

FAQs

(frequently asked questions)

about

Stellar Madison

What is the Stellar Communities Designation?

The Stellar Communities program, launched in 2011, is a multi-agency partnerships designed to recognize Indiana's smaller communities that have identified comprehensive community / economic development projects and activities as well as next steps and key partnerships. Participating funding agencies include; the Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA), Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), and Indiana Housing and Community Development Association (IHCDA).

What kind of projects will Stellar help accomplish?

Stellar projects are normally related to infrastructure, such as roads, parks, utilities, downtown redevelopment, housing rehabilitation and new housing projects, as well as streetscape improvements. In Madison, our community helped leaders identify the most important infrastructure projects through open houses and public input surveys at various stages over the last few years. Many of these projects have been desired by the community for some time, but due to financial or development difficulties, they need an extra "push" that Stellar will help provide. Our projects are listed on the www.stellarmadison.org website.

Is this a grant program?

Stellar Communities is not a grant program. Communities are designated as a Stellar Community and then engage the state agencies to gain access to funds of varying types including grants, loans and tax credits.

How long will it take to complete all of the Stellar projects?

All projects, including complimentary projects, should be expected to be completed within four years after the Stellar Communities designation.

What private dollars are involved and how will those be used?

A 20% local match is typically the minimum on most state funded projects, but it depends on the type of state funds. The local match can come from a variety of sources including government, non-profit, companies, and organizations.

Who are the partner agencies from the state?

- Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA)
 - As part of the Indiana Stellar Communities Program, the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority focuses on implementing housing-related initiatives to meet its organizational strategic priorities of: (1) developing activities that promote aging in place; (2) encouraging individual self-sufficiency; (3) supporting high-performance building; and (4) striving to end homelessness.
- Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA)
 - OCRA's primary objectives within the Indiana Stellar Communities Program are to encourage implementation of those development strategies that adhere to its organizational mission of: (1) promoting community prosperity; (2) strengthening the local and state economy; and (3) providing capacity-building solutions to ensure rural communities are ready, marketable, and competitive for economic growth.
- Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT)
 - The Indiana Department of Transportation plans, builds, maintains, and operates the state's transportation system. Its core mission is to enhance safety, mobility, and economic growth. The Local Public Agency - Metropolitan Planning Organization (LPA-MPO) Section oversees the Indiana Stellar Communities Program for the Department of Transportation as part of its mission to assist local governments with transportation-related projects.

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What resources do non-funding partner agencies provide?

- Technical Assistance
 - Healthy Policies and Practices
 - Business Consulting and Entrepreneurship-Support
 - Volunteerism and Service
 - Historic Structure Management and Outdoor Recreation Community Planning
 - Financial and Brownfield Counseling
 - Asset Development, Strategic Planning, and Destination Marketing
- Non-funding partner agencies
 - Indiana Office of Tourism Development
 - Department of Natural Resources
 - Indiana Finance Authority
 - Indiana State Department of Health
 - Serve Indiana
 - Indiana Arts Commission
 - Indiana Bond Bank

Where will the money come from?

It depends on the individual projects. In the past years, designated communities have received around five to six million dollars in state investment for various projects. All of those projects typically involve a local match of some amount. A 20% local match is typically the minimum on most state funded projects, but it depends on the type of state funds. The local match can come from a variety of sources including government, non-profit, companies, and organizations.

How were the projects chosen?

The projects were identified by the general public and community leaders during previous planning projects. This includes the following plans:

- Economic Development Review (June 2012)
- Madison Active Living Workshop (June 2014)
- Envision Jefferson County (Jan 2015)
- VisitMadison 2016-18 Strategic Plan (Feb 2015)
- Madison Area Arts Alliance Work Plan (2016)
- America's Best Communities Plan (April 2016)
- Madison Active Transportation (Sept 2016)
- Madison Comprehensive Plan (Sept 2016)
- Parks & Recreation Plan 2017-21 (Dec 2016)

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How flexible are the projects once they are planned?

Stellar Communities is a unique program, so project requirements are not quite as rigid as other "grant" programs might be. While our project list will stay largely the same, tweaks may have to happen to individual projects to ensure they can be done in the right time frame and budget necessary. It is expected that projects will change slightly as years progress, while keeping the same end result.

How can I have input?

There will be numerous public engagement sessions throughout our time as a Stellar Community. Our meeting schedule will be announced at the beginning of each year at a City Council meeting. We hope you'll keep informed about these public engagement times through our website (www.stellarmadison.org), our social media (www.facebook.com/stellarmadison, www.twitter.com/stellarmadison & www.instagram.com/stellarmadison), and directly to our team at stellarmadisonin@gmail.com.

What if I have a question not listed?

- The Primary Stellar Contact Team includes Andrew Forrester (812-265-8300, community@madison-in.gov) and Nicole Schell (812-274-2750, preservation@madison-in.gov).
- For additional contacts, see the [PROJECT TEAM](#) (Page on the www.stellarmadison.org)
- If you have specific questions about specific projects please direct them to the Primary Stellar Contact Team and that team will direct your question to the right person(s).

What can I do to help?

Please participate in this process and let us know how to improve communications and improve the projects themselves. Attend one or more of the stellar events, follow our progress on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram (www.facebook.com/stellarmadison, www.twitter.com/stellarmadison & www.instagram.com/stellarmadison) and look for updates on www.stellarmadison.org.