

261—28.4(88GA,SF608) Program eligibility, application scoring, and funding decisions.

28.4(1) Program eligibility. An applicant must meet the following eligibility criteria to qualify for financial assistance under this program:

- a. The applicant must be an Iowa community as defined in rule 261—28.2(88GA,SF608).
- b. An applicant that is an incorporated city must have a population of 20,000 or less and shall not be contiguous to a city with a population of 40,000 or greater. An applicant that is a county shall be one of the 88 least populous counties in the state. An applicant that is a community designee shall have entered an agreement pursuant to Iowa Code chapter 28E with an incorporated city or county meeting the population criteria in this paragraph.
- c. An eligible applicant will be allowed to submit only one application per application period.
- d. The applicant must demonstrate the capacity for administering a grant.
- e. The applicant must demonstrate the feasibility of the project's proposed scope and timeline with the funds requested.
- f. The applicant must identify and describe other sources of funding for the proposed assessment and related activities.
- g. The applicant must identify any partner organizations that will be utilized in interpreting and implementing the data collected through the assessment.
- h. The applicant must provide a cash match of at least 50 cents for every dollar awarded as a grant under this program.

28.4(2) Application scoring criteria. All completed applications will be reviewed and scored. Each application will be scored using criteria set forth by the authority, which may include the following:

- a. Applicant readiness and partnerships. The application should demonstrate that the applicant is actively addressing housing needs and has identified diverse partners.
- b. Project goals and timeline. The application should demonstrate clearly defined, measurable goals and a timeline for execution of the project.
- c. Project budget and financing. The application should include a complete budget that provides clear justification for all costs. The application should also demonstrate secured financing and that the cash match requirement has been met.
- d. Additional points. Extra consideration is provided to applications that have projects supporting housing initiatives endorsed by the Iowa great places citizens advisory board, as well as those located in a community with a population of 10,000 or less.

28.4(3) Funding decisions. Funding decisions will be made using the following process:

- a. *Staff review.* Each application will be reviewed by staff for eligibility and completeness. Complete applications meeting all eligibility requirements will be sent to a grant committee.
- b. *Grant committee review and recommendation.* Following staff review, a grant committee will review and score applications using the criteria in subrule 28.4(2) and will make funding recommendations. The committee may utilize an outside technical panel if the committee determines additional expertise is necessary to review and score the application. The application and score will be referred to the director with a recommendation as to whether to fund the project and, if funding is recommended, a recommendation as to the amount of the grant.
- c. *Director's decision.* The director will make the final funding decision on each application, taking into consideration the amount of available funding and the grant committee's recommendation. The director may approve, deny, or defer funding for any application.
- d. *Notification.* Each applicant will be notified in writing of the funding decision within 15 days of the director's decision.

[ARC 5092C, IAB 7/15/20, effective 8/19/20; ARC 5693C, IAB 6/16/21, effective 7/21/21; ARC 6319C, IAB 5/18/22, effective 6/22/22; ARC 6892C, IAB 2/22/23, effective 3/29/23]