

Resources, Grant programs & Economic development projects



Stellar Communities Program is a multi-year, multi-agency partnership designed to work with communities to develop their regional development plans, promote local and regional partnerships and implement comprehensive solutions to challenges facing rural Indiana. In January 2018, the program evolved into to a regional partnership design. A minimum of two or more communities must partner to create a region. Population divisions are no longer a component of the program. Once designated, regions are then eligible for multiple grants.

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) — federal funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant program. These funds are an important tool for helping rural communities tackle serious challenges and improve the quality of life. Projects include sewer and water infrastructure upgrades, community centers, health and safety programs and many others. Grant programs included under CDBG include:

- **Blight Clearance Program:** Remove commercial blight.
- **Wastewater/Drinking Water:** Improve/repair/build water infrastructure.
- **Stormwater Improvement Program:** Assist communities who suffer from flooded property and sewer backups and flooding due to inadequate stormwater management.
- **Public Facilities Program:** Build essential facilities like fire/EMS, community/senior/daycare centers.
- **Main Street Revitalization:** provide streetscape and façade renovations.
- **Planning Grants:** Community leaders can prepare plans for projects relating to comprehensive plans, infrastructure, broadband, downtown revitalization and public facilities.

Historic Renovation Grant Program — to further incentivize downtown economic development in rural communities, this program provides funds ranging between \$5-100K to eligible owners of historic properties to rehabilitate the exterior façade, roof and structural repairs to meet the Secretary of Interior standards.

Indiana Site Certified — Formerly known as Shovel Ready, OCRA certifies sites as ready for economic development in concert with Indiana's FASTeam. These sites receive priority attention from companies seeking to expand and offer assurance that the community is ready to help them grow. The program has three goals: mitigate risk, provide a marketing tool and illustrate the community's commitment to economic development.



Indiana Main Street — A nationally-recognized program committed to encouraging economic development, redevelopment and improvement of downtown areas in Indiana cities and towns. OCRA assists with building, maintaining and growing local organizations focused on the development of the traditional heart and hub of community commerce. Once designated, these communities are eligible for additional technical assistance and funding. For every \$1

used to support a local Main Street program, an average of \$56 in new investments is leveraged. This makes Main Street one of the most successful economic development strategies in America.

Quick Impact Placebased (QuIP) Grant — Small funds, under \$5K, designed to fund space enhancement and community transformation that sparks community wide conversation and creativity. Eligible projects must be transformational and have a positive impact for the community, and existing and underutilized assets should include a new or additional use.

In 2019, OCRA awarded more than 91 grants, which totaled more than \$35 million and was matched by more than an additional \$56 million of local and private funds. A total of \$91 million is invested in more than 85 Indiana communities and organizations focusing on economic development, capacity building, infrastructure improvements and quality of place initiatives.