

# Indiana Stellar Communities Program

A first of its kind collaboration between these state agencies



## Regional Development Plan Requirements



2019

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## Program Summary

The Stellar Communities Program is a partnership of multiple state agencies designed to recognize Indiana's smaller communities. Through annual designation the program provides resources for transformative quality of place community improvements by utilizing previous planning efforts, leveraging existing assets, fostering regional investments, and stimulating continued growth for long-term relevance. The partnering state agencies are: the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCD), the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA), the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH), the Indiana Office of Tourism Development (IOTD), the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Indiana Arts Commission, Indiana Bond Bank and the Department of Workforce Development (DWD). These state agencies are requesting that the Stellar Communities finalists detail their comprehensive community revitalization strategies in a four-year Regional Development Plan.

The region's comprehensive revitalization strategy shall identify areas of interest, projects, an implementation schedule to complete projects, cost estimates, local match amounts and sources, additional funding resources, the level of community impact, and the significance of each project to the overall comprehensive revitalization of the community. From this revitalization strategy, finalist communities will produce a four-year Regional Development Plan which will identify capital projects to be completed during that time period. Projects included in a Regional Development Plan typically represent the following areas of interest:

- Transportation;
- Housing;
- Infrastructure; and
- Community and Economic Development.

Communities are encouraged to identify complimentary projects as a part of the Regional Development Plan. Potential funding resources for complimentary projects can include: Indiana Arts Commission, Indiana Department of Agriculture, Indiana Department of Energy, Indiana Economic Development Corporation, U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Commerce. Complimentary projects include but are not limited to:

- Green space and aesthetics;
- Quality of life issues;
- Education;
- Public safety;
- Job creation;
- Youth engagement; and
- Retaining and attracting new residents and visitors.

The Stellar Communities Program will designate one region as a Stellar Community. After detailed discussions regarding project eligibility, the designation will include access to state funds in order to complete specific projects over the four-year period as program rules and regulations will allow. **The total number of state funded projects is limited to funding availability and the region's demonstrated ability to successfully complete the projects as a cohesive unit.**

## REQUIREMENTS

Indiana's Stellar Communities Program is requesting a Regional Development Plan detailing the Stellar Communities Finalists' comprehensive community revitalization strategies detailed in a four-year Regional Development Plan. This process is competitive. Regional Development Plan must be received by the deadline of **4 PM (EDT) on September 20, 2019** and follow the Stellar Community Regional Development Plan format. Any changes to the format will be cause the region to be eliminated from consideration.

There are three steps to the Regional Development Plan process:

1. Mandatory attendance at the Ball State/Indiana Communities Institute meetings, held in May and June of 2019.
2. Turn in a completed Regional Development Plan with all of the requirements by the due date.
3. A presentation in Indianapolis for each of the Finalist regions. The Stellar Communities partners will be present during each Finalist presentation to discuss specific components of the plan with the community. Presentations should be as detailed as possible to help articulate the regional development plan. The 75 minute in-person presentation will include:
  - a. A presentation of the proposed plan and project.
  - b. A video, if so desired.
  - c. Those in attendance should include Key Leaders, CEOs and Implementation Team.

Successful Regional Development Plans will thoroughly and concisely address and document the following minimum requirements:

- Section 1 – Current State of the Region:
  - Geographic boundaries - List all counties, cities and towns that are actively a part of the RDP.
  - Demographic and economic summary and assessment for the region.
  - Inventory and discussion of previous planning efforts and how that work will be incorporated.
- Section 2 – Key Achievements: describe key achievements the each community, within the region would like to achieve with the designation.
- Section 3 – Designation: Describe how the Stellar Communities designation will enable the region to further implement the revitalization goals.
  - Provide a description of how the designation will be used to market the communities and the overall region to attract residents and businesses.
- Section 4 – Capacity: Describe the capacity of the applicant and the partnerships to administer the funds:
  - All participating communities should have no outstanding monitoring/audit findings of any current grants;
  - All participating communities must be in good standing with all funding agencies;
    - **Any community, within a region, who is non-compliant with any of the above, is considered ineligible.**

- Describe development team and their ability to implement a multi-project plan providing examples of past successes;
  - Document governmental and/or civic leadership capacities within the region; you may discuss from both an individual and/or regional level and
  - Document the services of a grant administrator and/or successfully completed projects in the past three years utilizing state and/or federal grant funds.
- Section 5 – Engagement Process:
    - Steering Committee
      - List of the steering committee members\* for the planning process and any specific functions or sub-committees they intend to lead. This section should include the name and contact information for each steering committee member.
    - Community Engagement
      - Outline the community engagement strategy that was used to gather input from citizens within the region (e.g. surveys or meetings) for inclusion within the plan.
      - Discuss the overall communications plan throughout the process and include how each community and the region plan to continue this process moving forward.
      - Any other information related to the process of developing the plan.
      - Community vision, goals and revitalization strategies to address the identified needs in the targeted area
      - Include details as to how each community engagement will tie into an overall regional community approach.
- Section 6 – Project Identification and description: Provide a list of the intended projects and demonstrated reasonableness of project scope:
    - Identify priority projects in terms of greatest level of impact and need. Document and support the level of need for each project and the significance of each project in the overall revitalization efforts within the region;
    - Projects should be comprehensive in meeting the variety of needs within a region;
    - Projects should be reasonable in the scope of work to be completed. The projects should be able to be completed in the four program years;
    - Description how proposed projects will leverage additional resources; and
    - Projects should be practical in relationship to the community’s operating budget.
- Section 7 – Implementation:
    - Outline how progress will be measured, including:
      - Establishment of the region’s baseline relative to itself and its benchmark cities
      - The method and frequency of reporting of progress (who reports the progress, to whom, and how often?).
      - Specific metrics to be used to measure progress.
      - Discuss how the regional development plan will continue to move forward without the state partnership.
- Section 8 – Feasibility: Describe the feasibility of each project. Include documentation of the proposed capital projects in relation to floodplain/floodways.
- Section 9 – Readiness: Describe the steps taken thus far in each proposed project’s process and include details about key partners and stakeholders.

- Section 10 – Impact: describe the local and regional impact and how future investments will be attracted to the region.
- Section 11 – Sustainability:
  - Discuss how the region will continue to sustain the momentum over the course of the Stellar process period.
  - What processes are in place that will allow your region to continue to move projects forward, include new or updated projects as others are completed or necessary as adjustments are needed, and engage new individuals in the process as needed?
- Section 12 – Long Term Viability: The long-term viability of the Regional Development Plan (RDP) should include.
  - Provide a four year timeline.
  - Provide a current revitalization strategy utilizing any of the following techniques: existing comprehensive plans, economic development strategic plans, downtown revitalization plans, or community surveys; and
  - Financial documentation supporting the sustainability and maintenance of the proposed projects (pro forma, user rates, available public financing, other appropriate funding mechanisms, etc.).
- Section 13 – Maps
  - Full color map of the overall and description of the project target area for entire region
    - Regional/Partner boundaries identified
  - Individual Community Maps
    - Past projects identified
    - Current projects identified
    - Proposed projects identified
    - Complementary projects identified
    - Inclusion of previous planning for projects
- Section 14 – SORH: Rural Health Project Proposal
  - Assessment: Show how a need has been identified and the target population being served. May include:
    - Analysis of collected data from sources such as a Community Health Needs Assessment to show a rural health need in their community. This information can be utilized through a local hospital or a county public health department.
    - Research done through an outside expert such as the CDC, NIH, or other reputable sources
    - Utilization of information on County Health Rankings or ISDH sponsored initiatives
  - Project Development Plan: Look at how other areas have approached the particular rural health issue identified in the Assessment section. May include:
    - Look locally. Ask the health experts in the region for ideas of projects and programs that they would like to do but haven't been able to or what's been done before that worked but wasn't sustained.
    - Look nationally. There are a number of resources available to the regions teaming with projects and programs rural specific that have been implemented and sustained over time. Two suggested resources:

- <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/project-examples/evidence-levels>
    - <https://www.naccho.org/resources/model-practices/database>
  - Be innovative. Develop a project that is unique to the region represented by thinking outside the box and taking modern approaches.
- Implementation Plan: Discuss how the region will work together to ensure that the project is fulfilled as outlined above. Must include:
  - Action steps
  - Person(s) responsible
  - Approximate timeline
- Outcome Measures: Provide information on how the project’s impact will be measured. How does the region know if the project was successful or not? May include the use of:
  - Personal stories of those served
  - Statistical improvements
  - Knowledge increases
  - Lessons learned
  - Rate changes
- Budget: Explain how the region will use the funding awarded and a timeline of when funding will be used. No required format, but ample justification must be provided.

## ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

When identifying projects through your planning process it is encouraged that the regions look at the whole of the communities and not make determinations on projects based on fundability. The purpose of the Stellar Communities Program is to take a holistic and comprehensive view of the region and projects not necessarily related to funding may be a priority as well. This list identifies the general types of activities that are eligible but it is not meant to include or exclude any particular project. Questions about specific projects should be directed to the Stellar Communities email address.

Property Acquisition and Disposition

Public Facilities

Housing

Clearance

Transportation

Economic Development

Infrastructure

Parks and Recreation

Public Safety

Streetscapes

## Final Submission

Final submissions will be submitted online, via Foundant, only. No hard copies of any documents will be accepted.

A complete application consists of the items and in the order listed below. Applications received without all of the items will be considered incomplete. Incomplete applications will be withdrawn from the review process and returned to the applicant.

1. Cover sheet on organizational letterhead that includes all relevant contact information (1-2 pages)
2. Qualifications of the Applicant Organization and Community Capacity and engagement (1-2 pages)
3. Expected ultimate project outcomes and the impacts on the targeted areas and region as a whole (1-3 pages)
4. Regional Development Plan:
  - Project costs and the amount of required gap funding (1-2 pages)
  - Project goals and objectives (1 page)
  - Target population (1-2 pages)
  - Project activities (1-5 pages)
  - Staff responsible for the project, including names and positions (1-2 pages)
5. Full color map of the overall and description of the project target area:
  - Past projects identified
  - Current projects identified
  - Proposed projects identified
  - Complementary projects identified
  - Inclusion of previous planning for projects
6. Individual project maps including parcel-by-parcel and/or street-by-street description of activities.
7. Project renderings if applicable.
8. Detailed budget for each component of the project, including local sources and uses. Inclusion of resolutions appropriating local funding should be included.
9. Detailed timeline and benchmarks over the four year program period.
  - Demonstration of how the process will meet the timeline established by OCRA, INDOT and IHCDA.
10. Completed Budget and Leverage Matrix.
11. Completed Stellar Research Investment Spreadsheet.



12. Completed Feasibility Matrix.

13. Resumes of key project staff of the primary organization and Development Team.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Until **4 P.M. EDT on Friday, September 20, 2019** questions should be directed to the Indiana Stellar Communities staff at [stellarcommunities@ocra.in.gov](mailto:stellarcommunities@ocra.in.gov). Responses to questions will be answered in a frequently-asked questions document that is posted on the [OCRA website](#).