

2027-2028 Community Revitalization Strategy Thresholds and Scoring Criteria

Updated August 3, 2026



Definitions

- **Community Revitalization Strategy (CRS)** shall mean a deliberate, concerted, and locally approved plan or documented interconnected series of local efforts with local stakeholder support intended to improve and enhance specific aspects of a Community Revitalization Strategy Area (defined below). The strategy should include a concerted plan for comprehensive community redevelopment that includes housing policy goals, and may also include education, public infrastructure, and employment and job training. A locally approved plan is one method of documentation but well-documented efforts taking place outside of formalized plans are equally acceptable for this purpose.
- **Community Revitalization Strategy Area (CRSA)** shall mean the Project area for a Community Revitalization Strategy. The ideal CRSA is a geographically compact area (census tract(s), municipality, neighborhood/community area, etc.) with a population no greater than 50,000, and must contain the census tract(s) where the subject site(s) is (are) located. The Authority's Community Revitalization staff may approve a larger CRSA on an individual basis if the Sponsor provides documentation evidencing the need to define a larger area.
- **Affordable Housing** – For the purposes of Community Revitalization Strategy Section VIII.B and IX.F.c. only, the term “Affordable Housing” is defined by one of the following criteria:
 - Rent restricted rental units (legally restricted via use of programs such as Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, HOME, Illinois Affordable Housing Trust Funds, etc.) where rent is restricted to levels affordable to households earning under 30%, 50%, 60%, or 80% of the Area Median Income;
 - Rent subsidized rental units (examples of rental subsidies are Project Based Rental Assistance, Project Based Vouchers, Housing Choice Vouchers, Section 811, and Rental Housing Support Program);
 - Affordable homeownership programs, including the use of subsidized mortgage credit certificates, mortgage revenue bonds, or down payment assistance that are limited to households earning less than 120% of Area Median Income.
- **BIPOC** shall mean “Black, Indigenous, or Person(s) of Color”
- **Subject Site(s)** shall mean the property or properties where Affordable Housing activity proposed by the LIHTC application will be located.

IHDA requires that project sponsors and communities that are required to or are interested in submitting a Community Revitalization Strategy receive technical assistance from the Community Revitalization staff. For more information, or to request technical assistance, please contact Revitalization@IHDA.org.

Additional information and resources can be found on IHDA's **Community Revitalization Website**.

Community Revitalization Workbook

Required for both 4% and 9% applications. A template cover letter provided by IHDA must be utilized.

Click [here](#) to utilize IHDA's Cover Letter template (required)

A cover letter citing the locations (**document/exhibit title and page numbers**) within the submitted materials where thresholds and scoring criteria can be found. The Community Revitalization Strategy for 4% and 9% applications **will not be evaluated** without this cover letter.

Threshold Requirements

All projects proposing to locate in a Qualified Census Tract (QCT) or HUD-recognized Racially or Ethnically Concentrated Area of Poverty (R/ECAP), or projects demonstrating market concerns as identified by IHDA, determined at the time of PPA, must submit a Community Revitalization Strategy and supporting documentation that at a minimum meets the mandatory Threshold Requirements outlined below. This requirement applies to projects seeking either 4% or 9% LIHTC.

Within the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program, all projects may submit a Community Revitalization Strategy, which is eligible for up to five points in a 9% competitive application. Points will be awarded cumulatively for meeting the requirements as outlined in the eight scoring criteria detailed below. Projects may not receive more than five points total.

To be eligible for these points, the Community Revitalization Strategy must first meet all of the Threshold Requirements outlined below and must receive technical assistance from IHDA's Community Revitalization staff. **All materials, plans, and supporting documentation must be dated within five years of application submission** (excepting community participation, see below); IHDA Community Revitalization staff may approve the submission of materials, plans, or supporting documentation that are up to 10 years old from the time of application submission, but sponsor must:

- Request verification of proposed materials from IHDA Community Revitalization staff in advance of application;
- Submit the verification memo emailed to you by IHDA CR planners confirming acceptability of documentation older than five years from IHDA Community Revitalization staff upon application; and
- Demonstrate a clear connection to the present conditions and goals of the community through a detailed narrative and evidence from the community.

Successful Community Revitalization Strategies frequently consist of multiple documents from a variety of sources that provide evidence of interconnected deliberate, concerted, and locally approved planning efforts and activities. Where possible and relevant, please include complete documents, rather than excerpts, to provide reviewer with necessary context.

Defined Community Revitalization Strategy and Area

All of the following must be provided:

- A written description of the Community Revitalization Strategy Area designated for revitalization, with boundaries clearly described.
- A) The CRSA must contain the census tract(s) where the subject site(s) is (are) located. The ideal CRSA is a geographically compact area (census tract(s), municipality, neighborhood/community area, etc.) with a population no greater than 50,000.
- B) A detailed narrative of the Community Revitalization Strategy that provides clear evidence of concerted planning efforts occurring within a three-mile radius of the subject site. This must address why the designated Area was chosen for revitalization, and specifically how the Strategy has and/or will address the challenges that residents of the community face in accessing resources and amenities.
- C) A map locating the subject site(s) within the designated Community Revitalization Strategy Area. The map must identify the subject census tract(s) and the subject site(s), clearly mark the borders of the CRSA, and identify the three-mile radius within which concerted planning efforts are and/or have been occurring.
Google Maps includes a radius measurement tool, but other tools are also available and acceptable.

The Community Revitalization Strategy defined above must demonstrate components of:

1) Consideration Of Housing

Documentation explicitly demonstrating the community's planning for revitalizing housing throughout the above-designated CRSA as part of the Strategy for the community. The type of housing revitalization needed should be specified and the subject property should align with the stated need:

- A)
- Preservation of naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH)
 - Demolition and replacement of obsolete or blighted housing
 - Infill of vacant lots
 - Large-scale housing rehabilitation
 - New development of rental and/or homeownership subdivision
 - Workforce/affordable housing
 - Older adult housing
 - "Missing middle" housing

(community plans which indicate targeted areas for housing revitalization, a letter from an elected official in the community summarizing local efforts made to designate areas for new housing, housing plans, etc.).

2) Community Participation

Activities must have taken place within three years of application submission **and** must target members of the larger community. Documented input from community must be included and must prove a need/desire for affordable housing in the CRSA. Documentation of tenant meetings for existing subject site(s) will not be sufficient to demonstrate community participation.

1 of the following must be provided:

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| A) | Documentation of input gained from public meetings that took place within the CRSA as described above <u>and</u> directly related to the Community Revitalization Strategy.
<i>(SWOT analyses, meeting minutes, lists of preferences, documentation of comments received, etc.).</i> |
| B) | Evidence of community-led project(s) that align with the Community Revitalization Strategy and are located within the CRSA.
<i>(materials documenting community-based development initiative or program, community-based participatory budgeting process, etc.).</i> |
| C) | Community participation or action components in published planning documents or efforts that contain or are located within the CRSA.
<i>(TIF plans, comprehensive plans, neighborhood/corridor plans, etc.).</i> |
| D) | Evidence of a mix of public, private, and nonprofit investment in the Community Revitalization Strategy indicating a broad coalition of local stakeholders participating in concerted planning efforts taking place within the CRSA as defined above <i>(agreements or Memoranda of Understandings (MOUs) between community-based organizations and financial institutions or government entities, etc.).</i> |
| E) | Documentation of sponsor- or developer-hosted community meeting that targets members of the larger community. Tenant meetings for existing subject site(s) will not be sufficient to meet this indicator.
Click here to utilize IHDA's Community Meeting Toolkit (optional) |

3) Plan Adoption, Approval, or Support by Local Champion

1 of the following must be provided:

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| A) | A resolution passed by a local governmental board, community, or committee stating the adoption of a plan that is a component of or relevant to the Community Revitalization Strategy that demonstrates concerted planning efforts within the CRSA.
<i>(comprehensive plan, transportation plan, neighborhood priorities report, etc.).</i> |
| B) | A letter signed by an elected official from the Strategy Area detailing the official approval of component(s) of the Community Revitalization Strategy. The letter must contain the date the plan was approved and the names of the officials and/or staff who approved it. |
| C) | Meeting minutes from a local governmental board, community, or committee meeting with jurisdiction in the CRSA which clearly state the approval of component(s) of the Community Revitalization Strategy. |
| D) | Letter of support for the Community Revitalization Strategy from an existing local "champion" or "quarterback," not on the project development team, who has the capacity for mobilizing and coordinating resources and funding
<i>(CDC, local community leader, neighborhood group, etc.).</i> |

Scoring Criteria

Submissions that have met all of the Threshold Requirements are eligible to earn up to 5 points for demonstrating that their Community Revitalization Strategy includes components outlined within the following Scoring Criteria. Points will be awarded cumulatively for meeting the requirements as outlined in the eight scoring criteria detailed below. Projects may not receive more than five points total. **All materials, plans, and supporting documentation must be dated within five years of application submission;** IHDA Community Revitalization staff **may** approve the submission of materials, plans, or supporting documentation that are up to 10 years old from the time of application submission, but sponsor must:

- Request verification of proposed materials from IHDA Community Revitalization staff in advance of application;
- Submit the verification memo emailed to you by IHDA CR planners confirming acceptability of documentation older than five years from IHDA Community Revitalization staff upon application; and
- Demonstrate a clear connection to the present conditions and goals of the community through a detailed narrative and evidence from the community.

Note: Successful Community Revitalization Strategies frequently consist of multiple documents from a variety of sources that provide evidence of interconnected deliberate, concerted, and locally approved planning efforts/activities. Where possible and relevant, please include complete documents, rather than excerpts, to provide reviewer with necessary context.

Submissions may utilize the documentation referenced in their Threshold Requirements, as well as any needed additional materials to provide evidence of the following aspects within the Community Revitalization Strategy Area:

BUILDING OPPORTUNITY	
1) Addressing a Pre-Existing Community Need	
2 points available	
A)	1 point is automatically earned if project site(s) falls within a census tract(s) designated as a “Moderate Revitalization Impact Area” as listed on IHDA’s Market Research website* .
B)	2 points are automatically earned if project site(s) falls within a census tract(s) designated as a “High Revitalization Impact Area” as listed on IHDA’s Market Research website* .
2) Capacity-Building and Partnerships	
1 point available (at least 1 category must be satisfied)	
Acceptable types of documentation for this area include executed Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), internship agreements with colleges/universities, grant applications, applications for technical assistance, letters of intent from anchor institutions, etc.	
A)	Evidence that the community (<i>local government and/or established community-based organizations</i>) is actively seeking or participating in assistance or partnership for capacity-building activities to work towards a public agenda in the CRSA as defined above. • Applying for grants (within the prior 2 years) • Participating in training or technical assistance programs including those offered by IHDA (within the prior 2 years)
B)	Evidence that the community has or is developing programming to actively place interns and/or students in public-service positions within the CRSA as defined above. • Municipal government • Social services • Healthcare • Education
C)	Evidence of financial support allocated from major community stakeholders such as universities, hospitals, or other anchor institutions to the Community Revitalization Strategy.

3) Promoting Racial Equity in the CRSA

Earning points under the **BIPOC Development Control** and/or **Women/Disadvantaged/Minority Enterprises** scoring categories is not sufficient to meet this criterion.

1 point available

- A) Documentation that the community or Community Revitalization Strategy is actively promoting racial equity or pursuing racial equity initiatives within the CRSA as defined above. To earn this point, a narrative supported by accompanying evidence must illustrate the presence of at least one of the categories listed below, or other pertinent and measurable areas:
- Active outreach, inclusion, and leadership of BIPOC populations in planning activities
 - Documentation of at least one (1) formal partnership between sponsor/developer and a certified MBE/WBE providing services and/or programming to the subject site **and** accessible to the larger community.
 - Promotion of homeownership to BIPOC communities
 - Provision of housing counseling and education targeting BIPOC communities
 - Provision of translation services for local programs and services
 - Support of entrepreneurial activities and initiatives for BIPOC communities
 - Support of wealth-building initiatives for BIPOC communities
 - Other activities that promote racial equity

ACCESSIBILITY AND LIVABILITY

1) Improvements in Amenities and Services

3 points available (1 point awarded per category satisfied)

Document local efforts to improve and/or preserve access to the following elements within or available specifically to the Community Revitalization Strategy Area.

A map/list of existing amenities present in the CRSA will not satisfy these categories.

Documentation must indicate how the CRS and/or subject site will **improve or preserve access** to existing amenities and/or provide new or innovative amenities within the CRSA.

- A) Local financial institutions offering education in financial literacy/homeownership/investment, etc.
- B) Business development or incubation
- C) Daycare/childcare availability and/or before/after school childcare programming
- D) Workforce development programs availability; may include vocational education or business education offered in local high schools
- E) Access to fresh, affordable, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food
- F) Access to mental health services, e.g. behavioral health care, substance use counseling, etc.
- G) Homelessness services/supportive housing initiatives
- H) Municipal/community-wide broadband internet access
- I) Recreational/social opportunities targeting youth/families/seniors
- J) Placemaking initiatives such as streetscaping, public art, river walks, garden walks, art markets, other activities that attract visitors and business

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION, AND FUNDING	
1 point available (At least one category must be satisfied)	
A)	A realistic implementation and funding plan detailing specific activities intended to promote the Strategy Area's economic progress. Accompanying evidence must also be provided demonstrating that significant portions of the Strategy are underway or will be in the coming five (5) years that can be substantiated via site visits and/or audits. • <i>Activities to create meaningful jobs</i> • <i>Activities to attract businesses or a grocery store</i> • <i>Activities to increase entrepreneurship in the CRSA</i>
B)	Proof of active funding for and ongoing implementation of infrastructure improvements and measurable progress made within the Strategy Area needed for continued development and/or investment or to address local service issues • <i>Road improvements (pothole repairs, bike lanes, etc.)</i> • <i>Investment in building facades or streetscaping</i> • <i>Improved water/sewer infrastructure to address flooding</i>
C)	Map(s) showing active incentive programs overlapping with the Strategy Area, and an accompanying narrative explaining a plan for utilizing these resources to address community needs over the next five (5) years. • <i>Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts</i> • <i>Enterprise Zones/Rivers Edge Redevelopment Zones</i> • <i>Opportunity Zones</i> • <i>Cultural Districts</i>
D)	A letter or statement from the municipal or county government attesting to any funding already committed to projects inside the CRSA within the prior two (2) years through the next five (5) years.
E)	Evidence that local funding has been committed to the housing components of the Strategy (<i>CDBG, HOME, TIF, grants, etc.</i>).

*Points automatically awarded under Scoring Criteria #1 to scattered-site projects falling within multiple census tracts will be awarded based on at least one site located in a qualifying tract.