

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY[261]

Adopted and Filed

Rulemaking related to community catalyst building remediation program

The Economic Development Authority hereby rescinds Chapter 45, “Community Catalyst Building Remediation Program,” Iowa Administrative Code, and adopts a new Chapter 45 with the same title.

Legal Authority for Rulemaking

This rulemaking is adopted under the authority provided in Iowa Code section 15.106A.

State or Federal Law Implemented

This rulemaking implements, in whole or in part, Iowa Code section 15.231.

Purpose and Summary

Pursuant to Executive Order 10, the Authority is rescinding Chapter 45 and adopting a new chapter in lieu thereof. The chapter describes the policies and procedures applicable to the Community Catalyst Building Remediation Program administered by the Authority pursuant to Iowa Code section 15.231. The program provides grants to cities for the remediation or redevelopment of underutilized buildings.

The updated chapter is more concise throughout. Language that duplicates statute and language that is duplicated within the chapter has been omitted.

Public Comment and Changes to Rulemaking

Notice of Intended Action for this rulemaking was published in the Iowa Administrative Bulletin on January 21, 2026, as **ARC 9974C**. A public hearing was held on the following date(s):

- February 10, 2026
- February 12, 2026

No one attended the public hearings. No public comments were received. No changes from the Notice have been made.

Adoption of Rulemaking

This rulemaking was adopted by the Authority Board on March 20, 2026.

Fiscal Impact

This rulemaking has no fiscal impact to the State of Iowa.

Jobs Impact

After analysis and review of this rulemaking, no impact on jobs has been found.

Waivers

Any person who believes that the application of the discretionary provisions of this rulemaking would result in hardship or injustice to that person may petition the Authority for a waiver of the discretionary provisions, if any, pursuant to 261—Chapter 199.

Review by Administrative Rules Review Committee

The Administrative Rules Review Committee, a bipartisan legislative committee which oversees rulemaking by executive branch agencies, may, on its own motion or on written request by any individual or group, review this rulemaking at its [regular monthly meeting](#) or at a special meeting.

The Committee's meetings are open to the public, and interested persons may be heard as provided in Iowa Code section 17A.8(6).

Effective Date

This rulemaking will become effective on May 20, 2026.

The following rulemaking action is adopted:

ITEM 1. Rescind 261—Chapter 45 and adopt the following **new** chapter in lieu thereof:

CHAPTER 45
COMMUNITY CATALYST BUILDING REMEDIATION PROGRAM

261—45.1(15) Definitions. For purposes of this chapter unless the context otherwise requires:

“Agreement” means a contract for financial assistance under the program describing the terms on which the financial assistance is to be provided.

“Applicant” means a city applying for financial assistance under the program.

“Authority” means the economic development authority created in Iowa Code section 15.105.

“Building” means a structure located in a city that is used or intended to be used for:

1. Commercial or industrial purposes;
2. Residential purposes; or
3. Both commercial or industrial and residential purposes.

“Community catalyst” means a building(s) located in an area central to a city's economic development activities that, if remediated, would stimulate additional economic growth or reinvestment in the community, especially private sector financial investment.

“Costs directly related” means expenditures that are incurred for acquisition, deconstruction, disposal, redevelopment, or rehabilitation of a community catalyst to the extent that the expenditures are attributable directly to the remediation or redevelopment of the community catalyst. “Costs directly related” includes expenditures for site preparation work, surveying, construction materials, construction labor, architectural services, engineering services, building permits, building inspection fees, and interest accrued on a construction loan during the time period allowed for project completion under an agreement entered into pursuant to the program. “Costs directly related” does not include expenditures for furnishings, appliances, accounting services, legal services, loan origination and other financing costs, syndication fees and related costs, developer fees, or the costs associated with selling or renting the dwelling units whether incurred before or after completion of the project.

“Director” means the director of the authority.

“Economic growth” means the creation of additional jobs, growth of new or existing businesses, development of new housing units, increased property values, or potential population growth.

“Emergency project” means the same as defined in Iowa Code section 15.231(2)“b.”

“Financial assistance” means a grant made by the authority under the program.

“Program” means the community catalyst building remediation program established pursuant to Iowa Code section 15.231 and this chapter.

“Project” means a proposed plan for the remediation of underutilized buildings in a city that is expected to have a significant positive impact on the city. “Project” must include at least one building but no more than two buildings. For two buildings to be considered part of the same project, the buildings must be contiguous and under the same ownership. All community catalyst buildings to be remediated must be included in the proposed plan upon application, and the proposed plan must demonstrate the steps and actions necessary to further remediation and redevelopment efforts in a comprehensive and coordinated manner.

“Public nuisance” means the same as defined in Iowa Code section 657A.1 and includes buildings with blighting characteristics as defined by Iowa Code section 403.2.

“Redevelopment” means development activities associated with a project that are undertaken for the purpose of remediating underutilized buildings; for constructing new buildings or improvements at a site

where formerly existing buildings have been demolished; or for rehabilitating, reusing or repurposing existing buildings or improvements at a project site. “Redevelopment” typically includes projects that result in the elimination of blighting characteristics as defined by Iowa Code section 403.2.

“*Remediation*” or “*remediating*” means the redevelopment, repair, improvement, rehabilitation, disposal, or deconstruction of at least one but no more than two underutilized buildings at a site included in a project.

“*Underutilized building*” means a building that is vacant or mostly vacant, is blighted or severely deteriorated, and contains potential safety hazards including structural instability, code noncompliance, vermin infestation, vandalism or potential for vandalism, vagrancy, hazardous materials, or generally unsafe or hazardous conditions. The building may or may not be considered a public nuisance.

261—45.2(15) Program description.

45.2(1) Amount, form, and timing of assistance.

a. The amount of financial assistance awarded will be determined by the authority based on the total amount of funds available to the authority for the program and based on the project details. Each applicant shall receive no more than one award of financial assistance per project per fiscal year. The maximum amount of financial assistance per applicant per fiscal year shall not exceed \$100,000.

b. The authority shall allocate moneys based on population as prescribed in Iowa Code section 15.231(3).

45.2(2) Application.

a. Information on submitting an application under the program is available on the authority’s website.

b. Each fiscal year during which funding is available, applications for financial assistance other than applications for emergency projects submitted pursuant to paragraph 45.2(2)“d” will only be accepted during the established application period(s) identified by the authority on the authority’s website.

c. An application shall not be considered submitted for review until the application is completed and all required supporting documentation and information are provided.

d. Cities that identify an emergency project may submit an application for financial assistance at any time. All applications for financial assistance for emergency projects must meet all other requirements of this program and shall be scored using the same criteria as are applied to other applications.

45.2(3) Use of funds. An applicant shall use funds only for reimbursement of the costs directly related to the project. The authority may require documentation or other information establishing the actual costs incurred for a project. Failure to use the funds for reimbursement of the costs directly related to a project shall be grounds for default under the agreement entered into pursuant to this chapter.

261—45.3(15) Program eligibility, application scoring, and funding decisions.

45.3(1) Program eligibility. An applicant must meet the following eligibility criteria to qualify for financial assistance under this program:

a. The applicant must be a city. If the project building(s) are owned by an entity other than the city, the city must provide information to the authority regarding ownership and the relationship between the owner and the city.

b. A building that constitutes the project must be an underutilized building and a community catalyst as determined by the authority.

c. The project must include financial or in-kind resources contributed by the city.

d. The applicant must complete the application and provide all other information and documents reasonably required by the authority.

45.3(2) Application scoring criteria. Each complete and eligible application will be scored by authority staff using criteria set forth by the authority, which may include the following:

a. Economic impact of the project. The authority will take into account the potential economic growth and investment that is reasonably expected to occur as a result of the project. The applicant must

provide information demonstrating that the expected economic impact of the project is reasonable based on existing factors.

b. Local government support. The level and amount of local government support, including financial support, will be considered for each applicant.

c. Readiness. The authority will assess whether the project is well-prepared and ready to begin within a reasonable amount of time.

d. Project plan and timeline. The authority will assess whether the applicant has prepared a detailed project plan and timeline for the execution of the project.

e. Project financing. The authority will assess whether the applicant has secured financing and is financially prepared to complete the project.

45.3(3) *Funding decisions.*

a. Each application and its average numerical score will be referred to the director with a recommendation as to whether to fund the project and, if financial assistance is recommended, a recommendation as to the amount of financial assistance.

b. The director will make the final funding decision on each application, taking into consideration the amount of available funding, the average numerical score of the application, and the recommendations made by authority staff. The director may approve, deny, or defer any application.

c. An application must receive the average minimum score established by the authority to receive funding. A score exceeding the minimum does not guarantee that the applicant will receive financial assistance.

d. Each applicant will be notified in writing of the funding decision.

e. A project that does not receive financial assistance may reapply.

261—45.4(15) Agreement and reporting.

45.4(1) Each applicant that is approved for financial assistance under the program shall enter into an agreement with the authority that specifies the terms on which the financial assistance is to be provided, including the terms described in Iowa Code section 15.231(4) and 15.231(5). The recipient shall execute the agreement before funds are disbursed.

45.4(2) The authority and the applicant may amend the agreement at any time upon the mutual written agreement of both the authority and the applicant.

45.4(3) An applicant that has been approved for financial assistance under the program shall submit information reasonably required by the authority to make reports to the authority's board, the governor's office, or the general assembly.

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code section 15.231.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: For replacement pages for IAC, see IAC Supplement 4/15/26.