



## 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). Please note: A locally approved plan is but one method of documentation, and because formalized plans are beyond the capabilities of all municipalities in the state, 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. An area of a pre-designated size that is larger than a parcel, PUD, or subdivision, but small enough that one municipality or county (or a small conglomerate of municipalities or counties) can have jurisdiction over it. A CRSA can also align with an existing area designated for development such as a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Target Area, Neighborhood Strategy Area (NSA), or Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District.
- **Subject Property(ies)** shall mean the property or properties where Affordable Housing activity proposed by the LIHTC application will be located.
- **Affordable Housing** – For the purposes of Community Revitalization Strategy Section XIV C2)b) 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.

*IHDA offers free technical assistance to projects, developers, and communities that are required or plan to submit a Community Revitalization Strategy. For more information, or to request free technical assistance, please contact [Revitalization@IHDA.org](mailto:Revitalization@IHDA.org).*

*Additional information and resources can be found on IHDA's [Community Revitalization Website](#).*

**Threshold Requirements**

Within the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program, all projects may submit a Community Revitalization Strategy, which can be awarded up to 10 points in a 9% application. To be eligible for these points, the project must not be located within an Opportunity Area, and the Community Revitalization Strategy submitted must first meet all of the Threshold Requirements outlined below.

Additionally, 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 meets the mandatory Threshold Requirements outlined below. This requirement applies to projects seeking either 4% or 9% LIHTC.

<p><b>Cover Letter</b>  <i>Required for 9% applications seeking points, optional for 4 % applications</i></p>
<p>A cover letter citing the locations (document title and page numbers) within the submitted materials where scoring criteria can be found. The Community Revitalization Strategy for 9% applications will not be scored without this cover letter.</p>

<p><b>Defined Community Revitalization Strategy and Area</b>  <i>All of the following must be provided:</i></p>
A) A clear written description of the Community Revitalization Strategy Area designated for revitalization.
B) A detailed narrative of the Community Revitalization Strategy. 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) Visual evidence ( <i>maps and/or photos</i> ) locating the subject property(ies) within the Community Revitalization Strategy Area.
D) Current zoning map of the Community Revitalization Strategy Area, with legend.
E) Current land use map of the Community Revitalization Strategy Area, with legend.

**The Community Revitalization Strategy defined above must demonstrate components of:**

<p><b>1) Affordable housing</b>  <i>All of the following must be provided:</i></p>
A) Documentation explicitly stating the need and desire for affordable housing as part of the Strategy for the community. The type of revitalization needed should be specified, such as preservation, demolition and greening, infill, rehabilitation, new development, rental housing, and/or homeownership ( <i>community plans which indicate targeted areas for affordable housing, a letter summarizing local efforts made to designate areas for affordable housing, housing plans, etc.</i> ).
B) A map showing locations where affordable housing is desired and/or planned within the Community Revitalization Strategy.
C) Documentation demonstrating the subject property's alignment with the Community Revitalization Strategy.

<b>2) Community participation</b> <i>At least 2 of the following must be provided:</i>	
A)	Local advertisements or evidence of community outreach for public meetings related to the Community Revitalization Strategy ( <i>newspaper advertisements, local community newsletters, leaflets, local postings, etc.</i> ).
B)	Attendance sheets or sign-in sheets from public meetings.
C)	Documentation showing the input gained from public meetings ( <i>SWOT analyses, meeting minutes, lists of preferences, documentation of comments received, etc.</i> ).
D)	Evidence of community-led project(s) that align with the Community Revitalization Strategy ( <i>materials documenting community-based development initiative or program, community-based participatory budgeting process, etc.</i> ).
E)	Community participation or action components in published planning documents or efforts ( <i>TIF plans, comprehensive plans, neighborhood/corridor plans, etc.</i> ).
F)	Evidence of a mix of public, private, and nonprofit investment in the Community Revitalization Strategy indicating a broad coalition of local stakeholders ( <i>agreements or Memoranda of Understandings (MOUs) between community-based organizations and financial institutions or government entities, etc.</i> ).

<b>3) Plan adoption, approval, or support by local champion</b> <i>At least 1 of the following must be provided:</i>	
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 ( <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 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> ).

<b>4) Economic development integration</b> <i>All of the following must be provided:</i>	
A)	An assessment of the current economic conditions ( <i>using most recent available data, not earlier than 2016</i> ) of the Community Revitalization Strategy Area ( <i>census data, market study, population and income trends for the area, community snapshot, etc.</i> ).
B)	A realistic implementation plan to promote the Strategy Area's economic progress that both identifies and addresses the community's most pertinent challenges, goals, and opportunities across a range of sectors ( <i>activities to create meaningful jobs, attract businesses or a grocery store, invest in public infrastructure such as potholes or bike lanes, etc.</i> ).

Scoring Criteria

Submissions that have met all of the Threshold Requirements can score up to 10 points for demonstrating that their Community Revitalization Strategy includes components outlined within the following Scoring Criteria. Submissions may utilize the documentation referenced in their Threshold Requirements, as well as any needed additional materials, to provide evidence of the following activities within the Community Revitalization Strategy Area:

<b>BUILDING OPPORTUNITY</b>	
<b>1) Addresses a pre-existing community need</b> <i>2 points available</i>	
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.
C)	<p>Project sites not falling within a designated Revitalization Impact Area may earn up to 2 points by demonstrating their explicit need for revitalization. To earn these points, a narrative supported by accompanying evidence must illustrate the Community Revitalization Strategy Area's need in at least 1 of the categories listed below, or other pertinent and measurable areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Rapidly declining population</li> <li>-Employment insecurity</li> <li>-High concentration of blighted housing stock</li> <li>-Unmet need for health services, educational opportunities, fresh foods, available/affordable housing, or other basic amenities</li> <li>-Other community demographic or economic insecurities</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>In order to qualify for points under category C, claims in narrative must be substantiated and verified by accompanying evidence</i></p>
<b>2) Capacity-building and partnerships</b> <i>2 points available (1 point per category provided)</i>	
<b><i>Acceptable types of documentation for this area include executed Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), internship agreements with colleges/universities, curricula of accessible training programs, grant applications, applications for technical assistance, letters of intent from anchor institutions, etc.</i></b>	
A)	Documentation of at least one (1) formal partnership or official collaboration between the local government and/or established community based organizations working towards a public agenda in the Strategy Area (neighborhood boards, local nonprofits, etc.) with organizations that offer technical assistance, capacity-building, or shared services. Documentation must also demonstrate that these partnerships have measurably improved community or resident outcomes.
B)	Evidence that the community has or is developing programming to actively place interns and/or students in public-service positions ( <i>municipal government, social services, healthcare, education, etc.</i> ).
C)	Evidence of community services available to increase job training and access ( <i>skills-based trainings offered at free or reduced costs, transportation services for job access, seeking job-creation entities, etc.</i> ).
D)	Documentation of a formal agreement between the subject property and an entity listed on the State Economic Development Resource Directory or a HUD Section 3 plan.
E)	Evidence of financial support allocated from major community stakeholders such as universities, hospitals, or other anchor institutions to the Community Revitalization Strategy and/or the subject property(ies) ( <i>this may include allocations from an approved Opportunity Fund</i> ).
F)	Evidence that the community is actively seeking assistance for capacity-building activities ( <i>applying for grants, participating in training or technical assistance programs including those offered by IHDA, etc.</i> ).

<p><b>3) Housing stock balance avoids concentration and/or isolation of affordable housing</b>  <i>1 point available (1 point for required map(s) AND 2 of the 3 additional categories provided)</i></p>
<p><b>REQUIRED:</b> Map(s) showing current locations of affordable housing properties and their close proximity to planned development and revitalization activities in the Strategy Area (<i>revitalization activities can include infill housing, income restricted and/or subsidized housing, market rate rental housing, homeownership target areas, connecting transportation lines, business and/or corridor development plans, etc.</i>).</p>
<p>A) Documented local efforts evidencing actions taken to promote mixed-income housing (<i>income-restricted and market rate rents</i>).</p>
<p>B) Evidence of local actions taken to increase affordable housing properties' access to amenities, services, and/or transportation.</p>
<p>C) Evidence of local actions taken to rehabilitate/invest in existing affordable housing properties (<i>upgrading electrical wiring, replacing roof, updating appliances, etc.</i>).</p>

ACCESSIBILITY AND LIVABILITY
<p><b>1) Improvements in amenities and services</b>  <i>3 points available (1 point per category provided)</i></p>
<p><i>Document local efforts to improve and/or preserve access (if at risk) to the following elements within or available specifically to the Community Revitalization Strategy Area:</i></p>
<p>A) Banking and financial services</p>
<p>B) Civic services and engagement opportunities</p>
<p>C) Educational opportunities</p>
<p>D) Food access</p>
<p>E) Healthcare and social services</p>
<p>F) Recreational opportunities</p>
<p>G) Retail opportunities</p>
<p>H) Transportation access</p>
<p>I) Other (<i>provide documentation illustrating how innovative activities not defined above are being used to meet the needs of the Community Revitalization Strategy Area</i>)</p>

<b>PLAN IMPLEMENTATION AND FUNDING</b>	
<b>1) The Community Revitalization Strategy is being implemented</b> <i>1 point available (1 point per category provided)</i>	
A)	Narrative detailing the Community Revitalization Strategy's implementation schedule, in specific quarters or months and years ( <i>e.g. Q1 2020 or January-March 2020</i> ), from plan creation to present. Accompanying evidence must also be provided demonstrating that significant portions of the Strategy have already been accomplished or are underway that can be substantiated via site visits and/or audits.
B)	Proof of implementation of infrastructure improvements made within the Strategy Area needed for continued development and/or investment ( <i>map of road improvements, proof of investment in building facades, local press coverage etc.</i> ).
C)	Evidence of measurable progress in addressing local services issues ( <i>public health, homelessness, employment and training, etc.</i> ).
<b>2) The Community Revitalization Strategy has funding and will continue to be implemented</b> <i>1 point available (1 point per category provided)</i>	
A)	A full budget showing prior funding directed toward plan implementation <b>and</b> future budgeting of funding (preferred: 5-years in the future) for implementation of the Community Revitalization Strategy.
B)	Map(s) showing active incentive programs ( <i>TIF districts, Enterprise Zones, Opportunity Zones, etc.</i> ) available in the Strategy Area, and an accompanying narrative explaining a plan for utilizing these resources to address community needs.
C)	A letter or statement from the municipal or county government attesting to funding already committed <b>and</b> future funding committed to the Strategy.
E)	Evidence that local funding has been committed to the housing components of the Strategy ( <i>CDBG, HOME, TIF, grants, etc.</i> ).
H)	Specific documentation of financial planning components to achieve elements of the Strategy in local adopted plans ( <i>consolidated plan, annual action plan, local comprehensive plan, etc.</i> ).