

CDBG Planning Grant Minimum Plan Requirements

Downtown Revitalization Plans

Updated December 2022

The following are the minimum technical specifications for a Downtown Revitalization Plan as part of an OCRA CDBG Planning Grant. Once the initial draft is completed, a digital copy should be submitted to OCRA for review. Once OCRA has approved the draft plan, it must be submitted to and approved by the local governing body. Once approved by the local governing body, a final digital and paper copy that includes the approval by the local governing body must be submitted to OCRA in order to close-out the grant.

The plan must include or address all of the following items and relevant content:

Required Items

1. Cover Page
2. Table of Contents
3. Executive Summary
4. High-quality, colored, and captioned maps, photographs, and/or drawings that illustrate the critical elements of the plan
5. Concise narratives with minimal use of professional jargon
6. Citation of all sources used in both the footnote and the reference page
7. Plans must be in color, have page numbers, and be free from unusual formatting.

Required Contents (Plan must be organized in this order and with these headings)

- A. Executive Summary (2 pages)
 - a. Purpose of the plan
 - b. Scope of the plan
 - c. Process to develop plan, including public input via hearings, surveys, etc.
 - d. Outline of key goals, strategies, and desired outcomes

NOTE: Include page references
- B. Community Assets
Provide a brief overview of the demographic, economic and educational profile of the target area (city/town, county, or region), including but not limited to:
 - a. Key population features (such as age structure, population change, educational attainment, etc.)
 - b. Economic base (major employers, main industrial activity, main street small businesses etc.)
 - c. Existing local economic development tools (Redevelopment Commission, revolving loan fund, façade grants, TIF, loan pool, etc.)
 - d. Key anchor institutions in the community/county (such as public library, hospitals/clinics, community centers, cultural groups/museums, public schools, higher education institutions, etc.)
 - e. A brief history of the Main Street organization (including date they were established, when they became part of the Indiana Main Street network, how the organization is involved in the community, and their relationship with the local unit of government).

C. Downtown Revitalization Planning Committee (DRPC)

Provide a summary of the DRPC. This group should be led by representatives from the Local Unit of Government and the Main Street organization and should include:

- a. List of the members of the committee and the entity they represent
 - i. This committee should be diverse in terms of representation (economic development organizations, business/industry, education, health, nonprofit, faith-based, as well as other appropriate organizations/agencies and demographic groups)
- b. Outline of the committee's work in developing the plan including a listing of meetings, summaries of public hearing, and a discussion of how consensus was reached for the plan
 - i. The DRPC should engage in an extensive and innovative public engagement plan and strategy utilizing traditional and non-traditional meeting and outreach methods to encourage participation from a diverse population.
- c. Describe role of the DRPC which includes, but is not limited to:
 - i. Serving as liaison between the area, OCRA, partners, funders
 - ii. Engaging in studying key data indicators related to revitalization
 - iii. Being actively involved in developing, with active public input, the Downtown Revitalization Plan

D. Existing Conditions

Describe the current state of the Main Street district area. Specifically, provide information on the following:

- a. Market Conditions
 - i. Basic demographic information and trends on the populations of the main street district area
 - ii. An analysis of the commercial development opportunities in the downtown business district area
 - iii. Recommendations of the types of commercial uses that could be supported by its own residents as well as by others from neighboring and/or regional communities.
 1. Results should be included from a public survey in the last 3 years that outlines the main street district strengths and opportunities, the type of businesses the public would like to see, when the public shops in the district, why individuals live or do not live in the district, etc.
- b. Existing Plan Conditions
 - i. Summary analysis (including date of last updated) of existing plans:
 1. Comprehensive Plan and/or Capital Improvement Plan
 2. Existing land use controls: zoning, site plan review, design review and guidelines, signage, and downtown ordinances.
 3. Strategic or economic development plans by City, Economic Development, and Main Street
 4. Long Range Transportation Plan and State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)
- c. Physical Conditions: each of the following should be discussed even if currently not in place and identified as a liability/issue or strength/opportunity.
 - i. Land use, in Main Street District

1. Inventory of current building stock with building condition, building materials, verbal description of location, architectural style, number of stories, shape of roof, landscape features, any known exterior, and interior alterations such as additions, replacement windows, aluminum, or vinyl siding changes. Include date of construction and date of alterations (if known).
2. Provide patterns of ownership and identify if the property needs façade improvements.
3. Provide current building use for all stories using only the following categories:
 - a. retail
 - b. food/beverage
 - c. private service
 - d. public service
 - e. housing
 - f. vacant
4. Provide several clear, current photos of the buildings. Submitted views should represent the property from the public right-a-way (sidewalk and alley)
- ii. Open spaces – vacant land and status of property
 1. Provide several clear, current photos of the property. Submitted views should represent the property from the public right-a-way (sidewalk and alley)
- iii. Public spaces – parks, parklets, alley activations, etc.
 1. Provide current conditions including area access, furniture, art, verbal description of location, date public spaces were installed or developed, and how they are currently managed and maintained.
 2. Provide several clear, current photos of the property. Submitted views should represent the property from the public right-a-way (sidewalk and alley)
- iv. All entrances and gateways to the downtown
- v. Circulation – vehicle and pedestrians
 1. Identify traffic routes
- vi. Parking – public and private, future parking, public parking lots
- vii. Infrastructure – sidewalks, streets, alleys, public Wi-Fi, utilities
- viii. Drainage
- ix. Public sign systems
- x. Public transit
- xi. Street furniture – benches, trash receptacles, bike racks, planters, etc.
- xii. Street lighting – decorative historic post, lamps, banners

d. Cultural/Social Conditions

- i. Analysis of the Main Street business district’s cultural and social resources, including:
 1. Events held in the Main Street district such as festivals, art fairs, concerts and retail promotions and identify which organization or group oversees the event.
 2. Cultural institutions such as schools, museums, libraries, theaters, art

- galleries, and other non-profits
 - ii. Analysis of housing in the downtown area
 1. Description, including total number, of available residential units by type (including single-family detached or attached, upper story rentals, condos, multi-family buildings, short-term rentals, etc.)
 2. Total number of occupied vs. vacant units
 3. Identified number of owner-occupied and rentals
 4. Current rental and housing costs

- E. Downtown Vision and Key Goals
 - a. Vision of the future state and use of the district. The vision must:
 - i. Be future focused (5 to 10 years) and take into consideration foreseeable needs of the community
 - ii. Identify how the district will be used with an emphasis on economic development and community engagement
 - iii. Include possibilities for programming that will help to revitalize the district and attract tourists and outside businesses.
 - iv. Address any service gaps and needs associated with the district.
 - b. Key goals, along with measurable strategies linked to each goal, that will help sustain the downtown business district area and expand access to/outreach of the district.

- F. Downtown Revitalization Implementation Options
 - a. Prioritized outline of at least three (3) implementation options for downtown revitalization where each option addresses:
 - i. Description of how current assets can be leveraged to implement each option
 - ii. Renderings and recommended improvements
 1. Design – Structural, Architectural
 2. Mechanical
 3. Other recommendations
 - iii. Site/land acquisition issues for locations
 - iv. Pro-Forma for operations
 - v. Maps, pictures, or illustrations
 - vi. Defined metrics that illustrate the impact of the proposed project
 - vii. Cost and benefit estimates
 - viii. Implementation timeline
 - ix. List of funding sources both private and public
 - x. List of possible partnerships
 - xi. List of other available resources and agencies
 - b. Façade, Streetscape, and Public Spaces Recommendations
 - i. Façade renderings and recommended improvements for priority buildings
 1. Renderings and recommended improvements, including but not limited to:
 - a. Signage, lighting, structural issues, paint colors/finishes. All proposed improvements should be in alignment with the Secretary of Interior’s Standard for Rehabilitation
 2. New site plans
 3. Cost estimates
 4. Implementation timeline
 5. List of funding sources both private and public

6. List of possible partnerships
7. Maintenance and management plan
- ii. Streetscape and public spaces renderings and recommended improvements for streets/spaces within the Main Street District boundaries
 1. Renderings and recommended improvements, including but not limited to:
 - a. Signage, lighting, historic features, parking, bike/pedestrian amenities, paint colors/finishes, landscaping, art, downtown Wi-Fi, and other amenities
 2. Site/land acquisition issues for locations
 3. Maps and site plans
 4. Projected number of visitors; projected annual use through events, rentals, etc.
 5. Cost estimates
 6. Implementation timeline
 7. List of funding sources both private and public
 8. List of possible partnerships
 9. Maintenance and management plan

G. Action Items

The purpose of this section is to immediately begin to take action as dictated in the plan. The plan should therefore conclude with a summary of action items that will be taken upon OCRA’s approval of the plan. The following are recommended action items for this type of plan:

- a. A set of recommendations, implementation steps, and assigned responsibilities that are prioritized into short, medium, and long-term actionable goals that enable the local unit of government and identified partners to achieve the proposed vision for the district.
- b. A methodology and framework that will enable the local unit of government and the Main Street organization to track and report its progress to the community on a series of indicators which represent the goals established in the Downtown Revitalization Plan.
- c. Develop actionable steps to build owner “buy-in” (especially for façade programs) for projects and their sustainability

H. Appendices

For further guidance on how to create a Downtown Revitalization Plan, see the following resources:

[\(Re\)Building Downtown: A Guidebook for Revitalization](#) – Smart Growth America

[Turning Around Downtown: Twelve Steps to Revitalization](#) – Brookings Institution

[Downtown Revitalization](#) – USDA Rural Information Center

[The Secretary of the Interior's Standards & Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Properties](#)—National Park Service (NPS)