



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

NewAllen Alliance Designated as an Indiana Regional Stellar Community

EAST ALLEN COUNTY, IN, December 11, 2018 – Countless hours of community collaboration and planning ends with an announcement those living in East Allen county had hoped for from the state. Today, East Allen Communities were designated as an Indiana Regional Stellar Community, a recognition not easy to obtain.

"This is truly an exciting time for our communities and the county as a whole. We have been working hard for the last four years to get to this point and we are excited to leverage this designation to the best of our ability with local dollars set aside to make a true impact. We want to thank our partners in the process and we look forward to implementing the plan to continue building our communities to attract and retain talent to our local region and the broader northeast Indiana region," stated NewAllen Alliance President Kent Castleman.

In September, East Allen's Rural Revival Regional Development Plan was submitted to the State of Indiana for their consideration. This plan outlines a bold vision to improve quality of place in all seven of East Allen's Communities. Proposed projects will help connect people to places within the rural areas...think downtowns, parks, trails, and housing developments, in addition to capitalizing on the industrial growth opportunities of the region's transportation assets.

The region's vision is to grow population by enhancing the livability of rural areas, which will attract and retain a talented workforce that benefits all of Allen County and Northeast Indiana. The proposed portfolio outlines a total of \$64 Million in projects to be implemented from 2019 – 2022. Over \$17 million in projects that are being proposed for support through the Indiana Regional Stellar Communities program (total costs for the list below). The remaining \$47 million in projects are considered complementary to the Stellar request.

"It has been exciting to be a part of the ongoing success of East Allen County which has culminating in its designation as a Stellar Community. We are proud of the leadership of the New Allen Alliance and look forward to even greater things for this part of our county," added Commissioner Nelson Peters.

Commissioner Therese Brown also stated, "This announcement illustrates what collaboration can achieve. Congratulations to all that worked so diligently on this project; the New Year will truly be the beginning of many great things to come!"

Indiana Regional Stellar Community designation unlocks access to a set-aside of funds. Amounts set aside by the state for each region includes: \$4,5M in Community Development Block Grants, \$2M in Federal Transportation funds, \$35,000 in Rural Health funds, and up to \$800,000 in affordable housing tax credits which can typically finance a \$8 - \$10M project. Projects currently proposed for Stellar funding include:

- East Allen County Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation
- Healthy Eating Active Living Kitchen Classes
- Grabill Downtown Streetscape Project

- Leo-Cedarville Downtown Streetscape Project
- Monroeville Forest Street Sidewalk Project
- Monroeville Monroe Street Corridor Project
- New Haven Meadowbrook Trail Project
- New Haven Community Center Park Project
- New Haven Kady Gene Cove Senior Housing Project
- Woodburn Sidewalk Improvements Project
- Woodburn Downtown Streetscape Project – Phase 2

These projects are being supported by a number of sources in addition to the cities and towns, such as the Allen County Commissioners, Allen County Council, the Allen County-Fort Wayne Capital Improvement Board, Northeastern Indiana Regional Coordinating Council, Brightpoint, local housing developers Keller Development and Niemeyer Builders, the St. Joseph Community Health Foundation, and Parkview Health. Each community has local volunteers from their chambers of commerce, Main Street organizations, and local foundations that stand ready to support the success of the effort.

“On behalf of the City of New Haven and all of NewAllen Alliance, we want to thank OCRA, and the selection committee for seeing the partnership as a worthy collaboration. Special thanks to all of the partner communities and their representatives. Now we go forward to continue our success and show the world how rural hometowns work together to achieve greatness,” said Mayor Terry McDonald.

A video about the initiative and a copy of the regional development plan can be accessed on NewAllen’s website at www.newallenalliance.net. A Stellarbration event is being planned for December 19th with local officials. Details of the meeting will be released next week.

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About the Indiana Regional Stellar Community Program: The Indiana Regional Stellar Program is a competition offered by a collaboration of state agencies including the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs, Indiana Department of Transportation, and the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority. The Indiana Stellar Program has been in place since 2011, but this year has been modified to have a regional focus. Goals of the Indiana Stellar program are to foster regional collaborative behaviors and investment, stem the tide of non-metropolitan population loss through talent attraction and retention, build sustainability, build capacity with municipal governance, and leverage quality of places through comprehensive and transformative planning processes building on current assets. Regions can be comprised of 2 to ten communities.

About the NewAllen Alliance: Organized in 1991, the NewAllen Alliance is an all-volunteer organization that works to bring people to the table who have a passion to see the East Allen County communities of Harlan, Hoagland, Leo-Cedarville, Monroeville, New Haven, and Woodburn thrive and excel. Its mission is to create a unified voice for the communities in East Allen County to foster a coordinated effort in community and economic development, resulting in new investment, job creation, and improved quality of life.

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