

CHAPTER 39  
IOWA MAIN STREET PROGRAM  
[Prior to 1/14/87, Iowa Development Commission[520] Ch 9]

**261—39.1(15) Purpose.** The purpose of the Iowa main street program is to stimulate economic development within the context of historic preservation and to establish a strong public/private partnership to revitalize traditional commercial districts in Iowa communities. The main street program emphasizes community self-reliance and the traditional assets of personal service, local ownership and unique architecture historically prevalent in traditional commercial districts. The main street program is based on four strategies which, when applied together, create a positive image and an improved economy in these districts. The strategies are organization, promotion, design and economic restructuring.

Communities selected for participation in this demonstration program will receive technical assistance from the department's main street staff, professional staff of the National Trust Main Street Center, and other professional consultants and may have professional services of other state agencies to draw upon in order to facilitate the communities' local main street program.

[ARC 9455B, IAB 4/6/11, effective 5/11/11]

**261—39.2(15) Definitions.** The following definitions will apply to the Iowa main street program unless the context otherwise requires:

“*Department*” means the Iowa department of economic development.

“*Director*” means the director of the Iowa department of economic development.

“*Eligible activity*” includes organization, promotion, design and economic restructuring activities to create a positive image and an improved economy in a city's traditional commercial districts.

“*Eligible applicant*” means a city in Iowa that files a joint application with a local nonprofit organization established by the community to govern the local main street program.

“*National Trust Main Street Center*” refers to an entity within the National Trust for Historic Preservation, a nonprofit national organization chartered by Congress.

[ARC 9455B, IAB 4/6/11, effective 5/11/11]

**261—39.3(15) Program administration.**

**39.3(1) Administering agency.** The Iowa main street program is administered by the Iowa department of economic development.

**39.3(2) Subcontracting.** The department may contract with the National Trust Main Street Center of the National Trust for Historic Preservation for technical and professional services as well as with other appropriate consultants and organizations.

**39.3(3) Request for applications (RFA).** The department, upon availability of funds, will distribute a request for applications which describes the Iowa main street program, outlines eligibility requirements, and includes an application and a description of the application procedures. Selection will be made on a competitive basis.

**39.3(4) Applications.** Applications may be obtained by contacting the Iowa Main Street Program Coordinator, Iowa Department of Economic Development, 200 East Grand Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50309; telephone (515)725-3056.

**39.3(5) Deadline.** A completed application shall be returned to the department, postmarked no later than the date specified by the department in the application and contain the information requested in the application.

**39.3(6) Advisory council.** The director may appoint a state main street advisory council(s) composed of individuals knowledgeable in traditional commercial district revitalization to advise the director on the various elements of the program.

[ARC 9455B, IAB 4/6/11, effective 5/11/11]

**261—39.4(15) Eligible applicants.** All cities in Iowa are eligible to file a joint application along with their local community nonprofit organization established to govern the local main street program for selection as a main street demonstration community.

[ARC 9455B, IAB 4/6/11, effective 5/11/11]

**261—39.5(75GA,ch1201) Funding.** Rescinded IAB 4/6/11, effective 5/11/11.

**261—39.6(15) Selection.**

**39.6(1)** The director will determine, contingent upon the availability of state funding, the number of cities to be selected for inclusion in the main street program.

**39.6(2)** Cities will be selected for participation in the program on a competitive basis as described in these rules.

**39.6(3)** Upon selection of the demonstration projects, the department shall prepare an agreement which will include the terms and conditions of participation.

[ARC 9455B, IAB 4/6/11, effective 5/11/11]

**261—39.7(15) Selection criteria.** The following factors shall be considered in the selection of a city for participation in the main street program (the highest point total possible is 400 points):

**39.7(1) Support/funding. (100 points maximum)**

*a.* Evidence of a strong commitment from city government and various local and private sector organizations to support a local main street program for at least three years. This evidence will include a resolution of support from the city government and other organizations in the community such as merchants associations, chambers of commerce or economic development corporations in addition to letters of support from other private sector entities.

*b.* Evidence of local public and private funds available to finance a local main street program for three years. This evidence will include a proposed local main street budget, sources of funding and financial commitment letters from the city government and other identified sources.

*c.* Evidence of a positive commitment to hire a local main street program director for not less than a three-year period. This evidence shall include a written commitment to hire a program director, signed jointly by the local nonprofit organization established to govern the local program and the city. For cities with a population of less than 5,000, the local main street program director shall be hired for a minimum of 25 hours per week. For cities with a population of 5,000 or more, the local main street program director shall be hired full-time.

*d.* Evidence of the existence of, or a plan for, a nonprofit corporation organized under the laws of the state, such as a local main street organization, merchants association, chamber of commerce or economic development corporation that will be locally designated to serve as the governing body and policy board for the local main street program and program director. This evidence will include a copy of the proposed or filed articles of incorporation and the bylaws of such organization.

**39.7(2) Historic building fabric. (60 points maximum)**

*a.* Evidence of the existence of architecturally and historically significant buildings in the traditional commercial district that are currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places or are National Register-eligible or are in National Register-designated historic districts. This evidence shall include identification of such buildings or districts.

*b.* Evidence of a local historic preservation organization and any evidence that indicates the organization's involvement working on historic projects located in the traditional commercial district. This evidence shall include the identification of such organizations and activities over the past three years.

*c.* Evidence of any current historic preservation activities.

*d.* Evidence of the concentration of historic buildings located within the identifiable main street area.

*e.* Evidence of a locally designated historic district.

**39.7(3) Potential.** (100 points maximum)

a. Consideration of the possibility for demonstrable change in the proposed main street district as a result of being a main street city. Demonstration of this possibility includes the identified goals of the applicant, the potential for the realization of these goals and identification of the long-term impact the main street program will have on the city.

b. Potential for successfully completing the five-year program start-up period. Demonstration of this potential shall include the proposed structure of the organization, the responsibilities of the board members, the program director and the chain of command for the organization.

c. Demonstration of the need for economic revitalization and development in the district. Demonstration of this need includes a summary of the current economic trends in the area and their impact on the district and a summary identifying reasons for needing the main street program.

d. Identification of the size and location of the district as related to the whole community. This shall include justification for the size of the district.

**39.7(4) Current community demographics.** (40 points maximum)

a. Description of the housing characteristics of the city, including the average vacancy rate and the condition of housing stock.

b. Description of the cultural, tourism and recreational aspects of the community. The importance the community places on these quality of life issues provides a barometer for future community growth.

c. Description of the mix of retail, professional services, government offices and other commercial uses in the district.

d. Description of building ownership within the proposed main street district, such as the current use, percentage of owner-occupied buildings, average rent rates and the vacancy rate.

**39.7(5) Previous history.** (60 points maximum)

a. Identification of previous revitalization efforts, including identifying prior programs and their outcome.

b. Evidence of past public/private partnerships. This evidence shall include a summary of significant civic improvements completed by the community within the past three years.

c. Evidence of a good private investment record in the proposed main street district. This evidence shall include descriptions of commercial building rehabilitations and new construction within the past three years.

d. Evidence of comprehensive plans, studies or surveys, which include the proposed main street district, done within the past three years. This evidence shall include copies of such plans, studies or surveys and their outcome.

e. Evidence of participation in other Iowa department of economic development programs within the past three years.

f. Designation as a certified local government, an Iowa great place, or an Iowa cultural and entertainment district from the Iowa department of cultural affairs.

**39.7(6) Readiness.** (40 points maximum)

a. Identification of the community's familiarity with the main street program and principles as evidenced by prior exposure to main street conferences, community presentations, and contact with the main street Iowa program.

b. Demonstration of support shown for the main street program by the local financial community, the chamber of commerce, the merchants association, the local economic development organization, the local elected officials and the professional staff of city government.

c. Demonstration of the ability to implement the main street program and hire a program director upon selection. Demonstration of this ability shall include a work plan with established timetables to hire a program director and organize a board of directors, if needed.

[ARC 9455B, IAB 4/6/11, effective 5/11/11]

**261—39.8(75GA,ch1201) Financial management.** Rescinded IAB 4/6/11, effective 5/11/11.

**261—39.9(15) Performance reviews.** Participating main street communities shall submit performance reports to the department as required. The reports shall document the progress of the program activities.  
[ARC 9455B, IAB 4/6/11, effective 5/11/11]

**261—39.10(15) Noncompliance.** If the department finds that a participating main street community is not in compliance with the requirements under this program, the department shall terminate the program agreement.  
[ARC 9455B, IAB 4/6/11, effective 5/11/11]

**261—39.11(15) Forms.** The following forms will be used by the administering agency for the main street program.

1. Application form for the Iowa main street program (Form 1).
2. Performance reports for monitoring the performance of each grantee (Form 2).

[ARC 9455B, IAB 4/6/11, effective 5/11/11]

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code section 15.108.

[Filed emergency 12/13/85—published 1/1/86, effective 12/13/85]

[Filed 4/30/86, Notice 1/1/86—published 5/21/86, effective 6/25/86]

[Filed emergency 12/19/86—published 1/14/87, effective 12/19/86]

[Filed 10/27/89, Notice 9/6/89—published 11/15/89, effective 12/20/89]<sup>1</sup>

[Filed 11/20/90, Notice 8/8/90—published 12/12/90, effective 1/16/91]

[Filed 12/16/94, Notice 11/9/94—published 1/4/95, effective 2/22/95]

[Filed ARC 9455B (Notice ARC 9336B, IAB 1/12/11), IAB 4/6/11, effective 5/11/11]

<sup>1</sup> History transferred from 261—Chapter 42 IAC 1/4/95.