



A G E N D A

REGULAR MEETING LA JUNTA URBAN RENEWAL AUTHORITY

La Junta, Colorado

March 27, 2025

4:00 p.m.

Council Chambers

CALL TO ORDER (Chairperson)

ROLL CALL (City Clerk/Deputy)

Board Members

Supervisors

Others

Ayala

Bennett

Johnson

Madrid

Mason

Miner

Monroy

Roberson

Saucedo

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Chairperson)

Regular Meeting February 27, 2025

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Treasurer)

February 2025

REPORTS – Project Updates

A. Plaza Building (Bennett)

B. Chestnut Apartments (Rikhof)

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Funding Application (Action)

B. Program Policy (Action)

NEW BUSINESS

A. Governing Body's Comments

ADJOURN

LA JUNTA URBAN RENEWAL AUTHORITY

CALL TO ORDER: The La Junta Urban Renewal Authority Board of Commissioners held a Regular Meeting on Thursday, February 27, 2025 at 4:02 p.m. in the Council Chambers. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Bennett.

Board Members Present

Absent

Nancy Bennett
Carly Johnson
Toni Madrid
Erin Monroy
Randall Roberson

Joe Ayala

**Subject to approval at the
March 27, 2025
Urban Renewal Meeting**

Also present: Melanie Scofield, City Clerk
Aliza Libby, Finance Director
Neils Rikhof, La Junta
Maureen Rikhof, La Junta
Erika Lively, La Junta
Bette McFarren, Rocky Ford Daily Gazette

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

There was no citizen participation.

MINUTES: January 23, 2025

Chairperson Bennett asked if there were any corrections or additions to be made to the January 23, 2025 minutes. There being none, the board moved to a motion.

MOTION TO APPROVE JANUARY 23, 2025 MINUTES AS PUBLISHED: BEN MASON

SECOND: ERIN MONROY

AYE: Bennett, Johnson, Madrid, Mason, Monroy, Roberson

OPPOSED: None

The motion carries.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS: DECEMBER 2024

Treasurer's Report: Aliza Libby reported that this is the final financial report that will go to the auditors. Toward the end of December, we had \$12,945.94 in our cash/checking account; in the ColoTrust investment account there is \$371,480.76. Notes receivable for \$1,437.50 bringing our total assets to \$388,029.91. We took in revenue from the tax increment district being \$2,629.85. We earned interest from the ColoTrust account on our monies deposited, which is \$1,371.15. We paid out \$4,257.19 in rehab grants. The City of La Junta welcome sign rent expense \$1,583.96. Finally, there was \$69.99 in general operating expenses.

Discussion explaining the breakdown of what is considered budget and savings.

LA JUNTA URBAN RENEWAL AUTHORITY

MOTION TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 2024 FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT AS PRESENTED:
RANDALL ROBERSON

SECOND: TONI MADRID

AYE: Bennett, Johnson, Madrid, Mason, Monroy, Roberson

OPPOSED: None

The motion carries.

JANUARY 2025

Toward the end of January, we had \$13,578.90 in our cash/checking account; in the ColoTrust investment account there is \$372,826.39. Notes receivable for \$1,375.00 bringing our total assets to \$388,029.91. You will notice that your "Other Receivable" which is the TIF is not there. We accounted for it in revenue in 2024 and we put it into accounts receivable. Once we got the money, we took it out of receivable and placed it into cash. It was discussed at a board meeting that we would need at least \$50,000 for the money to be placed in investments. We earned interest from the ColoTrust account on our monies deposited, which is \$1,346.88. There was \$1,596.50 in general operating expenses which was Otero County Insurance payments for properties owned by the city.

Discussion surrounding the possible numbers and amendments for the 2025 URA budget occurred.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 2025 FINANCIAL REPORT AS PRESENTED: CARLY JOHNSON

SECOND: TONI MADRID

AYE: Bennett, Johnson, Madrid, Mason, Monroy, Roberson

OPPOSED: None

The motion carries.

REPORTS:

A. Plaza Building (Nancy Bennett)

- We had a positive site visit from the architects last week.
- The electric is nearly completed, pending inspection for completion and the drywall will be ready to go up. The ceiling would be next, as well as installation of the tin tiles for the ceiling, as they are on site.
- The oakwood flooring is also on site ready to be installed. Tim Klob will be in charge of flooring installation. Finally, painting of the inside of the building will occur shortly thereafter.
- The new projected completion date of the Plaza Building is August 2025.
- The building will be receiving the Stephen A. Hart award on April 3, 2025 in Denver, CO.

B. Chestnut Apartments (Maureen & Niels Rikhof): Maureen & Niels Rikhof, La Junta, gave updates on the Chestnut Apartments.

- The grant that we received in July stated that we would have 18 months to get the windows installed. We got them sized and some work was needing to be done in some of the window structures (i.e. window casings). We have worked on the brick part of the back of the building where the windows will hang. Upon receiving windows, it will take 2-3 months to get installed. We are working with Ben Mason from Sutherlands to order windows.
 - Nancy Bennett: How many windows does this grant cover?
 - Around 40 windows are covered. That is all of the windows. There are plans for balconies to be installed and doorways for those balconies to be installed, as well.
- The weather has been the reason for the standstill; the windows could not be installed during the colder months due to the caulk for the windows. We will be seeing more activity in that area in the next few weeks now that the weather is favorable.
 - Randall Roberson: What else is going on the inside of the building – you have discussed the windows, but are other projects being worked on as well, such as the roof?
 - The roof has been redone. Sequence-wise, we are looking to stabilize the building with metal to help it be more secure. Then we will think about working on the inside. I do want the outside mostly completed such as the stairwells, the front porch, and the brick as well. We are also hopefully building a shop/garage for off-street parking located behind the building, which is pending City Council approval.
 - Nancy Bennett: Was there damage from the break-ins?
 - There was theft. We had around \$6,000-\$8,000 worth of tools taken at one time. This occurred about a year ago. There has been no more crime since then.
 - Erin Monroy: Do you have an anticipated date of when you expect to order those windows?
 - Ben Mason: We are working on trying to find the correct windows that will help qualify the Chestnut Apartments for future grants, as far as historical proprieties. It is not just about finding a normal, “everyday” window. There are certain qualities that are required for historical grants.
 - Maureen Rikhof: We keep learning about historical grants every day. Concerning the windows, there have been many questions surrounding the material of the windows (vinyl vs. Vibrex vs. wood). I am getting clarifications from History Colorado. We are excited to get moving on the apartment building as we have perfected many of our skills and processes.
 - Toni Madrid: Anybody out there that has historic property, call us here at Urban Renewal, call those of us at the Historic Preservation Board, formerly Certified Local Government (CLG).

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Funding Application/Program Policy (Action)

- Erin Monroy: We held a work session to go over the final edits to our funding application and program policy, and we have been provided a final draft of both by Melanie Scofield. I think they both look great; I did have a question. On the first page of the policy, where it mentions “Grant/Loan funding is available in the following amounts...” It is not 100% clear to me that this is a percentage of the total project that we will fund; I also had a thought about the loan – whether participants are considering a grant or loan.
- Toni Madrid: The funding application talks about the TIF district – could it also be added that an explanation of the TIF district location(s). Having the TIF districts described could also be helpful. To me, the breakdown of the percentages makes sense. There was also a section mentioning interest in the selling of properties that we have provided funding to. Did we discuss if participants that decide to sell the property pay the funding back?

Dialogue surrounding the percentage breakdown of loan/grants awarded to participants occurred.

MOTION TO TABLE THE URA FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE POLICY UNTIL THE BOARD FURTHER DEVELOPS GRANT PERCENTAGES: TONI MADRID

SECOND: CARLY JOHNSON

AYE: Bennett, Johnson, Madrid, Mason, Monroy, Roberson

OPPOSED: None

The motion carries.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Board Vacancy Interviews

1. Zach Miner:

- Nancy Bennett: I would like to know what you know about Urban Renewal? Are there projects you are especially interested in, whether it be new or old projects?
 - I’ve watched a lot of the meetings through Facebook, so I am fairly familiar of the things the board does. There is also a lot I don’t know, but am willing to learn. My interest in the URA has a lot to do with my experience in this type of work you do – bringing old buildings back to life, encourage new business opportunities to come to the area. We lived here in the community, purchased and sold a farm, and have since then relocated back to La Junta. One future project, which has been questioned by many citizens throughout the years, would be the old Gibson’s building. There are many possible ideas – and one idea is turning that building into an events building for the community which could benefit the TIF district. I have a daughter in softball and we travel out of town often for tournaments. This could be a great opportunity to encourage more tourism and business around the area, as they would be traveling through. At one point we were trying to get a meat processing plant in the area, as we are along Highway 50, as well as having two of the largest cattle sale barns in the state of Colorado. Those are the types of projects I like and look forward to.
- Toni Madrid: What personal skills do you have that would help us on this committee?

- Looking at the committee, I know that there is good experience across the board. I am aware Carly Johnson had applied for funds from the URA, but completely revamped her business without funding from the URA. I would bring experience in pricing of jobs. That is what I have done my entire life. In the big cities, general contractors hire out for all of their jobs. Here in smaller, rural areas, general contractors tend to do most of the work themselves. Regarding the policy, I would like to see a stipulation of using the URA money locally only. Keep the money in La Junta and not send the money out to other areas. If you are going to receive money from La Junta, use local La Junta businesses.
 - Erin Monroy: Would you feel comfortable with some other aspects, like facing the community to explain what we do. 'Holding the baby' type of aspects.
 - I am all for that. I am a husband of a high school coach; I'm essentially a cheerleader. I am pretty public about how I feel; If there is something I truly believe in, I will support it.
 - Carly Johnson: You made some really good points and I agree with a lot of what you said. What do you believe are some of the greatest challenges that we face in La Junta?
 - This might be a little bit unpopular. I think there can be a lot of 'vanity projects' – government money spent on these projects that are not going to last, then that might not be the place to put money. I see a lot of small business dying off because of that. If we could be smarter about where we put our money, and maybe even educate people about the types of businesses that work here. There are always younger people ready to break out. This area would be great for new businesses that will last.
2. Angel Saucedo:
- Nancy Bennett: I would like to know what you know about Urban Renewal? Are there projects you are especially interested in, whether it be new or old projects?
 - I will be honest; I am not completely aware of what the board does. I know that you take old buildings and turn them into something that works a lot better for the citizens. I've watched a few meetings here and there, but have always been interested in doing something within the city. I think Urban Renewal is a great committee, considering what our city is and what it could be. As for projects, I would be interested in seeing the downtown be completely revitalized from the ground up. Last summer, I visited Pella, Iowa and that was one of the most beautiful cities I've seen in my life. I can imagine La Junta being something like that. I've always thought that we could do certain things differently. Something else to focus on is something for youth. When I was young, I was completely bored because there was nothing to do in the area, other than be on the streets.
 - Toni Madrid: What strengths do you bring to this board?
 - Construction experience. I have been in construction for about 4 years now. Not that I'm terribly good at everything, but I feel like I bring experience, especially regarding younger citizen concerns.
 - Toni Madrid: We meet once a month, whether it is face to face or zoom. Would you be able to make it to the meetings monthly?
 - Absolutely. I can make arrangements to participate in the monthly meetings.

- Carly Johnson: Have you ever been involved in any community revitalization projects. I'm assuming you are currently working with the Chestnut Apartments.
 - Yes. I am.
- Erin Monroy: You seem comfortable with public speaking. Would you be comfortable with reaching out to the community/businesses and explaining what we do?
 - Absolutely. I have been working with the committee of the Wet and Dry parade for the last two years. I would be very comfortable in reaching out to the community when needed. I love interacting with the public.
- 3. Erika Lively:
 - Nancy Bennett: I would like to know what you know about Urban Renewal? Are there projects you are especially interested in, whether it be new or old projects?
 - I will preface that by saying I think about your TIF district and the fact that everything falls into a particular district. I feel like the downtown is something that could have newer, smaller business, but there really isn't a whole lot there space-wise for people. The idea that having other locations within downtown itself would be where people could come in (less large). I have been to different towns, such as Newburgh, NY. They had just undergone amazing historic renovation. They have diverse communities. They are wanting to attract both higher and lower income citizens. This idea is very important here in La Junta, as there are very limited people. Even if you have larger companies come in, how does it benefit the local people? Another idea is that La Junta is a major midway point for travel. A lot of travelers tend to have questions when people arrive to a new area from traveling is "What is available to me? Where can I dine, sleep, etc.". A lot of visitors just want to know what is available here for visitors, as well as events and places to eat and convene and find out what is going on in town. La Junta is considered a 'destination point' because you are historic. The idea of renovation rather than tearing it all down also creates atmosphere. Allowing smaller cottage industries, as well as allowing larger industries to come to La Junta to provide equal opportunities for all.
 - Toni Madrid: What skills or knowledge would you bring to this board?
 - In the past in the East Coast, I owned a small business in a dying part of the lower East side of Manhattan in a smaller, primarily Jewish neighborhood. It was a shop that provided some clothing items and fabrics. I came in and opened a shop where I worked with the local community and the business improvement district. I worked with different contractors that I found that I wanted to use locally. I got involved with real estate; I became a licensed real estate salesperson. I am from a construction family; I know how to do certain things – such as pricing and bidding as well as negotiating. I believe I come in with that experience. I'm a real estate broker. I was an entrepreneur; I am aware of some bits and elements of construction.
 - Toni Madrid: What is our ultimate goal at Urban Renewal? Or what do you believe should be the task at hand that the board should address?
 - Currently, I think your task at hand is drawing folks into the community; drawing in companies into the community; groups of people that are willing to work on finding out what they're going to bring in and need and how they are going to execute it to get it done and make it successful.
 - Ben Mason: I know you travel a lot from other meetings, are you more permanent now or still going back and forth?

- I am currently in transition; I have currently been here for 16 weeks, which is the longest time I've been here. I have personal matters to attend to on the East Coast; I will be returning for six weeks; I'm currently a gardener there in the area, and I have been contracted to complete a build-out on a rooftop and with that buildout, I need to go back and finish that project. I will return in June, and I am committed to attend all meetings, whether it be in person, over the phone or a zoom meeting.
- Toni Madrid: Do you own property here in La Junta?
 - I do own property here. My family has been here since 1950; I've been coming and going since I was a little girl. I've seen the area change quite a bit throughout the years. I have never been on a rural farm; however, I have experience with an urban farm. I have experience in construction and have done construction because I am from a construction family. I have been a project manager for a large, 120-unit property in New York City, which I then did the sales after being the project manager engage with the project management.
- Randall Roberson: A question for all three candidates, how many of you would be able to make it in-person to $\frac{3}{4}$ of all meetings. (Zach Miner and Angel Saucedo raised hands)
 - I can't commit to 100% of the meetings in-person - which is why I was completely transparent about my attendance. I know I will be back in June so I would miss those meetings. I was here in July of 2024, but that meeting was cancelled due to summertime. Then in August, the meeting got shifted. I was here in July and August; I was also here for the September meeting, despite needing to return and zoom to the airport right after the meeting. Because I wanted to be here for the meeting, I ended up missing my flight back. Then I came back and I have been here since November 1, 2024. I have attended every meeting and work session since then. If in-person attendance is the deciding factor, I completely understand and I will try again some other time – if that were the case.

With there being only two (2) open board seats on the Urban Renewal Authority and three candidates, the board voted by ballot on two of the three candidates. Zach Miner and Angel Saucedo received the most votes, therefore adding them to the Urban Renewal Authority.

B. Governing Body Comments:

- Ben Mason: I would like to bring to the board's attention, a few weeks ago I attended the Historical Society meeting in Colorado Springs with Aimee Hill and we learned quite a bit about different grants that we need to apply for. There is a lot of stuff that needs to go into the pre-planning of the grants. As a board, we need to keep in the back of our minds that when folks come before us, they have explored that route. There is a lot that can be done to historical buildings that could exempt them from historical designation – from the paint, to the type of construction materials used. I was working with Aimee to try and figure out somewhere that they could go during the permitting process to try and get ahold of the Historical Preservation Board and walk them through the process.
- Toni Madrid: The Urban Renewal Authority and Historical Preservation Board are completely separate boards, but I think it is important for people to know regardless that, if their building could be considered historical, they would be aware of the options.

LA JUNTA URBAN RENEWAL AUTHORITY

An Urban Renewal Authority work session is scheduled for Thursday, March 6, 2025 at 4:00 PM in the Power Board Room of the Municipal Building. Melanie Scofield will send out the notice.

The next Urban Renewal Authority meeting will be held March 27, 2025 at 4:00 PM in the Council Chambers.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:16 p.m.

Cristian Estrada, Deputy City Clerk

Nancy Bennett, Chairperson



Blight, Life Safety and Accessibility Grant/Loan Application



Applicant Name: _____

Applicant Mailing Address: _____

Telephone No.: _____

Email: _____

Owner Name, if not Applicant: _____

Owner Mailing Address: _____

Telephone No.: _____

Email: _____

Building Address: _____

Current Use of Property: _____

Amount Requested: _____ Please circle: Grant / Loan

CHECKLIST: Before starting the application, please read the Financial Assistance Program Policy and have the following documents and information prepared: (Your application will be rejected and returned to you if all of these items are not attached and made part of the application. Please check each item below and ensure the documentation is attached.)

- ☐ Two (2) bids from independent contractors (preferably local) for the full project costs
- ☐ Written description for the full project specifying what specific improvements the application will be funding
- ☐ A timeline of the full project from start to finish, showing the funding request milestones (what will be completed with LJURA funding)
- ☐ Drawings/pictures showing the full project
- ☐ Budget for the full project; items that will be part of the funding request noted or highlighted, if applying for a loan
- ☐ Proof of financial ability of repayment (tax returns, P&L statement), if applying for a loan
- ☐ Must be within the TIF District



Blight, Life Safety and Accessibility Grant/Loan Application



Write a brief (750 words or less) description of the proposed project. Please include the intended use of the building after the improvements have been made.



Blight, Life Safety and Accessibility Grant/Loan Application



Does this project address (please check all that apply):

- ☐ Reduction in the amount of blight
- ☐ Increase in safety created by the project
- ☐ Anticipated positive impact to the local economy and expansion of the property tax base
- ☐ Strengthening, enhancing, or diversifying the business community within the Urban Renewal Authority District
- ☐ Anticipated increase in the amount of sales tax the City will receive through the operation of the new or expanded retail sales tax generating business
- ☐ Contributes to the creation of a diverse business base with a mix of retail, service providers, manufacturing, multifamily housing or office uses

Has this property received any other funding through LJURA?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Project Title	
Date	
Amount	

What is the timeline of this project, from the date of this application until final completion?

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Blight, Life Safety and Accessibility Grant/Loan Application



Owner Certification

I hereby certify that I am the owner of the above-described property for the purpose of this application, and that I have title to the property free and clear of any adverse judgments. I further certify that I am in good standing with the City of La Junta with no fines, fees or unpaid taxes owed to the City.

Owner's Signature

Owner's Printed Name

Date

Tenant Authorization (if needed)

I, as the owner of the building that is the subject of this application, authorize the person listed below, as the tenant in the building, to undertake the improvements listed in this application.

Owner's Signature

Tenant Signature

Owner Printed Name

Tenant Printed Name

Date

Date



Blight, Life Safety and Accessibility Grant/Loan Application



BLIGHT, LIFE SAFETY AND ACCESSIBILITY FINANCIAL APPLICATION AGREEMENT

This Agreement is by and between the La Junta Urban Renewal Authority, a Colorado urban renewal authority (hereinafter referred to as "LJURA"), and _____, property owner or tenant for the building located at the following address: _____ (herein after referred to as "Funding Recipient").

As part of LJURA's Blight, Life Safety and Accessibility Financial Assistance Program ("Program"), both parties agree that this Program aids business owners in the rehabilitation and restoration of the TIF District to encourage the elimination of conditions that could qualify as blight or be injurious to public health, safety and welfare; to encourage private investment in commercial and multi-family housing that may otherwise be cost prohibitive, and to stimulate redevelopment to increase sales tax revenues and property values.

I agree to all the terms and conditions of participation in the Program. I understand, agree and certify that any funds (grants or loans) approved by the LJURA will be used only for the purpose specified within this application, and that records can be audited or reviewed at any time to assure that this is the case. I acknowledge that failure to adhere to any of the terms or conditions of the Program may result in the improvements becoming ineligible for reimbursement.

LJURA, in its sole discretion, will determine compliance with the terms and conditions of the Program. If the Funding Recipient is found to have violated the terms and conditions of participation in the Program, the applicant shall be solely responsible for all costs and fees associated with the improvements.

PROPERTY OWNER:

Signature

Printed Name

Date



Blight, Life Safety and Accessibility Financial Assistance Program Policy



Adopted January 25, 2024

Program Overview

LJURA, through the Blight, Life Safety and Accessibility Financial Assistance Program, may provide a reimbursement grant up to \$25,000 and a 50% loan on the remainder of the project amount, for qualifying blight, life safety and accessibility improvement project costs. Grant/Loan funding is available as follows:

Project Amount	LJURA Grant	50% Loan on Remainder of Project Amount	Total Maximum Amount Paid Out
\$0-\$100,000	Up to \$25,000	Up to \$37,500	\$62,500
\$100,000- \$200,000	Up to \$25,000	Up to \$87,500	\$112,500
\$200,000- \$300,000	Up to \$25,000	Up to \$137,500	\$162,500
\$300,000- \$400,000	Up to \$25,000	Up to \$187,500	\$212,500
\$400,000- \$500,000	Up to \$25,000	Up to \$237,500	\$262,500

Any projects over the amount of \$500,000 will be considered on a case-by-case basis as long as funds are available. Once an application is approved, a contract will be entered into by the applicant and/or owner and the LJURA.

The purpose of the program is to provide financial assistance for the removal or reduction of blight as defined by the state statute; the increase in life safety through the installation of fire suppression, safety code and accessibility requirements necessary to bring older buildings into compliance with current and applicable building and fire codes; and to increase physical accessibility through compliance with codes. The program incentivizes owners and tenants within the District to update and improve existing commercial and multi-family properties and buildings to increase the economic vitality of the buildings and increase sales and property values, while preserving and enhancing La Junta's architectural and cultural history.



Blight, Life Safety and Accessibility Financial Assistance Program Policy



Program Objectives

- Encourage the elimination or remediation of conditions that qualify as blight per the state statute.
- The elimination or remediation of conditions that could be injurious to public health, safety, and welfare.
- The remediation of issues that affect physical accessibility.
- Encourage private investment in commercial and housing within the District through the use of public incentives.
- Stimulate economic vitality and business development within the District by providing safe and blight free environments for workers, businesses, and the public.
- Stimulate redevelopment to increase sales revenues and property values.

Process Overview

The full completed application form must be submitted to be considered for approval. LJURA may assist as many eligible applicants as possible with the limited program funds available each year.

General Timeline

Funding approval from the Board in a formal meeting can be expected between 30 and 45 days after a completed application has been submitted. **No applications can be submitted for work that has been started or is in progress.** An application can be submitted at any time. The review process will take place as follows:

- Review by staff for complete application (information is included or attached per application requirements). Applicant notified if application is complete or incomplete.
Five (5) business days.
- Applicant resubmits, if needed, with corrected, completed, or updated information.
Five (5) business days.
- Staff reviews application to ensure it meets LJURA application guidelines, state requirements, and definitions. Applicant is notified by email of meeting or not meeting guidelines based on the staff report to the Board.
Ten (10) business days.
- Application and staff recommendation is submitted to the LJURA Board for review and comment. Board members complete a scoring rubric in advance of the board meeting.



Blight, Life Safety and Accessibility Financial Assistance Program Policy



At a regular monthly board meeting, held the 4th Thursday of each month, the application will be approved or denied by the Board. The LJURA will issue a formal letter of approval/denial and a contract will be drawn up and signatures obtained.

Within two (2) business days of the regular board meeting.

- Project construction must begin within sixty (60) days from the approval date. Work must be completed within one hundred eighty (180) days after construction begins. If unable to complete within the one hundred eighty (180) days, applicant may request a thirty (30) day extension upon the Board's approval.
- For GRANTS: once the project is completed and documentation has been approved for reimbursement, a check will be distributed within three weeks.
- For LOANS: monies will be distributed once a signed contract has been received. Periodic inspections will be performed to ensure the project is progressing as scheduled.

Program Eligibility

Eligible Area: Structures that are located in La Junta's Urban Renewal Tax Increment District.

Eligible Improvements: Eligible improvements must be the removal or reduction of blight as defined by the state statute; the increase in life safety through the installation of fire suppression, safety code, and accessibility requirements necessary to bring older buildings into compliance with current and applicable building and fire codes; and/or to increase physical accessibility through compliance with codes. Please refer to the Dangerous Buildings Guide from the City of La Junta for more information.

Examples include but are not limited to the following:

- City required life safety code improvements.
- Electrical upgrades to meet code.
- Plumbing upgrades to meet code.
- Fire separation between floors or adjacent occupancies.
- Fire/smoke alarm/sprinkler systems.
- Fireproofing floors, ceilings, walls, and/or stairwells.
- Repair/replacement/installation of fire escapes, fire rated walls or windows.
- Additional means of egress (for example: doors and windows).
- Demolition of unsafe (by building code) interior or exterior improvements.



Blight, Life Safety and Accessibility Financial Assistance Program Policy



- Renovations and improvements for accessibility requirements for restrooms and public entrances.

The recipient must be the owner(s) of record or the tenant with the owner's written and signed authorization to make the proposed changes to the building.

- Qualifying buildings must be used for commercial, mixed-use, or multi-family housing purposes. Buildings used exclusively for single family residential use do not qualify for this program.
- Work completed prior to or underway at the time the application is submitted will not qualify.
- Owners must certify and provide proof that title to the property is free and clear of any adverse judgments and there are no outstanding or unpaid fines, fees or unpaid taxes owed to the City or other taxing authority.
- Priority will be given to projects that will increase commercial tenancy in the Urban Renewal District with an emphasis on increasing the number of retail, restaurant, entertainment, and hospitality establishments.
- Professional fees (e.g., architectural and/or engineering fees) incurred by the applicant are not eligible for reimbursement.
- Funding may not be used to pay the owner or owner's family members, or tenant or tenant's family members for labor unless there is clear proof that the rates are competitively bid, and the work is being completed by a business in compliance with all Colorado state laws.
- Funding may not be used for finishes such as paint, flooring, furniture, blinds, lighting fixtures, or anything exterior to the building that would not qualify for blight or life safety.
- The applicant must show financial proof and a written financial plan so that the improvements to the property can be funded and maintained for a minimum of five years or the life of the loan.

Conditions of the Financial Assistance Program

The following conditions apply to any approved Blight, Life Safety and Accessibility application as follows:

- All financial assistance is subject to budget availability and the sustainable financial viability of the project.
- The amount of the funding awarded is based on the number of blight and life safety improvements approved and the costs of each improvement.
- Consideration will include the necessity of the repairs or improvements and the benefit to the building and the general public.



Blight, Life Safety and Accessibility Financial Assistance Program Policy



- Blight, life safety and accessibility improvements must comply with all state and local laws including all ordinances and regulations of the City of La Junta.
- The owner and/or tenant must comply with all local and state laws and regulations affecting the property, its rehabilitation and future use.
- Grant funding is provided on a reimbursement basis only after all project expenses have been paid by the owner and upon acceptance of work by the City of La Junta, as the jurisdiction with authority under the applicable building codes.
- Project Duration: Commencement of construction or installation of improvements that have been approved under this program must begin within sixty (60) days from the date of approval and must be completed within one hundred eighty (180) days from the beginning of construction, or monies for said project will not be distributed, and will be re-obligated to the program fund. An applicant may request a thirty (30) day extension upon the board's approval.
- Changes to Approved Project: Changes in the project for which funding has been approved must be reviewed and approved by the LJURA Board during a public meeting. Any changes made prior to approval will become ineligible for reimbursement.
- Reimbursement checks will only be issued to the owner of the property, or to the tenant with written consent of the owner.
- Failure to comply with the terms and conditions of this Program may result in denial of reimbursement. LJURA board, in its sole discretion, may determine whether there have been violations of any terms or conditions of this Program.

Requests for the Blight, Life Safety and Accessibility Grant/Loan

Submittal Requirements: Eligible property owners or tenants, as described above, interested in the program should submit completed application and supporting documentation via email to:

Melanie Scofield, City Clerk

melanie.scofield@lajuntacolorado.org.

City Permits and Licenses: The applicant is required to obtain all required permit(s) from the City before construction can begin. Permitting will vary depending on the improvements planned. Applicants should contact the City of La Junta for building code or permit information specific to their project. All work performed will be inspected and must be in compliance with all applicable building codes before reimbursement is paid.

The applicable building code's fire suppression and safety requirements and the City of La Junta Municipal Code will serve as the basis for reviewing the proposed blight, life safety and accessibility improvements. Building codes are available at the Municipal Building or at <https://codes.iccsafe.org/codes/colorado>.



Blight, Life Safety and Accessibility Financial Assistance Program Policy



The City's Municipal Code may be found on the City's website. Additional information may be required by staff as needed. The applicant and/or owner will have an opportunity to present information to the Board during the open, public meeting.

Staff Review: City staff will review the application to ensure it is complete and will work with the applicant to ensure understanding of the requirements. Staff will write a staff report and recommendation based on whether the application meets the adopted guidelines and place on a Board agenda. Additional information may be requested, if needed.

LJURA Board Review: Each application will be evaluated by the Board with a scoring rubric to make a determination on whether the proposed improvements are eligible and viable and in compliance with the applicable building code and program requirements.

Board Approval: The Board shall consider the application at a public meeting and may approve, approve in part, conditionally approve, or deny the application. The applicant will be informed, requested to attend, and invited to present the application during that meeting. The Board will issue a formal letter of approval or denial to the applicant following the Board meeting.

Project Construction: Project construction must begin within sixty (60) days from the approval date and must be completed within one hundred eighty (180) days from the beginning of construction, or monies for said project will not be distributed, and will be returned to the program fund.

Contact Information: Melanie R. Scofield, City Clerk
La Junta Urban Renewal Authority
601 Colorado Avenue/P.O. Box 489
La Junta CO 81050
719.384.5991
melanie.scofield@lajuntacolorado.org

Inspections: Inspections may occur periodically throughout the construction or installation. At the completion of construction, the applicant will request a final inspection by the City of La Junta. A final inspection is required prior to requesting reimbursement. The Building Official will verify that all work approved for assistance is completed in compliance with the approved application and all applicable codes. If state approval is required for the improvements, the applicant will be responsible for ensuring that inspection occurs, and the work is approved by the state. The City will not approve any work until state approval has been received.

Reimbursement: Once the final inspection has been completed and the improvements have been approved by City staff and other agencies with authority over the improvements, the applicant may submit for reimbursement.



Blight, Life Safety and Accessibility Financial Assistance Program Policy



Documentation of payments must be submitted with a written request for reimbursement. Acceptable proof of payment for reimbursement includes, but are not limited to the following:

- Itemized invoices with the corresponding receipts and/ or cancelled checks.
- Paid Invoices for materials and/or supplies, with the corresponding receipts and/or cancelled checks, or a release of lien from contractors, sub-contractors, and/ or suppliers.
- All copies of checks should show both sides of the checks (to prove the checks were submitted and paid)

The applicant will supply any additional documentation as required by LJURA to confirm expenses.