

## Main Street Washington Downtown Investment Grants (DIG)

*Grants are made possible through the generosity of the City of Washington, furnished through the Washington County Riverboat Foundation's Municipal Grant Program*

The goal of this program is to encourage remodeling and repair work to buildings within the designated Main Street District. Projects that are eligible are limited to existing commercial building rehabilitations (not including building acquisition costs) within the Main Street District and that utilize proven Main Street Washington (MSW) practices including emphasis on the Historic Preservation and the Secretary of Interior's Standards and Guidelines, including those that retain unique historic elements and use "green" materials. (<https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/four-treatments/treatment-rehabilitation.htm>)

Two opportunities within this program: DIG & Micro-DIG

**DIG:** Grants are offered on a sliding scale from \$25,000-\$50,000 with a minimum investment of \$100,000 (3:1 minimum match). (\$75,000 available)

**Micro-DIG:** Grants are up to \$10,000 with a required 1:1 match (\$25,000 available) – *preference given to projects that include blade or protruding signage.*

All projects require owner funding, and all elements of the project must meet MSW criteria. Project timelines are negotiable based on complexity, but are generally limited to 2 years. Projects will be handled in a project team method with checkup meetings on timeline and progress. Teams are in general the Building Owner, Contractor/Developer, and MSW Design Committee members. Individual grants will be managed within the framework of a written Project Agreement.

Funds will be awarded after the project is completed according to contract with MSW and applications will be available year round with awards made semi-annually.

Main Street Washington wants to support your project in any way we can, so please do not hesitate to ask. We offer:

- ★ Free Main Street Design Assistance from a professional architect
- ★ Technical publications such as Cleaning and Water-Repellent Treatments, Improving Energy Efficiency, Historic Storefronts, Repair of Wooden Windows, etc.
- ★ Interpretation and further explanation of Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation
- ★ Information and assistance with state and Federal tax credit programs

Steps in the Application Process:

1. Send a Letter of Intent to Participate (pdf attached) by email, or mail to Main Street Washington, 120 E Main St, Suite 6A, Washington IA 52353 [Required for eligibility]
2. Within a few days, the MSW Design Committee will make an appointment to visit your property to discuss your plans. [Required for eligibility]
3. Plan the details of the project with your contractor using information from the MSW Design Committee visit as guidelines. Be sure to contact MSW if you or your contractor have questions.
4. Compute the estimated cost of the project. [Required for eligibility]



5. Complete the **application form, attach contractor bids**, and return the packet to the Main Street Office. [Required for eligibility]
6. Only AFTER the Main Street Board of Directors and Washington City Council have approved your project AND after all applicable building permits have been issued may work begin.
7. All invoices and proof of payment must be turned in for reimbursement.
8. Schedule Confetti Celebration for Certificate of Completion and photo.

RETAIN THIS DOCUMENT FOR REFERENCE

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Eligibility requirements for all programs will assure high quality that will enhance our downtown for many years to come. Projects must adhere to the proposed plan, as specified in the Project Agreement. Any changes must be approved by the Main Street Washington Design Committee prior to completing that portion of the work. Construction progress meetings will be scheduled as agreed upon by the Project Team. A final walk-through is required to access grant funds.

**How to Qualify:** All commercial properties in the Main Street District are eligible to apply following the steps described on page one.

The **Letter of Intent to Participate** must use the form provided. Please include as much information as possible so we can best assist applicants in choosing appropriate materials and methods.

### A. Building Improvement

A City/WCRF Grant Partnership

**Purpose:** To facilitate repairs and maintenance on commercial buildings in the Main Street District. The proposed work may be interior or exterior, and may include removal of contemporary façade material in conjunction with other façade improvements.

**Incentive:** Up to **\$50,000** per building for approved plans; match requirement is 3:1 with minimum investment of \$100,000. Grant funds may be applied to labor and materials.

### B. Micro-DIG

A City/WCRF Grant Partnership

**Purpose:** Façade Improvements and/or Public Art Installation

i.e doors, windows, awnings, murals, signage, lighting, entrance accessibility /ADA compliance, tuckpointing, repairing cornices

- This year, Main Street Washington is prioritizing projects that enhance the "pedestrian experience." Preference will be given to projects that include **blade signs or protruding signage**—signs that are easily visible to people walking on the sidewalk, not just those driving by in cars.
- This signage can be a standalone project or integrated into a larger scope (e.g., combined with new awnings, window displays, or vinyl decals).

**Incentive: Up to \$10,000 (1:1 match required)**



## Letter of Intent to Participate Downtown Investment Grants (DIG)

Property Owner Information	Business Information <i>(if different than building owner)</i>
Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
Phone:	Phone:
Email:	Email:

Applying for: DIG       Micro DIG

Who is the **primary contact person** regarding this project? \_\_\_\_\_

**Approximate Project Budget:** *(bids not necessary at this time)* : \_\_\_\_\_

**Project Information:**

*Please check all the items being considered for the project.*

- |                                |                          |                               |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Roof                           | Exterior Painting        | Handicapped Access            |
| Exterior Lighting Masonry Work | Signage                  | Rear Entrance                 |
| Basement/Foundation            | Awnings                  | Interior Updating             |
| Heating/Cooling                | Storefront Restoration   | Upper Story Renovation        |
| Electrical Work                | Transom Windows          | Metal Ceiling                 |
| Site Improvements              | Entrances/Doors          | Windows                       |
| Asbestos Abatement             | Engineering Consultation | Design Assistance      Murals |
| Other: _____                   |                          |                               |

**Intended Start Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Expected Completion Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

I am a Main Street Washington Investor:  Yes     No     Unsure

Signing this document indicates I/we would like a site visit from Main Street Design Committee.

Building Owner Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Business Owner Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(if different than building owner)

**Return this form to Main Street Washington, 120 E Main St, Suite 6A.**

*Main Street Washington, as Grantor, is not liable for any contracts or agreements nor for any damages incurred as a result of this project. MSW reserves the right to withhold payment of said grant for work that does not comply with the scope of work as contracted between the grantee and MSW.*

*The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation are a set of common-sense historic preservation principles that guide work on historic buildings. They are meant to help preserve the historic character of a building while allowing for its continued, contemporary use.*

## Short Guide: Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

*These standards provide a framework for responsibly maintaining, repairing, and adapting historic buildings. The core philosophy is "repair over replace" and "respect the historic character."*

### The 10 Key Standards:

1. **Respect Historic Character:** Don't remove or obscure features and materials that contribute to a property's historic character. All changes should preserve it.
  - Simply put: Keep what makes the building historic.
2. **Avoid False History:** Don't create a false historical appearance. This means avoiding the addition of features that never existed on the building, or treating one period of history as the only important one if there have been significant changes over time.
  - Simply put: Be honest about the building's past; don't make up history.
3. **Preserve Defining Features:** Identify, retain, and preserve features and materials (such as windows, doors, ornamentation, and significant interior elements) that are important to the building's historic character.
  - Simply put: Save the special details.
4. **Repair, Don't Replace (if possible):** Prioritize repairing historic materials and features over replacing them. If repair isn't feasible, replace with new materials that match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities.
  - Simply put: Fix it, don't trash it. If you must replace, match it exactly.
5. **Protect Distinctive Craftsmanship:** Preserve distinctive historic features and examples of skilled craftsmanship.
  - Simply put: Value the original builder's work.
6. **New Additions: Be Compatible but Distinguishable:** New additions or alterations should be designed to be compatible with the historic building in terms of size, scale, color, material, and character. However, they should also be clearly distinguishable from the historic fabric.
  - Simply put: New work should fit in, but not pretend to be old. It should ideally be reversible.
7. **Protect Historic Site & Environment:** Preserve the historic relationship of the building to its site and its surrounding environment. Don't significantly alter the landscape or setting unless it's for an identified historic purpose.
  - Simply put: Consider the building's surroundings and overall context.
8. **Safeguard Archeological Resources:** If ground disturbance is necessary, ensure that significant archaeological resources are protected and appropriately recovered.
  - Simply put: Dig carefully!
9. **New Work - Compatible Design:** New additions, exterior alterations, or new construction on the site should be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale, and proportion of the historic property and its environment.
  - Simply put: Any new parts should blend with the old in look and feel.
10. **Reversible Alterations for New Uses:** Design alterations for a new use to be minimal and, where possible, reversible. This ensures that the historic integrity of the property is not compromised in a way that prevents future restoration.
  - Simply put: Make changes that can be undone later if needed.

***In a Nutshell:** The Standards encourage sensitive improvements that honor a building's past while allowing it to serve modern needs. They emphasize good design, quality materials, and careful craftsmanship to ensure that the historic character is retained for future generations.*

***Remember:** This is a condensed guide. For specific projects, it's always best to consult the full Standards document and seek advice from preservation professionals.*