



Hannibal, Missouri - DCTA Engagement Spotlight

City Approved 3/31/22

Exciting things are happening in [Hannibal, Missouri!](#)

In the last year, the City of Hannibal, MO applied for and has received technical assistance (TA) from the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) on a variety of topics including affordable housing and economic development. The TA was made possible through the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Distressed Cities Technical Assistance and Persistent Poverty (DCTA) program. Activities supported by DCTA have covered the gamut, including infrastructure, economic development, capacity building, and affordable housing.

The capacity needs assessment portion of the TA revealed that the City of Hannibal and its partners were already making strides to facilitate economic and community development but needed help to enhance its capacity to use federal funding. In June 2021, shortly after the start of the direct TA phase of the DCTA program, Hannibal's City Council approved the establishment of a new downtown community improvement district. Ultimately, the district partners hope to improve stormwater, sewer, and sidewalks by creating a revolving loan fund and grant fund for different enterprises. Hannibal Regional Economic Development Council (HREDC) Executive Director Corey Mehaffy said a fund would help the City "engage our special counsel for economic development, begin having some more public meetings, explain the program to people and start talking about petitions that people will need to be able to put their properties in the district."



In addition to infrastructure work, DCTA has supported Hannibal's pursuit of economic development. As part of the TA, the City of Hannibal received assistance in pursuing the Kiva program, in partnership with the HREDC, as a tool to support local businesses and city residents in Hannibal. Kiva brings microlending options that operate similar to a crowd-funding account for entrepreneurs that may not fit a traditional or commercial loan situation. As the City's partner, HREDC will be able to make character-based 1- to 3-year loans up to \$15,000 for microenterprises. HREDC will be the local trustee and will seek to endorse funding for at least five (5) local Hannibal, MO businesses in 2022. Click [here](#) to see local media coverage about the Hannibal program, and [here](#) for more information about HREDC's Kiva microlending.

LISC TA has also assisted the local team to study and pursue National Main Street status. The DCTA team is working with to organize local economic development entities, such as HREDC, the Hannibal Chamber of Commerce, Historic Hannibal Marketing Council (HHMC) and local businesses, to explore a restart of the Main Street Initiative. A small business focus group meeting was held last October, and Hannibal is taking incremental steps to bring more stakeholders to the table before formally applying to the Missouri Main Street program.



One of the core goals of the DCTA program is helping cities build their capacity to achieve their goals. One way the Hannibal Team is seeking to build capacity is by applying for an AmeriCorps member to support the City's economic development program. Tasks will include organizing community meetings for outreach through civic organizations, local Chambers of Commerce, and economic development organizations, and helping the City evaluate needs and gaps in business assistance. The job description also includes organizing community events geared toward downtown revitalization by increasing volunteer engagement in the community and establishing a comprehensive volunteer mentor program, among other duties. Hannibal hopes to seek more AmeriCorps assistance later in 2022 to support its affordable housing strategy.



Affordable housing is a high priority for Hannibal, so the DCTA team helped Hannibal identify capacity needs and develop a housing strategy. Part of that strategy is to increase activity of the USDA Rural Development Housing Rehab Programs by further partnering with the Northeast Community Action Corporation (NECAC). These loans assist homeowners with the rehab of existing homes. The DCTA team encourages working with nonprofits such as NECAC and for-profit developers. It has been advising the City and developers on a combined 65-unit rental project including single family, infill construction on scattered lots and the conversion of the abandoned St. Elizabeth's Hospital to senior apartments. The team is working to assist in filling funding gaps and is bringing in LISC experts to discuss various options and share materials for working with both nonprofit and for-profit developers. Hannibal's City Manager, Lisa Peck said that she is "thrilled to have the opportunity to work with LISC and the TA providers and is grateful for the knowledge and assistance gained through the DCTA program."