

PRESS RELEASE

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City of Muscatine and local banks collaborate to create a new building improvement loan program

Muscatine, Iowa: The City of Muscatine and three local banks, Central State Bank, First National Bank of Muscatine, and Community Bank and Trust, have partnered to launch a new loan program to assist property owners in Muscatine's downtown to make improvements to their buildings and properties. "The revitalized loan program is evidence of a longstanding private/public partnership involving city government and the locally owned banks", said Tom Spread, City Council Member and Executive Vice-President of Community Bank and Trust.

The program was born out of the need to stretch grant dollars for a specific downtown project so it could design, construct or upgrade the rear sides of a select few downtown buildings to take advantage of riverfront views that exist. "We needed to leverage what we had left in grant funds to assist the property owners to connect to underground electrical services, preserve the historical nature of the exteriors, and to get the owners committed to the project with their own dollars," said Dave Gobin, Muscatine's Community Development Director.

The local banks are very committed to the City of Muscatine's downtown and have set aside \$1,000,000 for this loan program. Scott Ingstad, CEO of First National Bank, stated, "This program serves as another example of how cooperation between the City and our local banks benefits the entire community and distinguishes Muscatine from many other communities our size." Further, Robert Howard, CEO and President of Central State Bank said, "We are excited to support the program and play whatever part we can in improving the downtown experience for workers, residents, tourists, visitors and shoppers."

Property owners will first work with City of Muscatine staff to detail the improvements to be completed with a building improvement plan. With the City's approval, applicants can approach the three lending institutions to secure funds for their improvement project. Loans will receive a fixed rate at 1% below prime for the first three years with a variable adjustable rate thereafter for a term no longer than 10 years. The initial district for these loans will run 12 City blocks. The loans will be a minimum of \$5,000, and borrowers will still be subject to the banks normal credit standards.

Most improvements are eligible; however, there are some improvements that are ineligible such as no signage, inventory or modifications that take away from the historic character of the property and historic district.

Property owners interested in the program and how to apply can find additional details on the City of Muscatine's website under Community Development > Building Improvement Loan Program or by contacting the Community Development Office at (563) 262-4141.

Muscatine – A Mississippi River community in Iowa and home to several Fortune 500 and Fortune 100 companies. Rich in history, its roots include Mark Twain, the lumber industry, the pearl button capital of the world and now a place of significant growth in the manufacturing sector.