



Indiana Association of  
Cities and Towns

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**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Burns Harbor Honored with Community Achievement Award**

FRENCH LICK, IN. – The Indiana Association of Cities and Towns (IACT) announced the Town of Burns Harbor has been named a **2015 IACT Community Achievement Award** winner for its community visioning process in the less than 4,000 population category. The town will receive its award during the IACT Annual Awards Luncheon presented by Umbaugh, Wednesday, Sept. 30, at the 2015 IACT Annual Conference & Exhibition in French Lick.

The Town of Burns Harbor was born out of the growth of Bethlehem Steel in the mid-1960s. The Town's largest taxpayer and once America's second largest steel producer filed bankruptcy in 2001. The filing relieved the corporation from all the current financial obligations, including the property taxes to be paid to the town. As a result, the town lost 80% of the annual tax revenue. Burns Harbor decided failure was not an option and began to recover from the loss in the mid-2000s. In 2014, the Town searched for a firm to help assess the town and give strategic guidance for the development of land and programs. LiveWorkLearnPlay, a real-estate development and advisory firm, was named to lead the long-term development and implementation towards a sustainable economic environment and town identity. Burns Harbor is a community determined to carry on after a devastating loss. The citizens have managed to survive during the difficult times and are active participants in creating a vision for the town's future.

IACT Executive Director and CEO Matt Greller said, "When a community goes through a time of great challenge or change, that's when the rubber meets the road. Burns Harbor has seen its fair share of challenges in recent years. Rather than retreat, they have responded with enthusiasm and commitment to emerge better than ever. Their strategy of improving the overall quality of life in the town is exactly the kind of modern thinking municipalities need in order to succeed in today's competitive economy."

In its 39<sup>th</sup> year, the IACT Annual Awards program, presented by Umbaugh, recognizes communities and individuals in municipal government for excellence and outstanding achievement. A nine-member panel of qualified judges selected this year's winners from a competitive field of nominees from around the state.



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Media are welcome to attend the awards luncheon. Please notify Jennifer Simmons ([jsimmons@citiesandtowns.org](mailto:jsimmons@citiesandtowns.org)) at your earliest convenience to secure a media credential.

The Indiana Association of Cities and Towns (IACT) is a coalition of municipal officials who seek to improve the quality of life in Indiana through effective government, and is a member of the National League of Cities. Founded in 1891, IACT is one of the oldest state municipal organizations in the country, with 470 cities and towns as members. IACT advocates for municipalities as the official voice of municipal government in Indiana, and promotes good government through education, training and leadership.

Conference Facts:

2015 IACT Annual Conference and Exhibition

September 29 – October 1

French Lick Hotel and Conference Center

Attendance: 800 (pending final registration count)

Further information: [www.citiesandtowns.org](http://www.citiesandtowns.org)