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## **Tourism Development and OCRA to award \$300,000 in grants for community development projects**

### **For immediate release**

INDIANAPOLIS (Dec. 13, 2013) – Lt. Gov. Sue Ellspermann announced today that the Indiana Office of Tourism Development (IOTD) and the Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) are now accepting applications for the 2014 Place Based Investment Fund. The fund, in its second year, is a \$300,000 competitive matching grant program to support collaborative community and economic development projects.

“Communities across Indiana are putting significant effort into their ‘quality of place’ initiatives. It was a consistent theme we heard on the 92 county Listen and Learn Tour,” said Ellspermann. “This grant program demonstrates the State of Indiana’s commitment to help communities become an even greater place to live, work or visit and a magnet to talent and investment.”

The grants are targeted toward “quality of place” initiatives across Indiana, which improve both the quality of life and tourism experience in a community. The agencies are seeking applications for multi-purpose, non-traditional crowd-building venues or unique gathering places that significantly enhance existing assets into distinctive and special places for a community.

“The Place Based Investment Fund is about rewarding creativity and sponsoring ingenuity that leads to our communities developing special places where residents and visitors alike will want to congregate,” said Mark Newman, IOTD’s executive director. “We are delighted to make this grant opportunity available with our partners at OCRA.”

“At its core, tourism is economic development. Quality of place is a top decision driver in business and personal investment.” said Bill Davis, executive director of OCRA. “As state agencies working together we want to join in local collaborations that focus on place-making to attract people near and far to invest in their community.”

Applicants are required to leverage local funding and partnerships. Performance-based quality of place initiatives that maximize investment and collaboration by local governments, economic development organizations, convention and visitor bureaus, Indiana Main Street organizations, public or private schools and community foundations are the intended recipients of these grants, ranging between \$25,000 and \$50,000. There is a 1:1 cash match requirement.

The grant application for the Place Based Investment Fund may be found here:  
<http://www.in.gov/tourism/PBIfund.pdf>.

Applications are due Feb. 21, 2014 at 5:00 pm EDT. Media questions should be addressed to the IOTD communications department. Eligible organizations with questions about the grant application process should contact their OCRA community liaison. A list of community liaisons can be found here: <http://www.in.gov/ocra/2330.htm>.

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*Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann oversees the Indiana Office of Tourism Development and the Office of Community and Rural Affairs. Mark Newman serves as IOTD's executive director. IOTD is dedicated to enhancing the economic vitality of Indiana through leadership and resource support to the Indiana travel industry for awareness-building, product development and job creation.*

*The Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) 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](http://www.in.gov/ocra).*