

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

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February 7, 2024

TO: Mahesh Sharma, County Administrator

FROM: David Farmer, CPA, MPA Director of Budget & Administrative Services

SUBJECT: Figge Art Museum CAT Grant matching request and Mississippi Valley Fair, Inc. CAT Grant matching request

Scott County has received two requests for the February 15, 2024 Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) grant filing deadline. The County normally budgets \$50,000 per year in CAT grant funding in our capital program, as the projects are generally capital in nature to meet the state program guidelines. For fiscal year 2024 the County has budgeted \$40,000 for Nahant Marsh and \$10,000 for the City of Bettendorf. For fiscal year 2025, the County has budgeted \$40,000 for the City of Bettendorf and has \$10,000 unbudgeted. For fiscal years 2026 - 2029 we have \$50,000 budgeted per year. County matching contributions have ranged from \$20,000 to \$100,000 over one to three years.

The Figge Art Museum is planning to seek a Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) grant of \$900,000 to fund a community lighting projects at the Figge. The project will be considered Iowa's largest art exhibit, *Evanescent Field*. The Figge anticipates increased visibility, enhanced visitor experiences, and boosted tourism. The Enhance Iowa CAT grant requires a match from Scott County and the City of Davenport. The Figge provided additional details in the attachments.

The Mississippi Valley Fair is intending to apply for a CAT grant for a major renovation and repair of the existing 105-year-old grandstand at the fairground. The upgrade will enhance safety and competitiveness to attract events. The annual fair last year drew over 120,000 people, as well as thousands more during interim events like races, tractor pulls, monster trucks, and other events. The estimated costs is over \$1 million. The Enhance Iowa CAT grant requires a match from Scott County and the City of Davenport. The fairgrounds provided additional details in the attachments.

As both organizations request a commitment by February 15, it is recommended to authorize the Board chair to act on consensus for any commitments the Board would like to make.

Further discussion can take place at the Committee of the Whole on February 13, 2024.

Attachments enclosed

Figge Art Museum
225 West Second Street
Davenport, Iowa 52801
t 563.326.7804
f 563.326.7876
www.figgeartmuseum.org



Figge Art Museum – *Evanescent Field*

About the Project

The Figge Art Museum has commissioned internationally renowned light artist Leo Villareal, in collaboration with RDG Planning of Des Moines, to create *Evanescent Field*, a monumental light sculpture for its façade. Consisting of 3,106 linear feet of powerful vibrant, full-color LED fixtures, this dynamic work of art will be driven by software and algorithmically generated patterns, resulting in a continuously evolving contemporary masterpiece and the largest public artwork in Iowa. Accessible to all free of charge, *Evanescent Field* will provide cultural engagement opportunities, support life-long learning, enhance the quality of life for the residents of our community, and have a significant impact on people of all backgrounds, races, and identities.

Evanescent Field promises to be a transformative addition to the Quad Cities. With Leo Villareal's global reputation, the Figge anticipates increased visibility, enhanced visitor experiences, and boosted tourism. High Trestle Bridge in Madrid, IA, for example, which combines public art and light, draws an estimated 250,000 visitors each year.

Enhance Iowa Funding Opportunity

Enhance Iowa's Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) grant provides an exciting opportunity for the Figge Art Museum to close the gap in funding needed to complete *Evanescent Field*. The CAT program assists communities in the development and creation of multiple purpose attraction or tourism facilities. CAT awards can help position a community to take advantage of economic development opportunities in tourism and strengthen a community's competitiveness as a place to work and live.

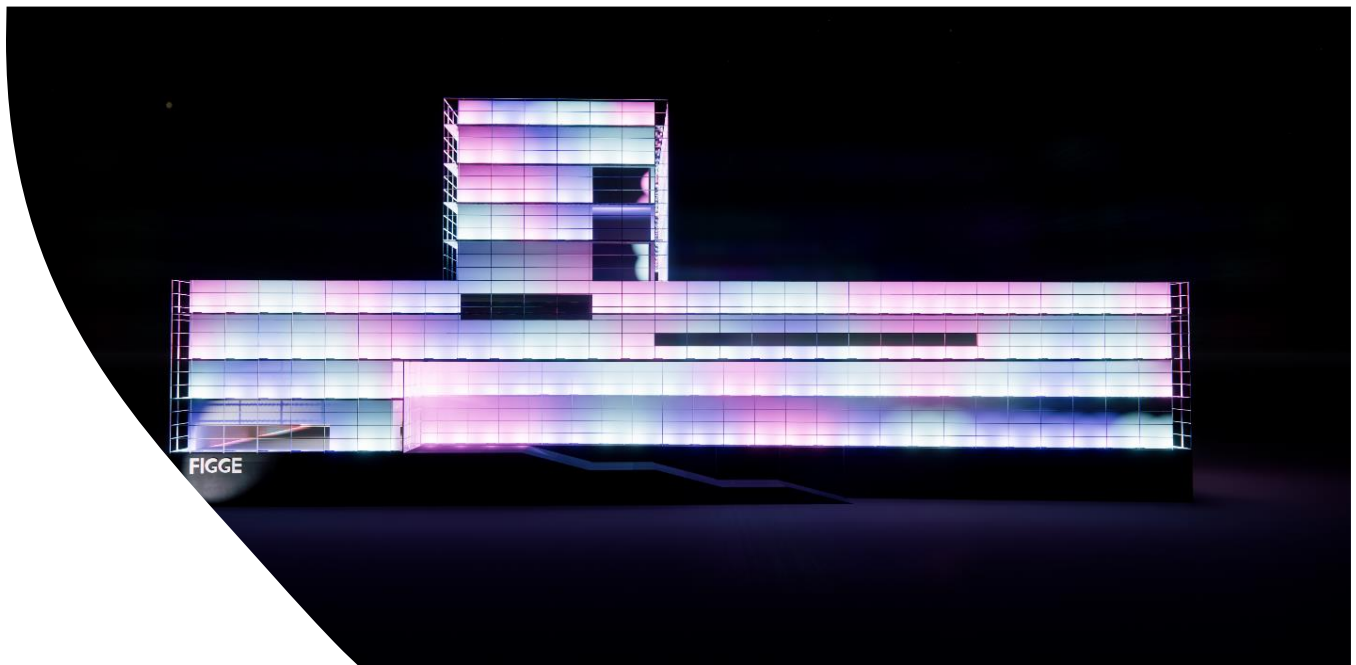
The Enhance Iowa CAT grant requires a match from Scott County, which the Figge will leverage to request over \$900,000 in additional project funding.

Project Renderings

Video simulation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-4KdjmPNNRw&t=16s>

November 2023 mockup: https://youtu.be/OZ_VM_ofr8M?







Mississippi Valley Fair, Inc.

2815 West Locust Street • Davenport, IA 52804

(563) 326-5338

www.mvfair.com

Shawn Loter

General Manager

February 6, 2024

Scott County Administrator
Mahesh Sharma
CC: David Farmer
admin@scottcountyiowa.gov

Dear Mahesh,

The Mississippi Valley Fair intends to apply for a grant from Enhance Iowa through the Iowa Economic Development Authority for a major renovation and repair of the existing 105-year-old grandstand at the Fairgrounds. In order to apply for funding for CAT awards, the Enhance Iowa Board requires cash contributions from the city and county where the project is located. We are respectfully requesting that the county consider this contribution. The Mississippi Valley Fair strives to maintain state of the art facilities for the city, county, state and nation. The upgrade not only contributes to the safety of patrons but strengthens the community's competitiveness as a place to work and live. The grandstand concerts during the annual fair last year drew over 120,000 people, as well as thousands more during interim events like races, tractor pulls, monster trucks and other events.

The 105-year-old grandstand shows some wear and tear in areas exposed to the elements (east and west ends and box seat area). The existing aluminum seating will be removed, and damaged lumber in the structure will be replaced. A gutter system will be installed under the beams to funnel any water out of the grandstand to concrete area in front walkway in the grandstand. The flooring will be replaced with treated wood. The existing aluminum bench seats would be reused. Lighting will be installed on all stairs. The estimated cost is over one million dollars.

There is no specific dollar amount required as a city or county funding. The funding amount is not as important as your support of the Mississippi Valley Fair and the project. I would be happy to visit with you to explain the renovation project in more detail if you would like as well. Time is of the essence, so I would appreciate a response as soon as possible.

Thank you!

Regards,
Shawn Loter
General Manager

Mississippi Valley Fair

July 30th - August 4th, 2024