

2018 Main Street Challenge Grant applications available.

Applications for 2018 Main Street Iowa Challenge Grants are now available. Main Street Challenge Grants are for bricks and mortar rehabilitation of buildings within a designated Main Street Iowa district. New construction within the designated district is also eligible for funding. Through an appropriation from the Iowa legislature, Main Street Iowa will be awarding a total of \$925,000 in grants and up to \$75,000 for each project. Grants are available ONLY to designated Main Street Iowa programs across the State of Iowa.

Main Street Challenge Grant Basic Information:

Application Deadline: September 21, 2018

Grant announcement (tentative): November 8, 2018

Grant Amounts: \$15,000-\$75,000

Cash Match: 1:1 (Dollar for dollar.) In kind match is encouraged but does NOT count toward the 1:1 cash match requirement.

Project completion date: December 1, 2020 (24 months from award).

ONE application per program/community

Application MUST be submitted by local Main Street program on behalf of selected project.

Grants MUST be submitted via Iowa Grants.

Green Streets criteria are required.

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Main Street Challenge Grant

Main Street Iowa and the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) are proud to announce the availability of Main Street Iowa Challenge Grants.

A state appropriation was made to the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) for the Main Street Iowa Program to assist participating cities improve the physical and economic health of their designated Main Street districts. This state appropriation will allow Main Street Iowa to offer matching Challenge Grants to participating communities for vertical infrastructure projects.

A maximum of \$925,000 in funds will be awarded to eligible applicants for bricks and mortar projects within designated Main Street Iowa districts. A map showing the 52 eligible Main Street Iowa programs is available at: <http://www.iowaeconomicdevelopment.com/IDRC/MainStreetIowa>

Each program may receive a single award from this funding round. Only one application per program is allowed. The local Main Street Iowa program MUST be the applicant on behalf of the local property owner(s) as the grant beneficiary.

Main Street Iowa staff will review all applications for eligibility, project impact within the designated Main Street district, design appropriateness, innovation and utilization of the Iowa Green Streets Criteria. Successful applicants will be notified in writing of the grant awards.

All awarded projects must agree to provide Main Street Iowa with appropriate budgetary information and expenditures. Main Street Iowa also reserves the right to share this information, including before, during and after photographs of each project for educational and promotional purposes to further the mission of historic commercial district revitalization in the context of historic preservation.

The PRIMARY goals of the MSI Challenge grant are:

- a. Stimulate appropriate building rehab of significant commercial historic buildings in Main Street districts.
- b. Stimulate appropriate infill development in downtown districts
- c. Create a positive climate for additional investment – public and private
- d. Support local revitalization efforts.
- e. Demonstrate “Main Street at work” in the local community
- f. Provide local Main Street programs with an exclusive financial incentive program
- g. Create additional jobs and business growth

These goals will be achieved through:

- a. Quality historic property rehabilitation
- b. Creating downtown housing – particularly upper floor housing
- c. Creating unique business locations

- d. Context sensitive infill development
- e. Strategic investment by IEDA into key local projects
- f. Research and utilization of appropriate available financial resources/programs
- g. Creating local job and business opportunities

ELIGIBILITY:

Main Street Iowa communities with current contracts who are meeting all contractual obligations including National Main Street Accreditation once within the past three years will be considered eligible for the Main Street Grant funds. Eligible projects must be within the designated Main Street district. Only the Main Street organization in participating communities may submit applications on behalf of local projects, properties and businesses. Awards will be made to the applicant Main Street organization, hereafter referred to as the Grantee, for disbursements to locally designated grant beneficiaries.

GRANT AMOUNTS:

Maximum awards for this grant round will be \$75,000. Minimum grants will be no less than \$15,000. No program shall receive more than one award per application round.

GRANT CRITERIA:

Grantee must show community support evidenced by the local contributing effort. Grantee or the grant beneficiary(s) must invest at a minimum a dollar for dollar cash match and must supply requested financial information to show that the match requirement is being satisfied.

Grantee and all Grant Beneficiaries agree, to the best of their ability, to complete designated projects within 24 months of award notification or show just cause for the delay.

Main Street Iowa programs in good standing and in compliance with all contractual requirements from previously awarded funds if any, may apply on behalf of a property or project within the designated district. **Only one submission per program, per round will be permitted.**

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS:

Rehabilitation and/or restoration of significant commercial properties within the designated Main Street district. This can include, but is not limited to:

- Façade improvements (Front, rear and side)
- Upper floor interior rehabilitation
- Structural repairs/improvements
- Code compliance
- First floor interior rehabilitation
- Energy efficiency/sustainability improvements

- Single specific phase of a large rehab. The project must have a specific defined focus and clearly identifiable scope of work including start/end dates and milestones for completion.

Compatible New Construction including building additions with first floor commercial and upper floor(s) commercial or residential within the designated Main Street district. Razing of an existing structure to allow for new construction will not be considered an eligible use of funds.

Multiple properties committed to a mutually agreed upon improvement or series of improvements located within the designated Main Street district. All multiple properties applications must be connected by a common need or issue that defines the scope/type of proposed project. For instance, a series of rear entrances visible from a parking lot; the removal of inappropriate slipcovers/siding materials and façade restoration for a number of buildings, multiple upper floor rehabilitations, etc. Multiple properties are not required to be contiguous. However, close physical proximity does improve the project impact within the district. Multiple property projects may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Installation of an elevator and common hallway linking several buildings;
- Sprinkling of multiple properties with a central master control room.
- Handicapped accessibility improvements serving multiple buildings/storefronts like a common ramp or lift.
- Energy efficiency/sustainability upgrades like green roofs for multiple buildings, geo-thermal well fields, etc.
- Improvements to the facades (front or rear) of a highly visible group or block of buildings;
- Upper floor rehabilitation for a number of properties.

Programs considering a Multiple Properties application are **STRONGLY ENCOURAGED** to discuss your application with Main Street Iowa Staff before submission.

EXPENDITURES/MATCH:

No previous expenditures of any kind will be considered as suitable cash match for a project. This statement applies to both new applicants and additional submissions for phased projects.

A dollar for dollar (1:1) CASH match is required for ALL projects. In kind contributions, while important, cannot be used to meet match requirements for any project.

The match requirement may include necessary project “soft” costs for professional service i.e. architectural or engineering directly related to the project/property.

EACH structure included as part of a **MULTIPLE PROPERTIES** application must meet the individual minimum project investment threshold (\$15,000 grant/\$30,000 minimum total investment.) For example, this applies to multiple façade improvements, upper floor rehabs or energy efficiency/sustainability improvements. It does not apply if the project is a large, single investment that impacts a number of properties like a common elevator or fire suppression system.

NOTE: Previous Grant Beneficiaries (projects/buildings) who are completing a large, phased project may apply for additional Main Street Iowa Challenge Grant funding so long as the scope of work authorized in the previous award is complete and all funds dispersed.

REHAB/CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS:

Main Street Iowa staff will review building plans and specifications for STANDARDS: design appropriateness. Plans must meet all local code requirements and comply with the defined Iowa Green Streets criteria of IEDA. See <http://iowaeconomicdevelopment.com/userdocs/documents/ieda/iowa-Green-Streets-Criteria.pdf> for Iowa Green Streets Criteria.

Note: If a property is listed or deemed eligible for the National Register of Historic Places or part of a National Register District, the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation <http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation.htm> must be followed.

APPLICATION DEADLINE:

Late applications will not be considered. Only completed applications including all required documentation will be reviewed.

PROJECT REVIEW:

Main Street Iowa staff will review submitted projects and make awards based on information provided in the grant application. Projects will be scored and ranked according to the scoring criteria outlined in the application.

Challenge grant applications will be scored/evaluated on the completeness and clarity of the application. The questions and scoring criteria are based on the 8 principles of Main Street:

Incremental: How does this project help stimulate additional downtown revitalization in the local district? How does it continue previous efforts? Help stimulate further efforts?

Quality: Design appropriateness. Level of finish. Businesses/tenants. Clarity of application – visuals, writing, organization. How well does the project demonstrate “Main Street at work”?

Partnerships: City/local government role. Other groups/organizations involved and their roles in the project. Local Main Street organization's role. Owner/developer's role

Local Assets/Priorities: How does this project fit into the LOCAL revitalization strategy? How significant is the property? How unique is the building/project? Does the project help achieve other local goals? (Educational, marketing, case study, etc.) Is the developer/owner local?

Catalyst/Change: How will the project affect the character and vibrancy of the district? What impact will it have on the building itself? (How transformative is the project on both the building and the district?)

Implementation/Completion: Is the project ready to proceed? (Shovel ready) How committed are the property owners to completing the entire rehab? Is there a big financial gap? Is this just initial stabilization? What's the plan to complete the project?

Comprehensiveness/Scope: Is this for an entire rehab or just a portion of the building? Is it only for the façade? Does it include upper floor housing/use? Business development? How well are all of the 4 points integrated into the project? Does the project help achieve other goals? (Educational, marketing, case study, etc.) Does it connect to market analysis? How does it help business development? How does it incorporate sustainable practices?

Self-help: How well are *local* resources being used? (Financial, volunteer, etc.) Are there a number of local players (individuals, organizations, businesses) involved/partnering in the project?

AWARD ANNOUNCEMENT:

The announcement of project awards is *tentatively* planned for Mid November of the current application cycle. Exact time and location to be determined. Grantees will be notified of time and location as soon as details are finalized. **Attendance at the formal presentation ceremony is expected!**

PROJECT COMMENCEMENT:

Once contracts are finalized and signed by all parties, and all designs are finalized and approved, a project may begin construction. This is possibly as early as December 1st following award announcements. Projects may not commence without approval from Main Street Iowa and the Iowa Economic Development Authority.

PAYMENT

Funds for completed work will be disbursed at the following intervals; a partial reimbursement payment may be made, if so requested, when no less than one-half (1/2) of the project is completed and proper documentation including photographs of completed work to date, copies of invoices of expenditures marked paid, and proof of payment are submitted to Main Street Iowa. Partial payment cannot exceed 60% of entire grant amount.

Final payment will be made upon project completion including final inspection by Main Street Iowa staff. To request final reimbursement payment, applicants must submit invoices of expenditures marked paid, proof of payment and photographs of the completed project. Warrants will be dispersed following a project inspection by Main Street Iowa staff.

CLOSEOUT/FINAL INSPECTION

Main Street Iowa will conduct a final site inspection/walk through before final payment. Paid invoices and proof of payment are required before final reimbursement is made. Projects that come in under budget will receive 50% of approved project expenses. Under no circumstances will IEDA pay more than 50% of the project expenditures.

The terms and conditions detailed above are a broad outline of the Main Street Challenge Grant and are not intended to be all-inclusive. Terms and conditions are subject to change.