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Contact: Emily Lofgren
Communications Manager
City of Muscatine
215 Sycamore Street
Muscatine, IA 52761
563-264-1550
elofgren@muscatineiowa.gov

CITY OF MUSCATINE AND THREE LOCAL BANKS IN RUNNING FOR STRONG COMMUNITIES AWARD

MUSCATINE, IOWA, October 2, 2015 – The City of Muscatine has partnered with CBI Bank & Trust, Community Bank and First National Bank of Muscatine to apply and become a finalist for the Strong Communities Award. The award honors the projects, the people and the programs that promote small business growth and retention in their community and also highlights the great work that the Federal Home Loan Bank of Des Moines' member institutions are doing every day to help their communities thrive.

The City of Muscatine and banks partnership is one of seven finalists for the award, which is split into two categories. Muscatine's rural category has four finalists.

A public vote will serve as a component of the selection process. One winner in each category will be recognized during a community celebration and will receive a \$15,000 award to promote small business and economic development in their communities. The top finalist in each category will receive a \$3,000 stipend.

Voting will take place Oct. 5 to 16 at www.fhlbforcommunity.com/voting.

Public participation by Muscatine community members will be highly valued as this award will help to further the efforts of the City and banks to provide opportunities for new and existing businesses to thrive.

Muscatine's Small Business Creation Project works to create small businesses in targeted areas of Muscatine that were once thriving business areas. Two of the business creation programs within the project include the Muscatine Small Business Forgivable Loan Program and the Muscatine Building Improvements Loan Program.

Since its creation, the Small Business Forgivable Loan Program has aided in the creation or expansion of seven businesses, including Big River Guns, Hanna's OzSome Treats, Home Run Hitters, The Rose Bowl, Sal Vitale's Italian Restaurant, Sign Pro 3-D Printing and Well Fit Nutrition Bar.

More information about the City of Muscatine's loan programs can be found at www.muscatineiowa.gov in the Community Development Department section.

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