

Urban Renewal Areas

The State of Iowa allows municipalities to finance infrastructure, economic development, and affordable housing projects within designated urban renewal areas. Urban renewal areas can be designated after a municipality determines blight or slum conditions, and may also be established in areas that are “appropriate for commercial and industrial enterprises” (1985 Iowa Acts ch. 66, §§ 1-3 and §§ 6, 7, and 9). Urban renewal areas do not need to be contiguous, nor is there a limit in the size; however, those established after 1994 have a 20 year limit. All proposed urban renewal areas must have a plan that outlines the projects and goals of the area and proposed financing, and once approved, an urban renewal plan may be amended or modified at any time. Pleasant Hill established several urban renewal areas and made amendments in 2010, 2011, and 2013.

TIF Districts

Once an urban renewal area is established, a municipality may utilize TIF funding to incentivize and attract desired development within key commercial areas. Pleasant Hill’s four TIF districts utilize future property tax revenues generated within a designated area or district to pay for improvements and further incentivize reinvestment. Funds acquired from these districts have been used for project ranging from general street improvements and infrastructure upgrades to land acquisition and redevelopment.

