



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Four Blighted, Residential Properties in Red Oak to be Demolished to Make Way for Future Development**

*Southwest Iowa Housing Trust Fund continues to accept applications for its Demolition Program for projects in Cass, Fremont, Harrison, Mills, Montgomery, Page and Shelby Counties.*

**Red Oak, Iowa** – The Southwest Iowa Housing Trust Fund (SWIHTF) Board recently approved 4 applications submitted by the city of Red Oak for the demolition program.

The demolition program, which is funded through SWIHTF, is designed to assist cities with the cost of demolition of blighted, residential properties. SWIHTF will pay 50% of the cost, up to \$15,000, for demolition of the city owned properties. Over the past seven years, the trust fund and partnering cities have demolished 37 dilapidated houses that were beyond repair.

All cities within the SWIHTF region of Cass, Fremont, Harrison, Mills, Montgomery, Page, and Shelby Counties can apply at any time. The SWIHTF Board meets quarterly to review, score, and approve the applications. Scoring criteria includes: city utilized the grant last year, asbestos inspection has been completed, condition of the building/collapse, inherent danger of the property, impact on the neighborhood, and plans for the space after demolition.

“When I visit our schools, civic organizations and with people in the community, one of their main concerns is the extent of dilapidated and dangerous properties within the community which greatly detract from the beauty of our hometown”, stated City of Red Oak Mayor Shawna Silvius. “As mayor, knowing how many properties are now the city’s, I am driven to lead by example. Growing property valuations is essential to improve our tax base, and housing is one of our most critical needs.”

One of the biggest benefits to this program is that it allows for cities to promote beautification initiatives that will build communities where families choose to live and businesses choose to locate. Mayor Silvius stated, “eliminating our nuisance lots and thinking out-of-the-box to redevelop areas, whether infill housing or redeveloped blocks using tiny home concepts to 3-D printed concrete houses, or creating other community garden, splash pad or river front/park-type amenities, we can literally rejuvenate dying areas of town into something bright and beautiful.”

For questions or to request/send an application contact Sandy Hansen at 712-243-4196 or [sandy.hansen@swipco.org](mailto:sandy.hansen@swipco.org).

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