

**URBAN
REVITALIZATION
TAX EXEMPTION
PROGRAM**



**Code Enforcement Office
City of Le Mars
40 Central Avenue SE
Le Mars, IA 51031
712-548-4972**

WHAT IS THE URBAN REVITALIZATION TAX EXEMPTION PROGRAM?

The Iowa State Code (Chapter 404) authorizes cities to exempt property taxes for qualified improvements to real estate that is located within designated urban revitalization areas.

The City of Le Mars has created a City-wide urban revitalization area to encourage housing construction and residential development, stabilizing and increasing the tax base, and providing overall aesthetic improvement.

WHAT IS A QUALIFIED IMPROVEMENT?

Qualified improvements include:

- New construction
- Rehabilitations that add value to a home
- Additions to existing homes

Please note: not all “improvements” add value to a home. Adding a new roof or painting a home, for example, rarely increases the taxable value of a home.

This program requires that you add value to your property. For residential or commercial used as residential assessed property you must add at least 10% to the actual value of the property. Qualifying residential property is eligible to receive an exemption from taxation on the first \$75,000 of actual value added by the improvements for a period of 5 years. Qualifying commercial used as residential is eligible to receive an exemption from taxation on the first \$75,000 of actual value added by the improvements for a period of 3 years.

WHAT IS THE APPLICATION PROCESS?

An application shall be filed for each new exemption claimed. At the conclusion of your project, receipt of a Certificate of Occupancy, and no later than February 1st of the assessment year for which the exemption is first claimed the property owner must file an application with the City of Le Mars.

You can obtain an application at the Le Mars City Hall.

The application takes less than 5 minutes to complete and staff will be available to assist you. You will be asked to estimate the cost of your improvements. Unfortunately not every dollar you spend will increase your property’s value. The Plymouth County Assessor makes the final determination of how much value has been added to your property.

At a meeting of the Le Mars City Council, the application will be approved and forwarded to the Plymouth County Assessor. The Plymouth County Assessor then determines how much value has been added to the property.

CAN ALL OF MY PROPERTY TAXES BE ELIMINATED?

No. You will still pay taxes on the base value of the property during the life of the urban revitalization area, you will only need to file one application in the year in which you first wish to claim the improvements.

If you make multiple improvements over many years, you must submit an application each year that you make qualifying improvements to your property.

I HAVE ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS. WHO CAN I CALL?

If you have additional questions about the Urban Revitalization Tax Exemption Program you may call the Le Mars Code Enforcement office at 548-4972. If you have questions about the tax exemption received or general questions about your property taxes, please call the Plymouth County Assessor’s office at 546-4705.

