

**Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs
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Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann Names Six Finalists to Stellar Communities Program

INDIANAPOLIS – Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann today named six Indiana communities as finalists for the 2014 Stellar Communities Program.

City of Decatur
City of Huntingburg
City of Marion
City of Mount Vernon
Town of Nashville
City of Wabash

The communities were selected from 14 applications by the staffs at the Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA), the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA), and the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT).

Each finalist community will receive funds to prepare an in-depth Strategic Investment Plan, and will have a site visit by the selection team. Two of the finalists will be announced as this year's Stellar Communities later this summer.

"The Stellar Communities program is an important way to support and encourage rural and smaller communities to create and implement innovative development plans," said Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann. "Our team looks forward to visiting these communities to learn more about, and see firsthand, how the plans will impact the overall development of these cities and towns."

Since 2010, six Hoosier communities have been selected from over 60 applicants to the Stellar Communities program. These communities receive funding, and educational and technical support to make comprehensive economic development plans a reality. For more information on Stellar Communities, including the comprehensive plans of previously designated cities and towns, visit www.in.gov/ocra/2601.htm.

Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann oversees the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA) and the Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA). The IHCDA creates housing opportunities, generates and preserves assets, and revitalizes neighborhoods by facilitating the collaboration of multiple stakeholders, investing financial and technical resources in development efforts, and helping build capacity of qualified partners throughout Indiana.

OCRA's mission is to promote community prosperity to strengthen Indiana's economy by providing capacity-building solutions to assure ready, marketable, and competitive communities for economic growth. For additional information on OCRA and its programs visit www.in.gov/ocra.

The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) is an executive agency of State government that plans, builds, maintains and operates a superior transportation system enhancing safety, mobility and economic growth.

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