

# **ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR CDBG-FUNDED PROJECTS**

Recommended format per 24 CFR 58.36, revised January 2014  
[Previously recommended EA formats are obsolete].

Project Identification: City of Ironwood, Downtown City Square Project  
#MSC218024-CPF

Preparer: Jerald Wuorenmaa,  
Western U.P. Planning & Development Region

Responsible Entity: City of Ironwood, Michigan

Month/Year: April 2020

## ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

**Responsible Entity:** City of Ironwood, Michigan  
[24 CFR 58.2(a)(7)]

**Certifying Officer:** Annette Burchell, Mayor  
[24 CFR 58.2(a)(2)]

**Project Name:** Ironwood City Square

**Project Location:** City of Ironwood, Michigan

**Estimated total project cost:** \$1,677,027

**Grant Recipient:** City of Ironwood, Michigan  
[24 CFR 58.2(a)(5)]

**Recipient Address:** 213 S Marquette St, Ironwood, MI 49938

**Project Representative:** Scott Erickson, City Manager

**Telephone Number:** (906) 932-5050

**Conditions for Approval:** (List all mitigation measures adopted by the responsible entity to eliminate or minimize adverse environmental impacts. These conditions must be included in project contracts and other relevant documents as requirements). [24 CFR 58.40(d), 40 CFR 1505.2(c)]

**No mitigation measures are required to be adopted by the City of Ironwood for this project.**

**FINDING:** [58.40(g)]

☒ **Finding of No Significant Impact**  
(The project will not result in a significant impact on the quality of the human environment.)

☐ **Finding of Significant Impact**  
(The project may significantly affect the quality of the human environment.)

**Preparer Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** 3/26/2020

**Name/Title/Agency:** Jerald Wuorenmaa, Executive Director, Western U.P.  
Planning and Development Region Commission (WUPPDR)

**RE Approving Official  
Signature:**

Annette De La Burchell **Date:** 4/6/2020

**Name/Title/Agency:** Annette Burchell, Mayor, City of Ironwood

**Statement of Purpose and Need for the Proposal:** [40 CFR 1508.9(b)]

**Description of the Proposal:** Include all contemplated actions, which logically are either geographically, or functionally a composite part of the project, regardless of the source of funding. [24 CFR 58.32, 40 CFR 1508.25]

**Project name:** Ironwood City Square

**Project type:** Infrastructure

**Project description:**

The City will be acquiring two vacant lots in the core downtown block to be redeveloped into the Ironwood City Square. The Downtown Ironwood City Square will be a central location of activity year-round in Downtown Ironwood. In order to build on current downtown momentum the City wants to undertake a bigger project to activate public space in the Downtown. The Ironwood City Square will utilize an undeveloped lot right downtown. The project will include the development of an amphitheater for larger music performances and outdoor theater functions, an ice rink in the winter, a splash pad in the summer, a location for food truck vendors, outdoor

fireplace for year round use, solar and environmental features, and extensive landscaping to beautify the downtown. This location serves as the finish line for our annual event the SISU Ski Fest ski race, that draws 650 participants from all over the country, and will serve as the location for future community events. The City sees this as an incredible opportunity to strengthen the downtown and stimulate more new businesses.

The proposed project is located at the SW Corner of Ayer Street and Aurora Street Ironwood, MI 49938. Located in Downtown City of Ironwood. It is currently privately owned but will be acquired by the City for public use.

*Apart from the main project site, the proposed project also encompasses new streetlights to be installed along several blocks of two street segments extending outward from the downtown area. These lights will enhance the aesthetics of existing neighborhoods and continuity with the downtown project site.*

**Existing Conditions and Trends:** Describe the existing conditions of the project area and its surroundings, and trends likely to continue in the absence of the project. [24 CFR 58.40(a)]

The project site is a large vacant lot in the heart of a traditional downtown. The site is underutilized space in a high-traffic, walkable, primarily commercial environment adjacent to residential neighborhoods. Currently some car parking occurs on site, but otherwise it is empty, composed of a level surface of asphalt, gravel, and unmaintained vegetation. The site is served by municipal storm sewer and municipal and private utilities and is ready for infill development.

The proposed project would greatly enhance the active environment of downtown and would provide a critical location for active recreation and events serving residents and visitors. The project would offer many quality-of-life amenities that are currently unavailable in the downtown area.

If the project is not undertaken, it is likely the site would continue to decline rather than capitalizing on a high-value location to enhance commercial and recreational opportunities. Alternatively, as the site is currently in private ownership, it is possible it would eventually be developed into commercial space.

## Statutory Checklist

Federal Laws and Authorities listed at Sec. 58.5

**Project Name and Identification No.**

Ironwood City Square

Area of Statutory or Regulatory Compliance	Not Applicable to This Project	Consultation Required*	Review Required*	Permits Required*	Determination of consistency Approvals, Permits Obtained*	Conditions and/or Mitigation Actions Required	Provide compliance documentation. Additional material may be attached.
Historic Properties		X					SHPO letter dated 12/3/2019 (in ERR) determined <u>no adverse effect</u> .
Floodplain Management (HUD 8-step decision-making process must be used if project is located in/impacts floodplain)	X						The project is not located in a Special Flood Hazard Area. Worksheet, 8-Step form, and FEMA map in ERR.
Wetlands Protection (HUD 8-step decision-making process must be used if project is located in/impacts wetlands)	X						There are no designated or known wetlands in the project area. Worksheet, 8-Step form, and wetlands map in ERR.
Coastal Zone Management	X						The project is not located within a Coastal Zone, nor would it impact one. Worksheet and map in ERR.
Water Quality	X						There are no EPA-designated sole source aquifers in or near the project area. Worksheet and MI & WI maps in ERR.
Endangered Species	X						The project will not modify habitat and is not known to be utilized by any endangered species. Worksheet and list in ERR file.
Wild and Scenic Rivers	X						The project is not located within ¼ mile of either bank of a listed Wild and Scenic river segment. There are no Wild or Scenic Rivers in the project area. Worksheet and MI & WI maps in ERR.
Air Quality	X						There are no nonattainment areas in or near the project area. Worksheet and MI & WI maps in ERR.
Farmlands Protection	X						Project area is completely built-up; there is no existing farmland in or near the project area. Worksheet and aerial map in ERR.
Thermal/Explosive	X						The project does not include a hazardous facility. Explosive and Flammable Hazards worksheet in ERR.
Noise Control	X						Environmental or community noise exposure will not exceed a day/night average sound level of 65 decibels. The project does not include any new residential construction or rehabilitation. Worksheet in ERR.
Airport Clear Zones	X						NPIAS (2017-2021). Does not require consultation. Worksheet and map in ERR.
Contamination/Toxic Sites	X						Phase I ESA discovered no recognized environmental conditions (contamination) associated with project site. ESA document in ERR.
Environmental Justice	X						Phase I ESA discovered no recognized environmental conditions associated with project site; thus project will have no effects that would disproportionately impact population subgroups. ESA document in ERR.

\* Attach evidence that required actions have been taken.

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# Statutory Checklist

Federal Laws and Authorities listed at Sec. 58.6 and  
Permits, Licenses, Forms of Compliance Under Other Laws - Federal, State and Local

**Project Name and Identification No.**

Ironwood City Square

Other Areas of Statutory and Regulatory Compliance Applicable to Project	Not Applicable to This Project	Consultation Required*	Review Required*	Permits Required*	Determination of consistency	Approvals, Permits Obtained*	Conditions and/or Mitigation Actions Required	Provide compliance documentation. Additional material may be attached.
<b>Federal Requirements</b>								
Flood Insurance - 58.6(a)	X							Project is not located in a Special Flood Hazard Area. Worksheet and FEMA Map in ERR.
Coastal Barriers - 58.6(c)	X							Project is not located within a CBRS unit. John H Chafee Coastal Barrier Resource System, Michigan map, and US Fish & Wildlife Service, Coastal Barrier Resource System Mapper. Worksheet and maps in ERR.
Airport Clear Zone Notification - 58.6(d)	X							NPIAS (2017-2021). Does not require consultation. Worksheet and map in ERR file.
Water Quality	X							There are no EPA-designated sole source aquifers in Michigan. Worksheet and MI & WI maps in ERR file.
Solid Waste Disposal	X							The project will not generate an excessive amount of solid waste, and appropriate disposal facilities are readily available. No hazardous waste will be generated.
Fish and Wildlife	X							The project will not impact fish and wildlife habitat.
Stormwater	X							Public infrastructure is in place with sufficient capacity to manage stormwater.
Use the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality's Environmental Permit Checklist to determine which, if any, state statutes apply ( <a href="http://www.michigan.gov/documents/deq/deq-oea-cau-permits-egp3580_415019_7.pdf">http://www.michigan.gov/documents/deq/deq-oea-cau-permits-egp3580_415019_7.pdf</a> ). Document any relevant state statute compliance below.								
<b>State Statutes</b>								
Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control (local agency)						X		Permit obtained.
NPDES	X							Discharge volume does not require permit.
Plumbing and electrical				X				Permits to be obtained after procurement by contractors eligible to apply.
<b>Prepared by:</b>						<b>Title</b>		
Jerald Wuorenmaa						Grant Administrator		

## Environmental Assessment Checklist

[Environmental Review Guide HUD CPD 782, 24 CFR 58.40; Ref. 40 CFR 1508.8 & 1508.27]

Evaluate the significance of the effects of the proposal on the character, features and resources of the project area. Enter relevant base data and verifiable source documentation to support the finding. Then enter the appropriate impact code from the following list to make a determination of impact. **Impact Codes:** (1) - No impact anticipated; (2) - Potentially beneficial; (3) - Potentially adverse; (4) - Requires mitigation; (5) - Requires project modification. Note names, dates of contact, telephone numbers and page references. Attach additional material as appropriate. Note conditions or mitigation measures required.

Land Development	Code	Source or Documentation
Conformance with Comprehensive Plans and Zoning	2	Project complies with and furthers implementation of City of Ironwood Comprehensive Plan. Project is consistent with City Zoning Ordinance (Sec 34-132[7]).
Compatibility and Urban Impact	2	The Comprehensive Plan indicates that projects of this type are compatible with and beneficial assets to the urban environment; the project will enhance community vitality through added activity, entertainment opportunities, improved aesthetics, etc.
Slope	1	Main project site is virtually flat, and surrounding streetlights will replace existing fixtures.
Erosion	1	Site is currently, and will remain, mostly impermeable surface drained by a municipal storm drainage system.
Soil Suitability	1	Underlying soil is sufficient to support the project, which will not significantly change ground cover type.
Hazards and Nuisances including Site Safety	2	No hazards or nuisances exist on site, and safety may improve as a result of more public awareness of activities on main project site.
Energy Consumption	1	Increase of energy use on main project site will be minimal, powered in part by on-site solar and remainder by an electric utility with sufficient capacity. Newly installed streetlights will likely have lower than current energy consumption.

<b>Noise</b> - Contribution to Community Noise Levels	1	Noise will be controlled by regulating activities on the site through rulemaking, policing, permitting, and appropriate scheduling to minimize impacts on surrounding areas. Surroundings of main project site are primarily nonresidential.
<b>Air Quality</b> Effects of Ambient Air Quality on Project and Contribution to Community Pollution Levels	1	There will be no increase in pollution-causing activities and thus no impact on air quality or community pollution levels.
<b>Environmental Design</b> Visual Quality - Coherence, Diversity, Compatible Use and Scale	2	The preliminary conceptual design is beneficial to the urban environment. Detailed design has not yet occurred but will comply with these design elements.

Socioeconomic	Code	Source or Documentation
Demographic Character Changes	1	Project will not impact demographics of the area.
Displacement	1	Project will not displace individuals or businesses.
Employment and Income Patterns	1	Project will not impact employment and income patterns.

**Community Facilities**

<b>and Services</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Source or Documentation</b>
Educational Facilities	1	Project will not impact educational facilities.
Commercial Facilities	2	Project may benefit area commercial facilities through increased traffic and activity on main project site.
Health Care	1	Project will not impact healthcare facilities or needs.
Social Services	1	Project will not impact social services facilities or needs.
Solid Waste	1	Solid waste production will be within capacity and service area of existing disposal services.
Waste Water	1	Project will not significantly impact wastewater.
Storm Water	1	Stormwater drainage will be within capacity of municipal infrastructure.
Water Supply	1	Any increase in water use will be within capacity of municipal system.
Public Safety	1	Need for police presence during events will be met by Ironwood Public Safety department.
- Police		
- Fire	1	Project will not significantly increase risk of fire.
- Emergency Medical	1	Project will not significantly impact emergency medical services.
Open Space and Recreation	2	Use, amenities, and character of open space on main project site will improve.
- Open Space		
- Recreation	2	Project will increase some recreation opportunities (e.g. splash pad).
- Cultural Facilities	2	Project will be a venue for cultural events and installations.
Transportation	1	Project will not significantly impact transportation.

**Natural Features**

Water Resources	1	Project will not impact water resources.
Surface Water	1	Project will not impact surface water.
Unique Natural Features and Agricultural Lands	1	Project site has no unique natural features or agricultural lands, nor will project impact these.
Vegetation and Wildlife	1	Project will not impact vegetation or wildlife.

**Other Factors**

Flood Disaster Protection Act [Flood Insurance] [§58.6(a)]	1	Project is not within a Special Flood Hazard Area.
Coastal Barrier Resources Act/Coastal Barrier Improvement Act [§58.6(c)]	1	Project is not within a CBRS unit.
Airport Runway Clear Zone or Clear Zone Disclosure [§58.6(d)]	1	Project is not within a runway clear zone.
Other Factors	1	Project has no other impactful factors.

## Summary of Findings and Conclusions

### ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED ACTION

#### Alternatives and Project Modifications Considered [24 CFR 58.40(e), Ref. 40 CFR 1508.9]

Additional Streetlights: Potential streetlight installation along an approximately two-block corridor abutting and east of the Montreal River was eliminated due to presence of floodplain.

#### No Action Alternative [24 CFR 58.40(e)]

Taking no action would result in the continuation of the main City Square project site as a lot that is vacant, partially overgrown with weeds and largely used for vehicle parking. This is far from being the highest and best use of the property. Redevelopment would result in the loss of some parking space, but this would likely be the only negative impact of the project. Large amounts of additional parking are available in the area, and in general the existence of the lot in its current underutilized state is an ongoing adverse impact to the overall human, physical, and economic environment of the downtown area of Ironwood. Exercising the no action alternative would be a detrimental avoidance of benefits.

#### MITIGATION MEASURES RECOMMENDED [24 CFR 58.40(d), 40 CFR 1508.20]

No mitigation measures are recommended.

### ADDITIONAL STUDIES PERFORMED

Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment

#### LIST OF SOURCES, AGENCIES AND PERSONS CONSULTED [40 CFR 1508.9(b)]

Thomas Bergman, Community Development Director, City of Ironwood  
Scott Erickson, Manager, City of Ironwood  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
Gogebic County Road Commission (via project engineer)  
Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy  
Michigan Department of Transportation (via project engineer)  
Michigan State Historic Preservation Office  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources  
Brian Grennell, MSHDA/State Historic Preservation Office