Example indicators:

- Small wood and metal trim pieces of buildings may be lifting away from primary surfaces.
- At least 25% of roofing and related surfaces, including roofline, trim, flashing, and chimneys, may be brittle, curled, cracked, and missing, and are starting to deteriorate.
- At least 25% of doors and windows may be worn, loose, ill-fitting, drafty resulting in some moisture damage, and may have peeling paint or deteriorating vinyl or other surfaces.
- Exterior walls have at least 25% of surfaces with missing, broken or otherwise deteriorated siding, painted surfaces in progressed state of peeling, or brick surfaces needing repointing.
- At least 25% of porches, stairs, and decking show early signs of deterioration including worn, cracked, and warped components affecting components such as treads, balusters, rails, joists, and support posts.
- Foundations have cracks and voids over at least 25% of surface area.

Storefronts and signage are showing signs of deterioration over at least 25% of their surfaces. If the storefronts have coverings of sheet metal, asbestos, asphalt, or other materials from renovations of earlier decades, those coverings are starting to deteriorate and/or are starting to cause damage to the original storefront underneath.

Identifying Blight

Definition of Poor Condition

Buildings in poor condition appear to have not been maintained for at least 10 years. A determination of poor for a building component means that the extent of defective conditions or deficiencies applies to **at least 50%** of the component.

Example indicators:

- Exterior trim is missing altogether.
- One or more major building systems may be in danger of failure.
- The roof (e.g., roofline trim, flashing, chimneys) may be sagging with areas of extensive wear, exposed sheathing, and evidence of leaks over at least 50% of surfaces.
- At least 50% of doors and windows are rotted, broken, missing, and/or boarded up, with peeling paint or deteriorating vinyl or other surfaces.
- Exterior walls have at least 50% of surfaces with missing, broken, or otherwise deteriorated siding; painted surfaces rotted or in advanced state of peeling paint; or brick or other masonry surfaces needing repair or repointing.
- At least 50% of porches, stairs, and decking exhibit hazardous and unsafe conditions including sagging, rotted, and missing components, and separation from the main structure.
- Foundations are extensively cracked with missing stone or masonry over at least 50% of areas, indications of structural instability, and may require replacement and shoring up, including sill work.
- Storefronts and signage are extensively deteriorated over at least 50% of their surfaces (e.g., rusted or rotted framing, significant peeling paint, broken glass, damaged transoms or kick panels, etc.). If the storefronts have coverings of sheet metal, asbestos, asphalt, or other materials from renovations of earlier decades, those coverings are also at least 50% deteriorated and/or are causing significant damage to the original storefront underneath.

Documenting Blight: Photos

- Good examples: Full, front façade photos (entire height & width)



Documenting Blight: Photos

- Bad examples: Full, front façade photos (show only a portion)



Documenting Blight: Photos

- Good* examples: External wall surface
 - **still want to see the exterior wall as a whole...*



Documenting Blight: Photos

- Good* examples: Upper story windows
 - **still want to see entire row of windows...*



Documenting Blight: Photos

- Good* examples: Storefront
 - **where is the detail?*



Documenting Blight: Descriptions

○ Exterior Walls & Surfaces

- Brick work, primarily on second story, showing discoloration, face deterioration and missing or crumbling mortar.
- Some bricks appear to be loosening and out of alignment. Others are cracked, chipped, or pitted and much of paint cover has worn off.
- A degree of bowing has been noted on the exterior wall of the first floor. Lintel appears to be sagging and beginning to lose structural integrity.
- Cornice in need of cleaning and restoration of northeast end decorative elements.

Documenting Blight: Descriptions

○ Upper Story Windows

- A total of four windows on the second floor are missing and the openings have been filled in with plywood that is beginning to rot.
- Two other windows are not operational.
- Upper sash on one second floor window is cracked. All window frames are also showing signs of rot.

○ Storefront System Windows

- First floor storefront windows showing moisture damage; need to be resealed – caulking and weather stripping is deteriorating.
- Transom windows covered with metal panel that exhibits significant rust.

Prioritizing Blight

- Rank the building components
 - Worst to best
 - Worst = most blighted = rank (priority) 1
- Ways to fail
 - Ties/duplicate numbers
 - Thinking of the number as “levels/degrees” of blight versus a ranked list
 - Leaving blanks where a component clearly exists

Prioritizing Blight

- Exterior wall surface
 - crumbling/missing mortar and/or spalled brick over more than half of the wall, bowing slightly, cornice coming loose
- Upper story windows
 - one missing, two more in great shape
- Storefront
 - missing caulk, pane of glass is cracked, peeling paint on the wooden storefront framing
- Doors/entryways
 - apartment door won't lock; tile outside of main door is chipped and coming loose across the design
- Porch/stairs/deck/ramp
 - none on this building, or, ramp in great shape
- Foundation
 - cracking in a few places, but not bad at all
- “Other”
 - nothing unique, roof not blighted

Prioritizing Blight

- Exterior wall surface [1]
 - crumbling/missing mortar and/or spalled brick over more than half of the wall, bowing slightly, cornice coming loose
- Upper story windows [4]
 - one missing, two more in great shape
- Storefront [2]
 - missing caulk, pane of glass is cracked, peeling paint on the wooden storefront framing
- Doors/entryways [3]
 - apartment door won't lock; tile outside of main door is chipped and coming loose across the design
- Porch/stairs/deck/ramp [6]
 - none on this building, or, ramp in great shape
- Foundation [5]
 - cracking in a few places, but not bad at all
- “Other” [NA]
 - nothing unique, roof not blighted

The Goal: Impactful, Noticeable, “Before” & “After”

- Try to avoid...
 - “Before”



“After”



The Goal: Impactful, Noticeable, “Before” & “After”

- Try to avoid...
 - “Before”



“After”



The Goal: Impactful, Noticeable, “Before” & “After”

- Instead aim for this...
 - “Before”



“After”



The Goal: Impactful, Noticeable, “Before” & “After”

○ Instead aim for this...

• “Before”



“After”



The Goal: Impactful, Noticeable, “Before” & “After”

- Instead aim for this...
 - “Before”



“After”



The Goal: Impactful, Noticeable, “Before” & “After”

- Instead aim for this...
 - “Before”



“After”



The Goal: Impactful, Noticeable, “Before” & “After”

- Instead aim for this...
 - “Before”



“After”



Any questions about blight?

Other Programmatic Rules & Considerations

- Federal “Cross-Cutting” Requirements
- Historic preservation/Environmental Review
- DTR Design Guide

Federal Requirements

- Davis Bacon
- Lead-Based Paint
- Radon
- BABA

Environmental/Historic Review

- HUD rule to get “release of funds” – not following this could jeopardize all funding
- DTR follows a Tiered review:
 - Tier I: broad environmental review
 - Tier II: Historic “Section 106” review
- Historic survey expected (good for 5 years)
- Could positively impact application scoring...

Role of Design

- New this year: Bonus points for design
- Downtown Revitalization Design Guide
 - Adapted from Main Street Iowa's Downtown Design Guide
 - DTR Design Guide will be linked in application and on website
 - A scoring rubric is included on the DTR Application Review sheet

Role of Design: DTR Design Guide

Downtown Revitalization Design Guide

Quick Design Tips for Downtown Revitalization Projects

Note: These tips are adapted from the [Downtown Design Guide](#).

General

- **Maintain authenticity:** Base any restoration efforts on documentation or physical evidence.
- **Avoid False History:** Do not add features or ornamentation that never existed on the building.
- **Respect Historic Scale:** Storefronts should maintain traditional proportions, including two side piers and a lintel or cornice band. Avoid enlarging, reducing, or infilling the storefront with inappropriate materials.
- **Align New Features:** Ensure new elements align with existing architectural details. E.g. Edge of new transom aligns with edge of storefront glass.
- **Simplicity in Design:** Use simple, straightforward designs that complement classical proportions. Avoid unnecessary ornamentation unless historically accurate. E.g. Do not add patterns to new cement board paneling and trim if that area was originally another material, such as transom glass.

Materials

- **Appropriate Material Use:** Design for appropriate treatment of existing/historic materials and appropriate selection of new.
- **Avoid Inappropriate Materials:** Refrain from using materials like Exterior Insulation Finishing Systems (EIFS), Vinyl Siding, Standing Seam Metal Roofing and Siding, Residential type wood siding, shingles, or shakes.
- **Masonry Treatment:** For proper cleaning and repointing of brick and masonry, refer to [Preservation Briefs 1 and 2](#) from the National Park Service.

Transoms

- **New Transom Windows:** Ensure new transom windows follow traditional proportions. Transoms over storefront glass should not be bisected with brick, unless the brick is a pier that goes from the ground through the transom.
- **Infilled Transoms:** If transoms cannot be restored, ensure sign panels fit the original transom space. Awnings may also be used to conceal infilled or missing transoms.

Windows

- **Storefront Windows:** Use large, single, fixed windows without muntins for display windows.
- **Upper Story & Side Facade Windows:** Replace windows with historically accurate types and configurations. Retain original window sizes and ensure replacements fit the full opening.

- **Window Alterations:** Avoid infilling or blocking part of a window opening with masonry or plywood. Do not enlarge openings.

Doors

- **Commercial Doors:** Use predominantly glass doors for commercial spaces to maintain transparency and visibility.
- **Secondary Entrances:** Differentiate secondary entrances from primary ones. Half glass doors are appropriate for doors to upper stories.

Awnings

- **Proportionate Awning Design:** Awning shapes should correspond with the building's openings. Use sloped, rectangular awnings for rectangular openings and rounded awnings for arched windows.
- **Scale Consideration:** Ensure awnings do not obscure too much of the storefront or extend excessively over the sidewalk. Awning widths should allow proper anchoring while maintaining visibility of columns. Leave at least 8 feet of clearance from the sidewalk.
- **Multiple Awnings:** Use individual awnings for each storefront to break up large facades. Avoid extending a single awning across multiple storefronts.

Lighting

- **Effective Lighting:** Gooseneck lights are ideal for highlighting signage and adding architectural interest. Focus lighting on signage areas or over doors to enhance visibility and impact.

Role of Design

- Guiding Principles:
 - Maintain Authenticity
 - Avoid False History
 - Respect Historic Scale
 - Align New Features
 - Simplicity in Design
- Inappropriate Materials: avoid EIFS, vinyl siding, standing seam metal, residential-type wood siding, shingles, or shakes

Role of Design: Bonus Question Scoring Rubric

Downtown Revitalization Design Bonus Points Rubric

Evaluate the applicant's adherence to the Downtown Design Guide based on the quality and appropriateness of their design choices:

0 - No Compliance or Inappropriate Design:

- The applicant did not opt for design bonus points or
- The proposed designs and materials are clearly inappropriate for the building or surrounding downtown district, detracting from the district's historic or aesthetic integrity.

1 - Minimal Compliance with Design Standards:

- The applicant made an effort to comply with the Design Guide, but several design elements or materials are inappropriate for the building or district.

2 - General Compliance with Design Standards:

- The applicant followed most aspects of the Design Guide and achieved a generally appropriate design.
- However, the designs would not be strong examples for others in the field. There may be minor issues or missed opportunities to elevate the design.

3 - Exemplary Compliance with Design Standards:

- The applicant's designs fully align with the Downtown Design Guide and represent best practices.
- These designs could serve as exemplary models for architects, design professionals, and others engaged in downtown revitalization projects.


What's Next: IowaGrants Application

- Create an IowaGrants.gov account & search for funding opportunity
- City (or grant administrator on their behalf) can create and submit the application
- Can start a “test” application to become familiar with it

Updates in 2024

- Clarity/detail to instructions
- UEI documentation required (not just number)
- Use CISA floodplain maps
- Asks if using the Design Guide
- Links to Slum & Blight National Objectives Documentation guide
- Designated spot for CDHNA minutes *and* publication affidavit


What's Next: IowaGrants Application




IOWA GRANTS

Welcome to
IowaGrants.gov


Login

 IowaGrants Users Click Here To Login

[Click Here to Access Single Sign On Tool](#)

 Interested in the current posted Opportunities?

[View Current Funding Opportunities](#)

 **DISABLED (IOWA USERS DO NOT USE)**

User ID

Password

[SIGN IN](#)

Announcements

NEW LOGIN PROCESS

All IowaGrants users must login using the Single Sign On Tool via the blue button titled '[Click here to Access Single Sign on Tool](#)'. Do not use the gray 'Disabled' section to login.

Login & Registration Instructions

If you are registering for the first time, please follow the instructions below:

Text: <https://dom.iowa.gov/media/149/download?inline>

Video: <https://youtu.be/OHE2ijDwQ2c>

Program Information

If you have questions specific to the program or grant you are applying for, please contact the program manager should you have questions.

DISASTER RELIEF

If you are applying for disaster related housing relief, please register and login via the instructions below.

If you are having difficulty registering or logging into IowaGrants, please contact the State of Iowa Service Desk by calling 515-281-5703 or 1-800-532-1174.

If you are looking for disaster related program information, please visit disasterrecovery.iowa.gov.

Scoring Method

- Three sections: Checklist, Review, and Score
- Maximum “perfect” score of 45 (+3 for bonus)
- Iconic Building impact scoring method
- Competitive apps historically start around 28 points
- Applications are evaluated by three people; scores averaged

Scoring Criteria (9 Questions)

- Degree of community involvement with the proposed downtown revitalization efforts
- Degree to which the applicant adhered to the Downtown Design Guide based on the quality and appropriateness of their design choices [bonus question]
- Degree the project will impact the target area in terms of total project buildings in ratio to total number of buildings in target area
- Degree to which CDBG funds will be leveraged by other funds
- Degree to which applicant appropriately and accurately completed the individual building elements prioritization ranking for each participating building

Scoring Criteria (9 Questions)

- Degree to which the proposed design and work specs address identified and prioritized contributing factors to slum and blight identified per individual building
- Degree of impact the activity will have on the overall elimination of slum and blight in the identified target area
- Degree to which the project is planned out and prepared to proceed
- Degree of clarity, completeness, readability, and viability of the application
- Degree to which the proposed activity is appropriate for CDBG funding

Most Common Application Failings

- Missing required attachments
- Public hearing not properly noticed/conducted
- Poor documentation/prioritization of blight
- Nondescript/incomplete initial design renderings
- Not as high of an impact overall as other applications
- Amount/level of local match funding not demonstrated or firm
- Lack of consistency/clarity/readability/organization across the application

After Submission

- IEDA takes 30-45 days to make awards
 - Internal review and averaging of scores
 - Make recommendation and await approval
- Formal contract and award letter
 - Do nothing before signing/returning contract
 - Still do (almost) nothing before receiving Release of Funds
 - Read the CDBG Management Guide!
- Recipient Workshop spring 2025

Final questions?



THANK YOU

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