

Frequently Asked Questions: Delphi Stellar Downtown Streetscape

A workshop meeting to discuss preliminary Downtown Streetscape plans was held at 6:00 pm on September 30, 2013 at the Canal Center. The following summary answers some of the most common questions about the program.

What is the purpose of the streetscape project?

The goal of this project is to help downtown Delphi become more vibrant. Downtown Delphi has been oriented toward truck traffic for years, which limited the appeal of the downtown. With this project and the opening of the Hoosier Heartland Highway, Delphi has the opportunity to redesign the downtown so it is vibrant and focused on people.

Where are streetscape improvements proposed?

Work is focused on both sides of the street on all four sides of the courthouse square, plus Main Street from Washington to Union Street, and Washington Street from Front Street to Main Street.

What improvements are proposed?

Work will include:

- Decorative Street lights
- Decorative pavers in select locations
- Sidewalk replacement
- New landscaping, decorative planters and street trees
- Benches, bike racks and related street furnishings
- Street resurfacing and restriping
- Event spaces.

What changes will make the downtown more pedestrian friendly?

There are several changes being proposed:

- Bump-outs (also called curb extensions) will be installed at intersections to make it easier for people to cross the street. They will extend the sidewalk out to the edge of the parking lanes. This reduces the crossing distance for pedestrians, increases pedestrian visibility, adds space for landscaping, and calms traffic on the street.
- Mid-block crossings are being added on Washington Street and Franklin Street. By adding a designated crossing where people already cross frequently, it creates a safer environment for pedestrians. They also provide easy access to improved alleyways and off-street parking behind the buildings.

- The Gateway Trail will extend through the downtown and provide connectivity to schools, neighborhoods, the Canal Center and the city's larger trail system. A new bike hub will provide maps of trails, bike racks, benches, drinking water and other amenities for those walking or biking on the trails.

How much will this work cost?

A total budget of \$4.7 million is available for the design and construction of streetscape improvements.

Can trucks make the turns if we install bump-outs?

Yes. The turning radius will be installed so that trucks can still make the turns.

How will my business be impacted?

Access will be provided to all businesses throughout construction. At times, temporary stone or plywood sidewalks will be provided. Throughout the process, contractors will work with you to ensure that disruptions will be minimized. Additionally, work will be phased so that either sidewalks are closed (and the road remains open to traffic) or that sidewalks are open (and the road is closed to traffic).

Will streetscape and façade improvements occur at the same time?

No. Based on input from businesses and residents, the façade improvements will occur in 2014 and early 2015. Streetscape improvements will be made after facades are complete.

Will the existing trees be replaced?

Yes. Most trees in the downtown have reached maturity, are stressed in their current locations, and will not last many more years. The average life expectancy for street trees is in an urban condition around 20 years. The new plan will include larger planting beds for street trees, resulting in a more optimal growing condition for the trees.

How are you addressing parking?

The City has developed a three phase plan for addressing parking. These accommodations could add 300 parking spaces to the downtown in the future, as demand warrants.

First, funding is available within the Stellar Program to build off-street parking. This is what we understand to be the most important parking need. With this completed, there will be enough parking to meet short term demand (assuming every storefront is occupied and up to 25% upper floor occupancy in downtown buildings.)

Second, if parking demand continues to increase, existing parallel spaces could be converted to angled parking. This would allow for enough parking to meet demand for up to 50% upper floor occupancy in downtown buildings.

Finally, if long term demand continues to exceed available parking, the City will need to acquire and develop a series of smaller surface parking lots.

What will happen to the Murphy Drinking Fountain?

The City is proposing to restore the fountain as part of the project.

Will changes be made to the Courthouse?

No. The grant will not allow us to make changes to the Courthouse or the Courthouse lawn. Work will include the sidewalks around the Courthouse but will stop at the wall surrounding the Courthouse lawn.

Will drainage be improved?

Yes. New stormwater drainage piping will be installed throughout the downtown.

Is the City improving water lines downtown?

Yes. With this project, smaller existing water mains will be replaced with larger mains. This will allow for improved fire flows, and will accommodate multiple sprinkler systems downtown.

Will sanitary sewer lines be replaced?

The City has inspected the lines, and determined that the main sewer lines are in good condition, and that the pipes can be lined in the future (but that they do not need replaced). A review of building laterals is currently being conducted to determine if laterals need repaired or replaced.