

Incentives from the City of Marion, IA

Marion, IA has a strong track record of collaborating and partnering with businesses that make significant investments in our local economy. The City of Marion utilizes the following Economic Development policy to guide decisions that best support our local business community with fiscally responsible public assistance. The City of Marion does not provide standard incentives for specific types of projects. Each project is underwritten based on the following criteria.

Accessing public assistance requires a **finding of Public Purpose** for the use of City funds to support private development. Projects that meet the Public Purpose test achieve at least one of the following criteria.

Expansion of the employer base	Meeting match requirements
Expansion of the property tax base	Acceleration of tax base
Diversification of the property tax base	Highest and best use
Diversification of Marion's employer base	Height bonus to support higher density
Elimination of competitive barriers	Compliance with Active Living Policy

In return for public financial assistance, developers receiving public support are expected to meet all or some of the following minimum standards:

- Achieve high quality architectural and site design
- Offer energy efficiency and sustainability features beyond what is required through adopted building codes
- If a residential project, the contribution to an affordable housing fund or the provision of a certain percent of affordable housing units within the project that fill a need identified by the City
- Creation and/or retention of high-quality jobs
- Developer equity (not including debt) to be equal to or greater than the public financing requested
- The redevelopment of underutilized and/or blighted properties
- Projects achieving public purposes as detailed in the Comprehensive Plan, Adopted Sub-area plans, Urban Renewal Area planning documents, market sector studies, and/or the City Council adopted Strategic Plan (or other plans as applicable).

General Criteria for All Projects

- All projects must align with and support any relevant sub-area plans
- All qualifying projects must increase the assessed value of the property by a minimum of \$500,000. Speculative buildings must increase the assessed value by a minimum \$750,000.
- All projects within the Uptown Marion Main Street District AND within the Central Corridor Urban Renewal Area must increase assessed value of property by \$250,000.

Additional Unique Qualifying Criteria

- **Existing Building Investments** - For investments in existing buildings that are located in the Uptown Marion Main Street District that do not meet minimum value thresholds, assistance is available for projects that address ADA, building safety, or historic preservation improvements. For all other projects outside of the Main Street District, these expenses qualify for assistance only when improvements are being made that exceed local code requirements.
- **Commercial Reinvestment** – For vacant or underutilized commercial buildings or big box stores of at least 10,000 square feet. Renovation costs must be a minimum 50% of current taxable value to quality.
- **Master Planning** – For larger mixed-use developments of 15+ acres, projects that have an approved site plan and design guidelines may qualify for assistance.
- **Urban housing** – Multi-family units that address a need identified in the 2016 Housing Study, or future studies, and are located adjacent to established commercial areas.
- **Brownfield/Grayfield** - Projects where vacant or significantly underutilized properties include remediation, demolition, or unique site prep costs.
- **Living Building, Well Building or LEED Certification** - Projects achieving these certifications or standards may qualify for assistance based on unique development expenses incurred in order to achieve these standards. Proof of certification must be provided by a third. Expenses only qualify for assistance when improvements exceed local code requirements. This is for non-housing projects only.
- **New Services & Community Assets** - Projects that bring a new service or asset to the community which are excluded by any of the prior criteria.
- **Single Tenant Retail Buildings are excluded** from receiving assistance unless there are site specific challenges or disadvantages compared to greenfield sites.
- **Local Match** - Projects that require a local match for leveraging other state and federal funding resources qualify for assistance.

Project applications can be downloaded at

www.medcoiowa.org/localassistance

All economic development programs are subject to City Council approval.