

CULTURAL DISTRICT APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Pursuant to the authority of Iowa Administrative Code section 221, Chapter 9.

*A **Cultural District** is established to encourage city and county governments to partner with a local community non-profit or for-profit organization, businesses, and individuals to enhance the quality of life for citizens of this state. Cultural Districts also enrich local economies through developing and sustaining cultural facilities in a synergetic fashion.*

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF

CULTURAL
AFFAIRS

DEADLINE: FRIDAY, AUGUST 31, 2007 - 4:30 P.M.

Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs
600 East Locust Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0290

www.culturalaffairs.org

INTRODUCTION

What is a Cultural District?

A Cultural District is a well-recognized, walkable, mixed-use, compact area of a city in which a high concentration of cultural facilities serves as the anchor. Cultural Districts can be found in communities with smaller populations or in urban areas with the potential for more than one cultural district.

Iowa is the second state to initiate a cultural district certification program. **Ames, Cedar Falls, Cedar Rapids, Charles City, Cherokee, Clinton, Davenport, Des Moines, Dubuque, Elkader, Fairfield, Iowa City, Keokuk, Marion, Mason City, Muscatine, Pella, Perry, Sioux City, Spencer, Waterloo and West Des Moines** have established thirty separate Cultural Districts which positions historic preservation along with the arts and culture as the center of revitalization efforts. Cultural Districts attract residents and tourists who also support adjacent businesses such as restaurants, lodging, retail and entertainment. The presence of the arts and cultural opportunities enhances property values, the profitability of surrounding businesses and the tax base of the region. These districts attract a diverse and well-educated workforce – a key incentive for new and relocating businesses. And these districts contribute to the creativity and innovation of a community.

What are the benefits of a Cultural District?

The benefits offered to certified districts could include historic tax credits for rehabilitation of historic structures or other incentives which create live/work space for cultural workers, space for cultural and entertainment enterprises and access financial assistance programs from state agencies and other funding partners such as:

- Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs: Iowa Community Cultural Grants, Cultural Enrichment Operating Support Grants for Multi-discipline organizations.
- Iowa Arts Council: Project and Residency Grants, Operational Support Grants for Arts Organizations. Special Initiatives Grants.
- State Historical Society of Iowa: Historic Resource Development Program (*HRDP*), Temporary Property Tax Exemption, Federal Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credits and State Historic Preservation and Cultural and Entertainment District Tax Credit Program.
- Iowa Department of Economic Development (<http://www.state.ia.us/ided/index.html>):
- Iowa Finance Authority (www.ifahome.com):

Who can apply and what are the eligibility requirements to be a certified Cultural District?

A city or county (*jointly if a district extends across a common boundary*) must collaborate with a local non-profit or for-profit organization to apply for certification of a Cultural District by submitting an application, which includes all of the following information:

- Letter or resolution from the governmental body in which the district is located, which supports the designation for at least ten (10) years.
- Letter or resolution from local non-profit or for-profit organization board of directors which obligates their participation for three (3) years with an option to renew the certification.
- Statement of support from the county.
- Statement of support from the city if all or any portion of the district is within a city.
- Identify public/private partnership.

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What are the application requirements?

Applications must be typed or computer generated, be complete, meet all stated requirements and be properly signed by the chief elected official or officials in the case of a joint application and chair of community non profit organization. Include the completed checklist supplied with the application. An application fee of \$250 (*payable to the Department of Cultural Affairs*) and is required with submission. Fee will be refunded if district is determined not to be eligible.

Applications must be received in the DCA office by 4:30 p.m. on Friday, August 31, 2007. This is not a postmark deadline.

Fax and electronic submissions are not acceptable. Do not put into 3 ring binders, staple applications or place photos in protector sheets, please just use binder clips. Include \$250 fee.

Late applications will not be considered. Mail the original signed application and 14 copies to:

**Cultural District Certification Program
Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs
Attn: Jack C. Porter
600 E Locust
Des Moines, IA 50319-0290**

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What is the review process and timeline for certification?

Each application will follow a three-step process.

1. Applications shall be reviewed by the Department of Cultural Affairs' staff for accuracy and eligibility.
2. The Advisory Committee will review applications and make recommendations to the director. Advisory Committee members shall be appointed by the director and include staff from the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, the Iowa Department of Economic Development and individuals knowledgeable in subjects including but not limited to historic preservation, arts, tourism, and economic development.
3. The Director of the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs shall make the final certification decisions. Cultural Districts will be certified each year, depending on the quality and quantity of applications received.

Applications should be organized in the following order:

1. **Cover Sheet** – *Please provide the following information:*
 - Name of proposed Cultural District.
 - Name of local jurisdiction (*city/county*)
 - Name of community non-profit
 - Legislative District(s)
 - Description of the Cultural District boundary
 - Primary contact
 - i. Name (*please include Dr., Mr., Mrs., or Ms.*)
 - ii. Title
 - iii. Organization
 - iv. Mailing Address (*including city, and zip code*)
 - v. Daytime Telephone Number (*area code, direct line or extension*)
 - vi. Fax Number
 - vii. Email address
 - viii. Website (*community's*) URL
 - Project Director (*if different than above*)
 - i. Name (*please include Dr., Mr., Mrs., or Ms.*)
 - ii. Title
 - iii. Organization
 - iv. Mailing Address (*including city, and zip code*)
 - v. Daytime Telephone Number (*area code, direct line or extension*)
 - vi. Fax Number
 - vii. Email address
 - Signed by Chief Elected Official in jurisdiction certifying accuracy of application (*please also print name, title, full address, and telephone number*) and date signed.
 - Signed by Chair of community non-profit or for-profit organization certifying accuracy of application (*please also print name, title, full address, and telephone number*) and date signed.

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2. Maps

Maps can be either black and white or color copies and no larger than 11" x 17". Include legend and indicate North. All parts of the map must be legible, clearly marked and reflect the same information in the narrative (especially for the description of the district boundaries). Maps must indicate the following information:

City or County Map:

- Cultural District Boundary;
- Street names;
- Transportation corridors and facilities;
- Cultural, arts, entertainment, and tourist facilities;

Cultural District Map:

- Historic standing structures (*indicate those listed on the National Register*);
- Existing or proposed Historic District(s) boundary;
- Accessibility features (*existing and proposed*);
- Cultural facilities/organizations;
- Entertainment facilities;
- Additional information pertinent to the Cultural District;
- Identify the primary pedestrian corridors in the district.

3. Written Narrative:

A. Level of Community Support for Cultural District

- Description of how certification will be used to benefit the district and the surrounding area;
- Evidence and certification the political subdivision held a public hearing with adequate notice and publicity on the meeting to vote on the application. (*Include a copy of the public notice and/or minutes from the hearing*);
- Resolution by the governing body (*City, County or Joint resolution*) to support the Cultural District and directing Chief Elected official to sign application;
- Resolution by non-profit board to support the Cultural District and directing the chair to sign application;
- Resolution by other local development corporation(s) to support the Cultural District.

B. Management Structure

- Leadership/management team
 - Identify key staff and personnel. Explain their expertise, which demonstrates their ability to provide assistance to and manage the Cultural District. Note their anticipated roles and responsibilities and chain of command.
 - Identify which entity (*i.e. county, city, or local non-profit or for-profit organization*) has ultimate responsibility for the Cultural District;
 - Include an organizational chart.
- Plans to market the Cultural District to cultural workers, businesses, and tourists. Remember to recognize state designation in publications and other marketing efforts;

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- Describe how voluntary registration procedures for the artists and businesses will be created to monitor growth in the district.

C. Presence of Cultural Assets

- Detailed description of the Cultural District boundary, including street names, etc. that adequately describe exactly which properties are included in the district;
- Locate historic, cultural and entertainment enterprises located in the district that contribute to the Cultural District (place in appendix but cross reference to map).

D. Incentives

- Describe incentives the county, city or local non-profit or for-profit organization will offer to cultural and entertainment enterprises and qualifying resident cultural workers. Please be as specific as possible with the incentives offered such as special signage, publicity, local grants, property tax abatement, Self-supporting Municipal Improvement District (*SSMID*), Tax Increment Districts (*TIF*), rent buy-downs, low interest loans, zoning to encourage live/work space for artists, other state programs, federal programs, etc.

E. Plan for Developing and Sustaining the Cultural District

- Describe how the community will coordinate economic development and initiatives with other programs (i.e. Main Street, Certified Local Government, Historic Commission, Chamber of Commerce, local Development Corporation, etc.);
- Identify potential for affordable housing (rental or purchase), studio and performance space;
- List proposed activities and time frames;
- Explain proposed budget for the Cultural District – describe funding sources;
- Explain goals and objectives of the Cultural District and their expected outcomes;
- Include proposed transportation/walking plans for the Cultural District (may include signage, parking, shuttle buses, walking maps, etc.)
- Identify Americans with Disabilities Act (*ADA*) accessibility features of the Cultural District (*individual enterprises as well as transportation and common areas*);

F. Attachments

- Include up-to-ten (10) photographs, which illustrate the Cultural District. Photos should be no larger than 8 ½ x 11 and will not be returned.
- List partner organizations (*Include endorsement letters, indicating their support and commitment*).
- Properties in the Cultural District, and their use (*a listing of properties in the district is encouraged*).
 - Indicate renter-occupied, owner-occupied, or vacant;
 - Indicate general structural condition of buildings by ranking their general condition as good, fair, or poor (*A, B or C*);
 - Survey of current building use (*specifically studio, exhibition, performance and other cultural uses*);
- Zoning designations within the district (*include public and private uses*);
- Identify housing resources;

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Cultural District Application Checklist *(include with application in the order listed)*

1. Cover Sheet

2. Maps

- City or County Map
- Cultural District Map

3. Narrative

A. Level of Community Support

- Benefits of Cultural District to the community
- Copy of public notice
- Copy of signed resolution by governing body
- Copy of signed resolution of support by non-profit organization board, **or**
- Copy of signed resolution of support by for-profit organization board
- Copy of signed resolution of support by local development corporation(s)

B. Management Structure

- Leadership/Management Team *(see application instructions)*
- Organizational Chart
- Marketing Plan *(one page)*
- Voluntary registration procedures

C. Presence of Cultural Assets

- Describe and identify cultural uses and historic properties within Cultural District

D. Incentives

- Describe incentives *(unique local or private)*

E. Plan for Developing and Sustaining the Cultural District

- Coordination with other economic development programs
- Description of affordable housing and studio space
- Proposed activities and timelines
- Cultural District Budget
- Goals and objectives
- Transportation/Walking plan
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) features

4. Attachments

- Photographs *(no more than ten)* reflecting the written narrative
- Letters of Endorsement and Commitment from partner organizations
- List of all properties located within cultural district and specifically identify historic, cultural and entertainment enterprises
- _____
- _____

5. Application Fee

\$250.00 check payable to the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs

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Definitions

Artistic/Cultural Work – *a work, whether written, composed, executed, performed or taught that fall within the following categories:*

- Literary Arts (*playwriting, screenwriting, fiction, non-fiction, poetry*);
- Design Arts (*graphic design, architecture, landscape architecture, interior design*);
- Theatre;
- Visual Arts (*painting, sculpture, graphic arts, bookmaking*);
- Public Art;
- Photography;
- Interdisciplinary and/or Performing Art;
- Traditional Arts;
- Media Arts (*film, video, radio*);
- Horticulture.

Cultural District - *a developed district of public and private uses that:*

- May be a portion of a county or city with a special coherence that crosses jurisdictional lines;
- Is distinguished by physical and cultural resources that play a vital role in the life and development of the community and contribute to the public through interpretive and educational, and recreational uses; and
- Is a contiguous geographic area of a county that is wholly within one square mile.

Cultural Enterprise – *a not-for-profit or for-profit entity dedicated to cultural arts, excluding adult entertainment.*

Department – *the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs.*

Director - *the Director of the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs.*

District Incentives – *the financial incentives offered for a Cultural District and resident cultural workers.*

Political Subdivision – *a county or city in the State;*

Resident cultural worker - *an individual who:*

- Owns or rents residential real property in a Cultural District; and
- Derives income from the sale or performance within the Cultural and Entertainment District of an artistic work, excluding adult entertainment, that the individual wrote, composed, taught or executed wholly or primarily within the district, either solely or with one or more individuals.

State Fiscal Year - *the period from July 1 through June 30 of the following year.*