

Phase II of Downtown Falls City Improvements Could Begin This Summer

(KLZA)-- More than 25 interested Falls City business owners and tenants attended a meeting Monday evening to learn more about the proposed Downtown Revitalization Grant the City plans to submit to the Nebraska Department of Economic Development. The maximum grant available is \$350,000 and would require a \$111,000 local match.

Lisa Beethe with Southeast Nebraska Development District led the meeting. SENDD would administer the grant on behalf of the City.

During an earlier meeting building façade improvements was the top priority listed followed by sidewalks, curbs, gutters and street lighting which all fall in same category. The area eligible for grant funding would be from the middle of 14th Street to the Middle of 20th Street and from the alley on the east side of Harlan Street, west to the alley on the West side of Chase Street.

The City Council will likely be asked approve going forward with the grant application during their April 6th meeting. Commercial rehab projects for buildings can begin as soon as grant monies are received. The sidewalk projects will require engineering and would likely be done in 2016.

The way the projects will be set up, building owners will pay for the entire scope of work and then be reimbursed from grant monies with either a zero percent interest loan or a grant or combination thereof. The maximum grant amount for a building improvement project would be \$50,000. But they can be any amount less than that. The property owner is responsible for a 25 percent match.

When input was gathered on what projects to do next, reducing the size of the bumpouts on Stone Street put in during Phase I of the Downtown Improvement Project came in at #5. Beethe says the new grant funds won't be used for that. Beethe said the committee does not intend to include bumpouts if more street projects are done in the future.

Anyone with questions may contact the Falls City Chamber / Main Street Office or Beethe at the SENDD Office in Humboldt.

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