

761—163.8(315) Immediate opportunity projects.

163.8(1) General provisions. The following provisions are applicable to immediate opportunity projects:

a. Immediate opportunity projects may be located on primary roads, secondary roads, city streets, state park roads or county conservation parkways.

b. There is no limit on the number of applications per county or city that will be considered for RISE funding.

c. Counties and cities may apply for single-year or multiyear funding. Multiyear funding is to be limited to funding commitments from no more than three program years' allocations.

d. Applicants may use staff from other counties or cities, areawide planning organizations, areawide economic development organizations, or other jurisdictions to prepare application materials or administer projects.

e. An adequate transportation justification for the roadway project is to be provided. The proposed improvement need not be designed prior to project application, but the concept is to generally be reasonable from a transportation planning and engineering standpoint and detailed enough to enable project cost estimates to be developed.

163.8(2) Contents of applications. Each application for an immediate opportunity project is to contain the following:

a. General information, including the applicant's name, contact person, mailing address, telephone number, local economic development area and history of efforts in the area, and other information of a general nature about the project proposal and the associated economic development activity.

b. Cost information, including the estimated total capital investment involved with the associated economic development activity, the estimated total cost of the roadway project, the amount of RISE funds requested for the roadway project, and the amount of non-RISE funds to be used to match or supplement RISE funding. Itemized breakdowns (showing the item, cost, and funding source) are to be included for the total capital investment, the total roadway project cost, the RISE funds requested, and the non-RISE funds to be used to match or supplement RISE funding.

c. Data showing the impact of the associated economic development activity, including the number of direct jobs created or direct jobs retained. Jobs created as a result of jobs being displaced elsewhere in the state are not to be considered direct jobs created for the purpose of evaluating the application.

(1) To expedite the review, the applicant is to provide the following data for each business included in the project justification: a list of in-state competitors; a list of in-state suppliers; the percentage of out-of-state sales; the effect on import substitution; long-range growth potential; and a list of all current and anticipated employment positions, both full- and part-time, the hourly wage for each, and the turnover rate.

(2) The applicant is to certify that each business will give hiring preference to residents of the state or local area, except for out-of-state employees offered a transfer to Iowa.

d. A preliminary project concept statement for the roadway project, including maps showing site characteristics, such as zoning, platting, subdivision boundaries, and corporate limits; a sketch plan; and a justification for the transportation improvement. In most cases, a sketch plan should include a simple plan and profile defining the horizontal and vertical geometrics and a typical roadway cross section defining pavement, shoulders, foreslope, and backslope or border treatment. The transportation justification should address topics such as the current condition of existing roadways or bridges, the relationship of the project to connecting roads, and ingress to and egress from the site, as well as the current flow of traffic on the development site, anticipated total traffic and large truck traffic, proposed major design features of the proposed improvement, the intended roadway function, how the proposed improvement is consistent with other local plans, and the reason the proposed alternative was selected over other alternatives. The department may request completion of a traffic impact analysis to supplement the transportation justification before it is reviewed.

e. A time schedule for the total development, including the roadway project and the associated economic development activity.

f. A formal resolution passed by the governing body of the jurisdiction responsible or to be responsible for the road or street to be constructed or improved. The resolution is to state that the project

will be adequately maintained and dedicated to public use for a minimum of 20 years after completion of the project and that land provided access by the proposed improvement will be developed according to rule 761—163.2(315). The resolution is to also certify that the project meets the threshold criteria cited in paragraph 163.8(6)“a” and that any business assisted by the project that acquires or merges with an Iowa corporation within three years following the RISE application intends to make a good-faith effort to hire the workers of the merged or acquired company.

g. Documentation showing that the threshold criteria of subrule 163.8(6) have been met.

163.8(3) *Submission of applications.* Applications are to be submitted on a form provided by the department and may be submitted at any time. Once an application has been submitted, no further information concerning that application is accepted by the department from the applicant unless specifically requested by the department. Applications may be withdrawn by the applicant and resubmitted at any time. Resubmitted applications are to be dated accordingly.

163.8(4) *Incomplete applications.* An applicant is to fully complete the official application form and provide all other information identified in this chapter before the application will be considered by the commission.

163.8(5) *Verification of application materials.* Complete applications are reviewed to verify the figures or statements in the applications. This may include site visits. If inaccuracies, omissions, or errors are found, the commission may rescind the commitment of funds or reevaluate the application based on the correct information. If an applicant loses funding through this process, the commission has complete discretion concerning the disposition of those funds, including awarding them to other applicants or carrying them over to the next programming cycle.

163.8(6) *Threshold criteria.* Funding commitment decisions for immediate opportunity projects are made on an individual basis. There is no competitive ranking of project applications. In order to gain a funding commitment, an application is to meet all of the following threshold criteria:

a. The project is to be related to an immediate, nonspeculative opportunity for permanent job creation or retention. The applicant county or city (or its agent) should be in the process of negotiating a location or retention decision with a developer or firm.

b. The applicant is to demonstrate that an immediate funding commitment is essential to influence the job location or retention decision.

c. The applicant is to demonstrate that necessary arrangements have been made for nonroadway factors (e.g., labor force training, zoning, sewer, water, police and fire protection, financing, and permits) essential for the proposed job creation or job retention activity.

d. The applicant is to commit to providing at least 20 percent non-RISE financial participation in the roadway project, except the commission may approve a participation amount that is less than 20 percent if it determines that the applicant city or county is economically distressed.

e. There is to be a strong likelihood that the total development, including the roadway project, can be completed in a timely manner. It is up to the applicant to identify a time schedule and maintain it. This time schedule may be adjusted for such reasons, including but not limited to the project involves unusually complex engineering studies, extensive real estate negotiations, extensive analysis for environmental clearances, or unusually complex planning for associated development. The commission may withdraw funding if time schedules have been misrepresented or have not been maintained.

163.8(7) *Review and funding of applications.*

a. Department staff reviews complete immediate opportunity project applications and may consult with other organizations with economic development responsibilities. As part of the review, the staff evaluates the effect of the proposed project on the state economy using the following factors: consistency with the state economic development plan; diversification of the state economy; the impact on in-state suppliers, competitors, and import substitution; percentage of out-of-state sales; the quality of employment positions; and the record of law violations. This review is to be performed within a reasonable period of time after receipt of the application. Following this review, complete applications meeting the threshold criteria of subrule 163.8(6) are to be forwarded to the commission for action at its next meeting.

b. The commission may fund all or any part of an application and may make a conditional funding commitment. In making its decision, the commission will consider the amount of total capital investment per RISE dollar requested and the amount of RISE dollars requested per job created or retained.

c. The commission may deny funding for projects that will not result in net job creation or job retention from a statewide point of view, for instance, projects that simply involve the relocation of jobs or other economic activity within Iowa.

d. Immediate opportunity project applications may, at the discretion of the commission, be considered as applications for local development projects and included in the current round of local development project programming, regardless of the deadlines stated in subrule 163.9(3). However, immediate opportunity project applications submitted solely to circumvent the deadlines for local development project applications are not to be considered in this manner.

[ARC 9008C, IAB 3/19/25, effective 4/23/25]