

Frequently Asked Questions: Delphi Stellar Downtown Facades Program

A workshop meeting to discuss the recommendations of the City of Delphi's Stellar Communities Façade Grant Program was held at 6:00 pm on September 9, 2013 at the Canal Center. The following summary answers some of the most common questions about the program.

Another FAQ was previously issued that addressed basic eligibility questions for property owners. That FAQ is still available on www.cityofdelphi.org.

What buildings in Delphi are eligible for the grant?

Two priority areas were set. The first and highest priority are buildings within the Delphi Courthouse Square Historic District.

Based on input received after the first public hearing, applications were also accepted from building owners outside the historic district. This was set as a secondary priority. Unfortunately, funding will not allow for properties outside the historic district to be included.

How many businesses are participating?

37 businesses have signed financial commitments to participate in the program.

What kind of work is included?

The eligible items for funding are:

- Paint
- Removal/replacement of inappropriate or incompatible exterior finishes or materials
- Removal of extraneous elements
- Door/window replacement or repair
- Tuck pointing
- Signage (new, replacements, removal)
- Awnings
- Repairs to gutters, downspouts and front roof cornices.

Are side or rear facades being improved?

Rear facades were not eligible for funding. Side elevations generally are not being addressed. However, work on sides will be completed in two situations.

At the intersection of Main/Washington, front and side elevations are being completed because of the visibility of this location. Additionally, the designs call for "wrapping" the facades around the first 10 feet of side elevations.

How much of the work are property owners paying for?

Five percent. The grant will pay for 90 percent of the work. The city will also match five percent of the cost.

How much are we spending on each property?

Estimates range from \$2,800 to \$118,000.

Why are some properties receiving so much money and others so little?

The goal was to apply the range of repairs consistently across the downtown, whenever those repairs were needed. A small, simple building in good condition just takes a lot less work than a 3 story building on a prominent corner.

Could we not just scale back the work where costs are high and add more properties outside the historic district?

The improvements you make to the largest buildings will be the most visible and impactful. Scaling work back on these buildings would leave needed repairs unaddressed. From the beginning, our priority has been to do the properties in the historic district first – and do them the right way.

Please explain the new requirement for a structural evaluation.

A new federal requirement stipulates that buildings need to be structural sound in order to participate in the program. This means that buildings with a failing roof, apparent structural failures would have to be repaired by the property owner (at their cost) in order to receive façade grant improvements.

How will you determine if a building is structurally sound?

A structural engineer will be hired to review each building participating in the program.

If structural problems are identified, the property owner will be given a report identifying the work that is needed to be eligible for the program. The cost of those repairs will be the responsibility of the property owner. That work will need to be completed before the grant is awarded.

How will streetscape and façade construction be coordinated? Will I be impacted by both projects?

Facades are scheduled to go to construction in 2014. Streetscape work is scheduled for 2015. Many businesses participating in the façade program have stated they prefer façade work to be completed before streetscape work starts. While this means construction will take longer, they will not be as disrupted during that time. The City has not finalized a decision on this issue, and is still interested in hearing more input from impacted businesses.

Are non-historic buildings being renovated?

Yes. These are eligible under the program.

Will the Library, City Hall, Post Office or Courthouse receive work?

No. Government buildings are not eligible.