

CDBG Planning Grant Minimum Plan Requirements

Downtown Revitalization Plans

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

- Cover Page
- Table of Contents
- Executive Summary (2-4 pages)
- High-quality, colored and captioned maps, photographs, and/or drawings that illustrate the critical elements of the plan
- Concise narratives with minimal use of professional jargon
- Citation of all sources used in both the footnote and the reference page
- 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

1. Purpose of the plan
2. Scope of the plan
3. Process to develop plan, including public input via hearings, surveys, etc.
4. Plan summary in 2-4 pages
5. Outline of key goals, strategies and desired outcomes

NOTE: Include page references

B. General Background

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:

1. Key population features (such as age structure, population change, educational attainment, etc.)
2. Economic base (major employers, main industrial activity, etc.)
3. Key anchor institutions in the community/county (such as public library, hospitals/clinics, community centers, museums, public schools, higher education institutions, etc.)

C. Downtown Revitalization Planning Committee (DRPC)

Provide a summary of the DRPC. This should include:

1. List of the members of the committee and the entity they represent
 - a. This committee should be diverse in terms of representation (such as local government, Main Street organization, economic development organizations,

business/industry, education, health, nonprofit, faith-based, as well as other appropriate organizations/agencies and demographic groups)

2. 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
3. Describe role of the DRPC which includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. Serving as liaison between the area, OCRA, partners, funders
 - b. Engaging in studying key data indicators related to revitalization
 - c. Being actively involved in developing, with active public input, the Downtown Revitalization Plan for the targeted area

D. Existing Conditions

Describe the current state of the downtown business district area. Specifically, provide information on the following:

1. Market Conditions
 - a. Basic demographic information and trends on the populations of the downtown business district area
 - b. Basic information on the area from the Census of Retail Trade
 - c. An analysis of the commercial development opportunities in the downtown business district area
 - Might include Esri data obtained from the Indiana Small Business Development Center (though not required)
 - d. 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
 - e. The problems and opportunities in the retail areas
2. Existing Plan Conditions
 - a. Summary analysis (including when last updated) of existing plans:
 - i. Comprehensive Plan and/or Capital Improvement Plan, Parks and Recreation Plan, etc.
 - ii. Existing land use controls: zoning, site plan review, design review, signage, etc.
 - iii. Strategic or economic development plans by City, Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development, downtown social services, etc.
 - iv. Long Range Transportation Plan and State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)
3. Physical Conditions
 - a. Land use, including district and sub-areas
 - Inventory of current building stock and their uses
 - b. All entrances and gateways to the downtown
 - c. Open spaces – vacant land and status of property for potential commercial/neighborhood development
 - d. Green spaces – parks, parklets, alley activations, etc.
 - e. Circulation – vehicle and pedestrians
 - i. Identify traffic routes
 - ii. Research ways for improving the safety of pedestrian traffic in the project area
 - e. Parking – public and private, future parking, city parking lot

- f. Infrastructure – sidewalks, streets, alleys, utilities
- g. Drainage
- h. Public sign systems
- i. Public transit
- j. Facades
 - i. Current photos of all downtown buildings
- k. Street furniture – benches, trash receptacles with a historic “look”, etc.
- l. Street lighting – decorative historic post, lamps, banners
- m. Plant materials – colorful planters
- n. Private property conditions, considerations and issues
 - i. Patterns of ownership
 - ii. Buildings that need façade improvements
- n. Vacant buildings (number and potential use)
- o. Existing local economic development tools – Redevelopment Commission, loan pool, etc.
- p. Summary of liabilities and issues
- q. Summary of strengths and opportunities

4. Cultural/Social Conditions

- Analysis of the downtown business district’s cultural and social resources, including:
 - Events such as festivals, art fairs, concerts and retail promotions
 - Cultural institutions such as schools, museums, etc.
- Analysis of the downtown business district’s current image within the community and trade area
- Analysis of available housing in the downtown area
 - Mixed-use and second story residential opportunities

E. Downtown Vision and Key Goals

1. Vision of the future state and use of the area. The vision must:
 - Be future focused (5 to 10 years) and take into consideration foreseeable needs of the community
 - Identify how the area will be used with an emphasis on economic development and community engagement
 - Include possibilities for programming that will help to revitalize the surrounding neighborhoods and attract tourists and outside businesses
 - Address any service gaps and needs associated with the area
2. 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 area

F. Downtown Revitalization Implementation Options

1. Prioritized outline of at least three (3) implementation options for revitalization that include:
 - a. Description of how current assets can be leveraged to implement each option
 - b. Renderings and recommended improvements
 - i. Design – Structural, Architectural
 - ii. Mechanical
 - iii. Other recommendations
 - c. Site/land acquisition issues for locations

- d. Pro-Forma for operations
 - e. Maps, pictures, or illustrations
 - f. Projected number of visitors and/or jobs created through new business attraction
 - g. Cost and benefit estimates
 - h. Implementation timeline
 - i. List of funding sources both private and public
 - j. List of possible partnerships
 - k. List of other available resources and agencies
2. Façade and Streetscape Recommendations
 - a. Façade renderings and recommended improvements for each building
 - i. Signage, lighting, structural issues, historic features, paint colors/finishes
 - b. Streetscape renderings and recommended improvements for each street
 - i. Signage, lighting, historic features, pain colors/finishes, landscaping
 - c. Cost estimates for the various recommendations
 3. Description of Main Street Organization involvement (group status/progress)
 4. Proposed revisions and reconnections to existing plans and land use regulations

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 approval of the plan. The following are recommended action items for this type of plan:

1. Operationalize at least one of the projects from this plan that was developed by the DRPC and fully supported by the appropriate governing body
2. Seek external funding from all sources to prepare for future projects included in the plan (fundraising, CDBG Construction grants, federal grants, etc.)
3. 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