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**Lt. Governor Skillman Names Greencastle, North Vernon
Indiana's First "Stellar Communities"**

More than \$30 million to be invested in the cities over three years

INDIANAPOLIS – Lt. Governor Becky Skillman announced today that Greencastle and North Vernon will be the pilot communities for the new multi-year, multi-million-dollar Stellar Communities program.

Stellar Communities is a first of its kind collaboration initiated by Lt. Governor Skillman between INDOT, the Office of Community and Rural Affairs, the Indiana Housing and Community Development Agency, and the State Revolving Fund to help fund communities' strategic plans.

"It's important for governments to stretch every dollar as far as possible. Stellar Communities has taught us to be intentional and strategic in the way we deliver grant funding to local governments," Lt. Governor Skillman said. "It will help our agencies collaborate more, be more efficient, and make a bigger impact with the dollars we have."

State agencies will invest an estimated \$31 million in the two communities over three years. The cities of Greencastle and North Vernon will invest an additional \$9 million in local and private funds.

Forty-two communities submitted proposals to become a pilot community. After scoring the plans, the top twelve communities were asked to submit more details, and site visits were conducted by staff from each agency. Lt. Governor Skillman intends to continue Stellar Communities next year, and cities that did not win this year may re-apply for future rounds.

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Lt. Governor Skillman will travel to Greencastle for a celebration ceremony on Thursday. Its plan will revitalize the downtown area; link the city more closely with DePauw University; and improve the quality of life through new initiatives in health, the arts, and technology.

“Stellar Communities will allow us to improve our city in ways that wouldn’t otherwise be possible,” Greencastle Mayor Susan Murray said. “With this help, we will create the next great college town in Indiana.”

North Vernon, the only city between Muscatatuck Urban Training Center and Interstate 65, will use their funds to become an economic hub for the defense industry. Planned improvements include a new event center, a pedestrian plaza, improvements to the Irish Hill neighborhood, and creating more commercial opportunities on Main Street. Lt. Governor Skillman will hold a celebration in North Vernon on Friday.

“Our region is not able to take full advantage of Muscatatuck without a vibrant North Vernon,” Mayor Harold “Soup” Campbell said. “Without Stellar Communities, we would certainly lose out on millions of dollars of economic activity.”

Funding for the initiatives comes from multiple existing federal funds. State agencies will continue to offer grant programs to local units of government not participating in Stellar Communities.

Details on the community celebrations will be announced later this week.

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Lt. Governor Becky Skillman oversees the Office of Community and Rural Affairs, the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority, the Office of Energy Development, the Office of Tourism Development, and the State Department of Agriculture.

To receive e-mail updates from Lt. Governor Skillman, sign up at <http://www.in.gov/lg/subscribe.htm>

Greencastle Fact Sheet

Greencastle has proposed quality of life improvements which integrate the cultural and intellectual assets of their city and position the city as a regional center for economic development.

Main Goals

- Revitalize courthouse square and central business district
 - Improve streetscapes and offer parking solutions
 - Improve facades while preserving historical integrity of buildings
 - Wayfinding program to support community visitors
 - Resolve potential environmental concerns in commercial district

- Create a pedestrian friendly residential neighborhood
 - Enhance housing options – second story loft housing in commercial district and new construction in South Court neighborhood

- Improve local quality of life
 - Community health initiatives including new community health center and new trail linking community to recreational area
 - Partnership with Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra
 - Technology hub/Wi-fi bubble in commercial district

North Vernon Fact Sheet

Improvements proposed by North Vernon will continue their efforts to create an economic hub for the defense sector, which gives new opportunities and improves quality of life for local residents, as well as making the community more strategically placed for business and residential attraction.

Main Goals

- Arvin Redevelopment site – 3.5 Acre Brownfield site, clearing the way for private investment
- Carnegie Library Restoration
- Depot Events Center Renovation
 - Project will convert historic train depot into social center for community events
- Downtown Streetscapes
 - New sidewalks, curbs, landscaping, lighting, signage, and wayfinding
- Irish Hill Revitalization
 - Historic Uptown Streetscape improvements near Irish Hill neighborhood
 - Creation of 17 properties to serve low- to moderate-income residents
- Short Street Plaza
 - Close Short Street to construct pedestrian-friendly plaza space
- Main Street Development – mixed use for both commercial and residential