Iowa Department of Management
Annual Urban Renewal Report

FY2015 Report Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How do we access this report?

A: Go to the Department of Management web site at this web address:

http://www.dom.state.ia.us/local/tif/index.html

You should have received a letter indicating a username and password to access the system. If you are unable to find this letter, please contact Ted Nellesen (ted.nellesen@iowa.gov or 515-281-3705) if you are a city or a Rural Improvement Zone, or Carrie Johnson (carrie.johnson@iowa.gov or 515-281-5598) if you are a county.

Q: What are the recommended browsers for accessing this report?

A: Web browsers supported by the application are Internet Explorer 9 and higher, Mozilla Firefox and Google Chrome.

If you are using an older version of Internet Explorer, you may discover functionality issues. If you are unsure what version of Internet Explorer you have, open a web site and go to "Help" and then "About Internet Explorer". A box should appear to tell you what version you have. To upgrade your Internet Explorer, go to "Tools" and then "Windows Update". Follow the steps as described to update your browser.

To download Mozilla Firefox, go to http://www.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/new/

To download Google Chrome, go to https://www.google.com/intl/en/chrome/browser/

Q: What timeframe is covered by this report?

A: This report is a backwards looking report focusing on the structure of your Urban Renewal Area/s, projects and debt of the area and revenue coming in, payments coming out of your TIF Special Revenue Fund during the prior fiscal year ended. So the Fiscal Year 2015 report will cover the time period July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015.

Q: How is information populated into the report on Urban Renewal Areas, tax districts and so on?

A: The general information populated into the report is pulled from data enter by the county auditor in your county into the State Property Valuation System (PVS). If there are concerns regarding the name of UR areas or tax districts or the general set up of your areas, you will want to bring those questions to your county auditor.

Q: What data that I entered is pulled forward from year to year and what do I need to enter each year?

A: The uploaded documents (plan, map and ordinance) are pulled forward. Projects are pulled forward unless you indicated the project was both Physically Complete and Payments Complete (meaning the debt used to pay for the project was completely paid). If both have "Y" selected they will be deleted the next year from the list. Debt is also pulled forward unless you had indicated a past year as the final year of payment as well as the general information for Rebate and Non Rebate Expenditures. Other general information, such as the Type of UR and the Date Revenue First Received, etc. on the tax district pages is retained from year to year and is not removed.

Your total outstanding debt will need to be entered as well the amount of any expenditures made during the year. You will also need to complete the Fiscal Recap page for all UR areas. Obviously any new debt, projects, etc., undertaken during the year will need to be entered.

Q: We created an Urban Renewal Area during FY15. We have not incurred any debt or divided revenue yet. The UR area is not currently showing up in the report. Do I need to complete the repor on this new UR area?

A:. If you had an Urban Renewal Area that existed in FY2015 but it was not set up in the Property Valuation System because it was not dividing revenue, please contact us. We will work with you to add the area into the system. For most in this situation, we anticipate that you would complete little of the report. Most would primarily only complete the basic information about the area as well as the provision of any applicable reference documents (plan, map, perhaps ordinance).

Q: Our TIF was set up in the 1990s and was never utilized to date. I understand I need to upload the map, ordinance and plan. Is there a place that I can check mark to simply say we have never used TIF?

A; There is a "Notes" tab. In that tab you can type whatever info you feel is helpful for someone reviewing the report and I would suggest indicating in there that you have not used TIF since the area was set up.

Q: If we have restated our plan, do we upload the restated plan and corresponding amendments or original plan, restated plan, and amendments?

A: You would combine whatever documents are needed to reflect the area as it looked in FY2015 into one PDF file and upload that one file for your plan. You are only able to uploaded one PDF file for the plan, one PDF file for the map and one PDF file for the ordinance. If you have difficulty combing multiple documents into one PDF, please let us know and we can assist.

Q: Our map is old and large, too large to place in a scanner. Is the map needed in this case?

A: Contact us. You could try copying it in sections and then scan and email those pieces to us, or there may be other ways to put together a map. We will do what we can to get it into one document that could be uploaded.

Q: As the TIF reporting was refined a few years ago, some counties assigned separate Urban Renewal numbers for each time the area was amended and property was added, even though it is all functioning as the same Urban Renewal Area. Do we upload the same latest Urban Renewal Plan information for each Urban Renewal numbered area?

A: Yes, you would upload whatever plan is pertinent for that particular area on which you are reporting. This may mean that the same plan, map, etc. is applicable to more than one area in the system.

Q: Recently we consolidated three of our TIF areas into one. For the annual report do I report them as one TIF area or do I do them individually

A: It depends on when they were combined. The Annual Urban Renewal Report is a backwards-looking report. So, for instance, the report for FY15 is reporting on whatever the areas looked like during FY15. If you just made the change very recently, the FY15 report would still be individually broken out.

Q: Can an Urban Renewal Area be designated as both economic development and slum/blight?

A: Yes, the system allows for any or all of the designations to be selected.

Q: If you have a jobs component in a developer agreement, but the entity did not meet the requirement for it and is therefore not getting any payment, do we still include it?

A: You would still report on it if your agreement is in effect. Therefore it would be listed on the Project and Debt tabs and you would report on it with the Jobs tab. But if you did not have expenditures for it in FY15, then you would not show anything for it on the Non-Rebate Expenditures tab. You could make a note on the Notes tab to further explain the specifics of the situation, if you would like to clarify it.

Q: Should administrative expenses be input in aggregate for the life of the bond (which would require some estimating) or just for the fiscal year in question, with a plan to annually input actual administrative costs in future years?

A: Debt would be reportable on the Debt tab when it is certifiable. It would become certifiable when there is formal documentation of that debt approval (in other words, an approved internal loan for administrative expenses).

Q: If we have an outstanding GO bond that only a portion of the interest is being paid by TIF, I just report the amount outstanding that will be paid by the TIF, not the total outstanding GO bond…right?

A: Yes, you are reporting debt that is eligible to be repaid with TIF revenues. You report the debt by debt instrument and report the outstanding balance as of the beginning of FY15.

Keep in mind you will need to take into account what you certified as TIF debt. If you certified the entire GO bond as TIF debt, even if your intent is perhaps not to repay the whole amount from TIF, you would reported the entire GO bond as TIF debt on this report. If you certified an entire bond as TIF debt but your intent is not to repay the whole bond with TIF revenues, you likely need to consider decertifying some of that bond as TIF debt.

Q: Is Engineering for Street Work considered Administration costs or Streets, Roads & Bridges

A: Engineering fees can be recorded either way. Just be consistent.

Q: If City is amending UR plan now and intends to certify as of 12/1/15 a new TIF project, and perhaps issue bonds yet this fall to fund that project, are you saying that the debt must be entered at this time? what if the City doesn't know the exact amount of debt to be issued, or the interest cost on that debt?

A: If the obligation or debt is not committed by 06/30/2015 then it cannot be included on this report.

Q: In the discussion of percentage of bond issue that is tied to a project, what if the City set up the bond with specific underlying schedule for each of the purposes, and that schedule was not proportional in each year, but rather, over time? How does a city enter data on this tab if this was the City's approach toward setting up their GO bond? FYI, this approach for setting up a GO bond is extremely common.

A: The proration of payments should be matched to your debt schedule. If you do not have a debt schedule that can be simply prorated in the fashion of our example, you could use this formula:

(Amount of Bond Par used for Project / Total TIF portion of Bond Par Amount) x Amount of yearly payment that is abated by TIF revenues.

Q: Can you use excess revenue received for a previously certified and paid debt to pay down internal loan principal rather than returning the money to the treasurer?

A: Yes, as long as it is in the same UR area, and you use Form 3 to reduce the amount of future TIF revenues being received to pay the internal loan.

Q: The city had negotiated the donation of 6 lots in a residential TIF in exchange for part of the financial LMI Obligation. Do I put the value of those lots in the outstanding LMI Obligation?

A: The Fair Market Value (FMV) of the 6 lots will eventually satisfy a part of the total LMI requirement. Until the Lots are distributed, though, the FMV of the lots would need to be included in the LMI requirement. As the lots are distributed, the amount of the LMI requirement can be reduced by the FMV of each lot as it is given away. If the entire LMI requirement has been certified on Form 1 then the FMV of the lots should be decertified on Form 3 so the City does not over collect TIF to satisfy the LMI requirement.

Q: You stated that fiscal fees are to be included in the principal of o/s debt. Are you referring to the agent fees that are charged each year for bond payments?

A: Yes, agent or registrar fees can be included.

Q: Does the LMI requirement stay the same as when the TIF area was first approved and stated in the original document…or does that fluctuate over the duration of the TIF project?

A: There are two likely possibilities. We suggest you contact your TIF counsel to determine which they recommend. The first is the LMI % or amount requirement is set when the urban renewal area is first approved. The second is the LMI % or amount requirement is set when the specific TIF project is first approved.

Q: Our Rebate Agreement is a percentage 75% / 25%, so should we just put in an estimated amount of total rebate?

A: Yes, re-estimate the total due to pay in full on a yearly basis.

Q: Does the Public Building Feasibility Analysis need to be done for Infrastructure / Street Improvements?

A: No, Infrastructure and Road projects are exempted from this analysis.

Q: What is meant by "Sum of Private Investment Made Within This Urban Renewal Area during FY 2015" on the Notes Tab?

A: The amount of money spent by property owners on physical improvements or expansion of employees in the Urban Renewal Area in FY2015 can be entered in this blank.

Q: What amounts should be entered for the Principal and Interest of the debts listed on the Debt/Obligations Tab?

A: The principal and interest entered on the debt/obligations tab should be the amount of principal or interest needed to pay in full as of 7-1-2015. For debt incurred during the fiscal year, enter the amount of principal and interest due to pay the debt in full at the time the debt is incurred.

Q: We refunded a debt we had listed on the report last year. How are refundings handled for this report?

A: For refundings of existing debt, for the old debt, you would only show the amount of payment for the fiscal year being reported. The new debt will show amount due for all future fiscal years. Please contact us for assistance reflecting refunding in your report.

Q: Is this going to be due December 1st? Does it have to be finished before a City or County can certify its budget?

A: The report has a statutory deadline of December 1. You have to complete it prior to being able to publish and adopt your budget or the Department of Management cannot certify your taxes. In addition, the Legislative Services Agency will pull data for their report to the Iowa General Assembly sometime shortly after December 1 and list out those that were not completed at the time they pull the data.

Q: How is the report approved? Motion or resolution?

A: A simple motion by the city council (city report) or board of supervisors (county report) is all that is needed.

Q: How do you submit the report?

A: Your report would be considered submitted when you come back into the system and enter in the date the governing body approved the report and select "Submit to Department of Management". You do not submit anything hardcopy.

Q: Are the completed reports available for public view?

A: Yes, the reports and data from the reports will be available to the public. In addition, the Legislative Services Agency is required to report to the Iowa General Assembly on the data in mid February of each year.

Technology TIPS:

Keep the file name of any uploaded documents short and limit them to letters and numbers only, no spaces or special characters (like commas, ampersands, etc.)

Always enter WHOLE numbers, no decimals (this is particularly pertinent when entering your TIF revenue).

Remember to save often and on each and every tab or page before moving to the next tab or page.

Complete a row of information (for example, all the information about one project in a row) before trying to save.

The system will "time out" after a certain amount of time. Meaning you will be logged out of the system if you have a period of no activity (for example, you leave the web site open and go to lunch). If you are timed out, it may not save what you had worked on since you last logged out. Therefore, we suggest inputting data and logging out if you anticipate any period of inactivity.

Always LOG OUT and do not simply close the window. Your data may be lost.

Questions:

Cities and RIZ contact:	**Counties contact:**
Ted Nellesen	Carrie Johnson
515-281-3705	515-281-5598
ted.nellesen@iowa.gov	carrie.johnson@iowa.gov