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Sue Ellspermann  
LT. GOVERNOR

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**Lt. Governor Ellspermann Designates the Cities of Bedford and Richmond as  
2013 Stellar Communities**

Indianapolis - Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann officially announced today the communities of Bedford located in the south central part of the state and Richmond in the east central region have been designated the newest of Indiana's Stellar Communities.

Launched in 2011, Stellar Communities is a collaboration between the Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA), the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA) and the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT). The program pools funding sources to assist communities in achieving their long-term comprehensive strategic goals for targeted areas of their community.

"I congratulate Bedford and Richmond on their Stellar Communities designation. The revitalization projects proposed by both communities have regional value added approaches which will not only benefit their targeted areas, but will have an economic impact on surrounding communities as well," said Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann. "I would also like to congratulate each of the communities that were finalists on their efforts and dedication to planning for the future of their cities."

Bedford's proposal centers on their downtown area and includes improved gateways, murals, streetscapes and parking as well as the addition of a Limestone Trail, façade renovations and downtown business development. The total cost estimate for their proposal is \$19.8 million.

"Thank you to Lt. Governor Ellspermann and entire the Stellar Team; it is truly an honor to be designated as a Stellar Community. I am excited for the investment opportunities for downtown Bedford and the partnerships that I believe will grow our education and workforce development efforts," said Bedford Mayor Shawna M. Girgis. "I would also like to thank our local community for giving their time and investments towards our proposal."

Richmond's proposal includes positively enhancing the quality of life through the addition of senior housing, owner occupied rehabilitation, improved sidewalks and bike trails, as well as downtown façade, second and third story living options and downtown Wi-Fi. The total cost estimate for their proposal is \$19.9 million.

“Richmond is positively honored by the Stellar Communities designation and with so much local effort and support for the proposal, I know we are ready to move forward and continue working hard to plan for the future of our great city,” said Richmond Mayor Sally Hutton.

Lt. Governor Ellspermann and agency representatives will travel to Bedford on Wednesday, June 19<sup>th</sup> and Richmond on Monday, June 24<sup>th</sup> for Stellarbration events to celebrate the designation with each community. Details will be announced at a later date.

Funding for the designation program comes from multiple existing federal funds. Both cities have proposed projects involving public and private dollars; Bedford's total is \$19.8 million and Richmond's total is \$19.9 million. The projects are proposals and no specific funds are guaranteed--- both communities will meet with representatives from the state agencies in the coming weeks to discuss details of the proposed projects including feasibility, available funding, timeframes and partner participation.

Twenty four communities submitted proposals for the 2013 Stellar Communities program round. After evaluating the plans, the top six communities were chosen as Finalist Communities which required further information to be submitted. Site visits were then conducted by staff from each agency following a standard agenda and set of questions.

North Vernon and Greencastle were pilot communities in 2011 and Princeton and Delphi were named in 2012.

The Stellar Communities program was nationally recognized last year with the Presidential Award for Innovation by the Council of State Community Development Agencies.

Eligible applicants must be a Local Unit of Government which includes a city or an incorporated town not located within an entitlement community. The community must also be eligible to apply for Community Development Block Grants to be considered.

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*Sue Ellspermann serves as the 50<sup>th</sup> Lieutenant Governor of Indiana. As Lt. Governor, Sue manages five state agencies including the Indiana State Department of Agriculture, the Office of Defense Development, the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority, the Office of Community and Rural Affairs, and the Office of Tourism Development. For updates from Lt. Governor Ellspermann and the agencies she oversees, sign up at [www.lg.in.gov](http://www.lg.in.gov).*