



Invest DSM Block Challenge Grant Program

APPLICATION

Thank you for your interest in Invest DSM's Block Challenge Grant Program (the "BCG Program"). Invest DSM is excited to work with you to improve Des Moines' neighborhoods. Our purpose is for neighbors to unite to build community, to build neighborhood identity, and improve the physical appearance of Des Moines' neighborhoods within designated investment districts established by the City of Des Moines or other governmental units located within Polk County, Iowa (each, a "Special Investment District" and, together, the "Special Investment Districts").

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Contact Invest DSM at info@investdsm.org or 515-221-8410 to discuss your team's eligibility. If your group is eligible, Invest DSM will create a Team DropBox for you to access and submit your application materials.
2. Complete all information entirely and accurately on this application form. If any information is incomplete, Invest DSM staff will request clarification or additional information, as applicable, from the designated team contact or a participating team member.
3. Each participating property owner must complete and submit, with this application, a separate Scope of Work for eligible improvements to be completed. Invest DSM staff will follow-up with the designated team contact or applicable team member(s) as needed to clarify each Scope of Work.
4. Provide "before" pictures of the areas where work is to be completed, for each Scope of Work. Digital pictures are preferred but printed pictures will also be accepted.
5. Include a map noting where each property is located and evidencing the proximity requirements of the BCG Program. Only one map is required per eligible team. Invest DSM can help provide a printed map for this purpose upon a team's request.
6. The designated team contact must return this application and all supporting documentation to Invest DSM to your team DropBox or to applications@investdsm.org. Digital applications are preferred but paper applications will be accepted and should be delivered to Invest DSM's office at 525 SW 5th Street, Suite F, Des Moines, IA 50309.

Applications Deadline: Last business day of the calendar month. Complete applications postmarked on or before the last business day of a calendar month may be considered as if received by Invest DSM by the last business day of the calendar month. Invest DSM will review applications promptly. Invest DSM plans to review complete applications received in the prior calendar month during the first two weeks of the following calendar month.

Awards Announced: On a rolling basis. Notifications for the team will be provided directly to the main contact via email or telephone, and letters of approval will go out to all team members via email and/ or USPS mail, at the address provided in each team member's application.

Project Completion Deadline: 90 days from the approval date or the date outlined in the individual applicant's respective scopes of work, as each may be amended and approved by Invest DSM, or such longer period as approved by Invest DSM at the time of application approval.

Questions: Christopher Civitate, Outreach & Engagement Coordinator at ccivitate@investdsm.org or 515-221-8410 x 103.



Designated Team Contact Person	
Name	
Address	
Phone	
Email	

HOW DOES THE PROGRAM WORK?

The Invest DSM Block Challenge Grant Program (the "BCG Program") works to strengthen specified Des Moines neighborhoods, known as the Special Investment Districts, by encouraging groups of neighbors to work together on exterior improvements to their properties.

Participating property owners in the BCG Program are eligible for matching funds. A dollar for dollar match, up to the Maximum Match Amount (see below), will be provided to eligible property homeowners as incentive to complete various, eligible exterior improvements to their properties. The match amount will depend on the number of residents that participate in the challenge. In no way are any amounts to be made available under this BCG Program a loan, a grant, or any other such forgivable loan, or other extension of credit by Invest DSM, and should at no time be held out as such.

Subject to compliance with BCG Program requirements, the maximum amount of match (the "Maximum Match Amount") that each property owner is eligible for with respect to any one project depends on the number of neighbors that participate and is summarized in the below table.

Number of Neighbors	Maximum Match Amount
5-9	\$1000 per residential property or 50% of eligible project costs, whichever is less
10+	\$2500 per residential property or 50% of eligible project costs, whichever is less

Notwithstanding anything herein to the contrary, Invest DSM shall have no obligation to reimburse a participating property owner's eligible expenses. Invest DSM's obligation to reimburse is subject to ongoing funding of the BCG Program and receipt of funds from Polk County and the City of Des Moines, pursuant to that certain Chapter 28E Agreement by and between Polk County, Iowa, the City of Des Moines, Iowa, and Invest DSM, Inc., For Funding and Operation of Invest DSM, Inc., dated August 19, 2019 (as amended from time to time, the "28E Agreement"). Invest DSM shall only use funds permitted for disbursement under the BCG Program to the extent provided under, and subject to the limitations in, the 28E Agreement. Invest DSM has the right to suspend the BCG Program and reimbursement obligations thereunder, including with respect to approved applications, if Invest DSM no longer has funding sufficient to operate the BCG Program or the 28E Agreement terminates. Invest DSM will notify applicants and participating property owner's promptly upon any suspension of the BCG Program.



WHAT IMPROVEMENTS AND EXPENSES ARE ELIGIBLE?

Eligible Improvements

Exterior improvements visible from the street may be eligible for matching funds through the BCG Program. All improvements must support the goals and objectives within the applicable Revitalization Plan and, in general, improve the curb appeal of the properties within a Specific Investment District. Larger, especially structural improvements, must also meet specified design standards, as may be adopted by Invest DSM from time to time ("Invest DSM Design Standards").

- Porch and soffit repair
- Porch construction
- Porch painting
- Paint for siding and trim
- Exterior lights
- Flower boxes
- Front doors
- Front windows
- House number
- Sidewalk repairs
- Front yard landscaping
- Mailboxes and house plaques/signs
- Shutters
- Junk and debris removal and disposal
- Fence Removal
 - Please note: Front yard fences are NOT eligible

This is not a complete list. Other improvements and repairs may be eligible, as determined by Invest DSM staff, in its sole discretion.

Eligible Expenses

Expenses eligible for reimbursement under the BCG Program include the actual amount expended by the participating property owner for the eligible improvements constructed in accordance with BCG Program requirements, as documented through receipts and paid invoices. This includes all hard cost for supplies and materials. It also includes labor expenses for hired contractors. It does not include the cost of the work performed by the participating property owner or any occupant of the property to be improved by the property owner, including such person's labor costs. Donated labor or supplies are not eligible for reimbursement.

ELIGIBILITY, SELECTION, AND REIMBURSEMENT

Project Eligibility

- At least five (5) neighbors in a Special Investment District must apply as a team to Invest DSM using Invest DSM's application. Each team must complete an application, and then attach a scope of work for each property owner/team member.
- The team must meet at least two times to discuss and prepare their application and individual scopes of work and Invest DSM staff must attend one of those meetings. These meetings are a pre-requisite to submission of the team's applications and Invest DSM staff's consideration of the team's applications and are aimed to demonstrate the team's collaboration and commitment to improve the neighborhood.
- Properties must be within an active Special Investment District actively served by Invest DSM.
- Except as provided below, each team member applicant must be the owner of record for the property as shown on the Polk County Assessors website page. Contract buyers are eligible as long as the contract is recorded and shows the applicant as the contract buyer on the Polk County Assessors website page. Renters are eligible if the property owner of record signs a consent related to the



renter's participation in the BCG Program and if a valid rental certificate for the participating property is on file with the City of Des Moines.

- Property taxes must be current or suspended for each of the participating properties.
- Each participating property must be a residential property and classified as such on the Polk County Assessor's website.
- Each participating property must be within eyesight from the front door of another participating property included in the block team.
- The improvements to be made by each participating property owner must be an eligible improvement and, if applicable, meet Invest DSM Design Standards.
- A complete application must be submitted and approved by Invest DSM prior to improvements being made. Costs expended by a team member before the team's application is submitted and approved by Invest DSM are not eligible for reimbursement.
- Property owners may participate up to three times in a five year period.

Application Review Guidelines

- Applications will first be reviewed for completeness and only evaluated once those guidelines have been met.
- Number of participating property owners to determine eligibility for the BCG Program and Maximum Match Amount.
- Proximity of the properties to be improved by the participating team members.
- Impact the improvements will have on the curb appeal of the participating properties in the Special Investment District.
- Teamwork of the projects and the members of the team. Are they working together to complete the application and proposal of improvements, and will they work together to complete the projects? Will they be able to build momentum from this and encourage larger projects or more neighbors to participate in the BCG Program? Have they included a group celebration when projects are complete?
- Do the improvements support the goals and objectives of the Revitalization Plan for the applicable Special Investment District? Revitalization Plans can be found at www.InvestDSM.org. Do the improvements meet the eligible improvements guidelines, below, and, if applicable, Invest DSM Design Standards?
- Does the team have a plan to sustain momentum from this team project? A strong application will detail future plans for how neighbors will work together to improve their neighborhood -- not only physically, but socially as well.
- Will the team's project serve as a catalyst for future projects and build community relationships?
- The funds available to Invest DSM for this project and other projects under consideration. Invest DSM reserves the right to fund one project over another, in its sole discretion, with priority given to those projects with greater impact and alignment with BCG Program requirements and goals, as determined by Invest DSM staff, in its sole discretion, or those projects that can be funded with the funds then available to Invest DSM, or both.
- Whether the applicant has participated in the BCG Program previously. While a prior participant is not prohibited from applying in connection with a new project, preference will be given to new participants.



Applications that don't meet these guidelines will be rejected and returned to the designated team contact. The team will be given the opportunity to answer questions and revise its application as appropriate. Invest DSM's approval of an application does not guarantee reimbursement. Such reimbursement is subject to further compliance with BCG Program requirements.

Applications may be reviewed on a first-come, first-serve basis.

In consideration of applications, and other BCG Program submissions, Invest DSM will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, national origin, disability, ancestry, sex, age, or familial status, or another protected class as identified under applicable law.

Reimbursement Process, if Application Selected

- Upon completion, each participating property owner will fill out a reimbursement request form provided by Invest DSM.
- The participating property owner requesting reimbursement will submit that form to Invest DSM, along with all paid receipts and invoices for eligible improvements and expenses.
- The participating property owner requesting reimbursement will also submit "after" pictures of the completed work for which reimbursement is sought.
- Paperwork will be reviewed by Invest DSM staff.
- Participating property owners will be notified by Invest DSM staff if there are any questions regarding the request for reimbursement or if additional information is necessary for Invest DSM staff's review of the work or supporting documentation.
- Eligible expenses will be calculated based on documentation submitted and are otherwise subject to the Maximum Match Amount and compliance with BCG Program requirements.
- Upon Invest DSM's approval of a reimbursement request, in whole or in part, a check will be issued to the participating property owner and mailed to the address on file.

UNTIL INVEST DSM STAFF ULTIMATELY DETERMINES AN ELIGIBLE PROPERTY OWNER AND HIS OR HER IMPROVEMENT(S) FULLY COMPLY(IES) WITH ALL REQUIREMENTS OF THE BCG PROGRAM, AND INVEST DSM DELIVERS A CHECK FOR THE APPLICABLE ELIGIBLE MATCH AMOUNTS TO THE PARTICIPATING PROPERTY OWNER, NO PARTICIPATING PROPERTY OWNER IS ENTITLED TO ANY BCG PROGRAM FUNDS, WHATSOEVER.



Team Application

How many neighbors (or "team members") have agreed to participate on your team? _____

Has your team held at least one initial planning meeting? YES

Have any of you contacted Invest DSM regarding this project? If yes, please list and explain:

What dates are your team members available to meeting with the Invest DSM staff?:

Answer these questions as a team and be as detailed as possible. Digital or typed applications are encouraged but paper and handwritten applications are accepted. Please attach additional sheets if needed.

1. Does anyone in your team have any contractor skills (carpentry, painting, landscaping, etc.) to assist others with planning or completing their projects? If so, please describe who and what kind. Include their contact information.



2. Please list any other contributions that members of the team may be able to provide to each other, and which member can provide them. (Examples: access to equipment, access to discount materials, etc.)

3. How will your team plan to celebrate, or build on, improvements made through your team project and sustain your momentum into the future? Do you have plans for events, projects, meetings, or other activities that will strengthen communications within your team, build a sense of shared identity, and/or beautify your neighborhood? In other words, explain how you will build pride in your neighborhood, inspire others to invest, and carry momentum forward in future years.

