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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Madison Named Indiana Community of the Year

September 17, 2024 (INDIANAPOLIS) — With its rich heritage and historic architecture, beautiful setting along the Ohio River and proximity to several large metropolitan areas, most Hoosiers are familiar with Madison. But there's much more at play. Madison is enjoying an ongoing housing and business sector expansion, a revitalized downtown and a growing list of events that keep the city bustling year-round.

In recognition, the [Indiana Chamber of Commerce](#) has selected Madison as its 2024 NextEra Energy Resources Community of the Year.

"Madison is a true southern gateway for the state of Indiana and is fast becoming a regional hub for business, in addition to being an established epicenter for recreational and leisure activities," offers Indiana Chamber President and CEO Vanessa Green Sinders. "What's happening in Madison is a credit to the public and corporate leadership there and is a feather in the cap of the entire state. It's an honor to put a spotlight on the tremendous progress they're making with this award."

"Maybe I'm biased, but I think Madison has it all," says Bob Courtney, a Madison native who after a long career in banking and finance became the city's mayor in 2019. "Yes, we do have a great environment for business and as a result a growing business sector. And we have a growing list of attractions, amenities and improved infrastructure to support all that. We have great schools. But it's even more than that. We've set a vision and curated an atmosphere that is very friendly, welcoming and inviting. That's why Madison is one of the few cities in Indiana – or anywhere – that is projecting population growth."

Tony Steinhardt is one of the people who has been drawn to Madison; in his case, it was a homecoming. Born in the southern Indiana burg, Steinhardt left Indianapolis after working for RATIO Architects for 25 years to become Madison's economic development director.

Using cutting-edge artificial intelligence software, Steinhardt, Courtney and other city leaders are striving to grow in a more strategic way than Madison ever has.

"Our community is in a renaissance period of not just growth, but growth that is thoughtful and managed," Steinhardt states. "We've elevated amenities and quality of life; we've eliminated blight – there are places to eat, things to see and do. And we've done all of these things by collecting, analyzing and studying data and trends to build on what we have, enhance Madison's current situation and chart a course for its future."

Touts Andrew Forrester, Visit Madison executive tourism director, "Madison has really boomed the last decade. If you haven't been here in a while, you would be amazed at the transformation ... and we want to tell people all about it."

Some of the things Forrester wants to share include the vibrant and growing music scene in Madison as well as the flourishing arts community. He also points to the city's riverfront attractions, including jet boat tours, and the Fairfield Inn & Suites at the Historic Eagle Cotton Mill, which was recently rated the

No. 1 Fairfield Inn in the U.S. Located in a cotton mill abandoned more than three decades ago, it has 85 hotel rooms plus meeting and convention space.

Earlier in 2024, Madison, located in Jefferson County, also earned the distinction as the No. 1 Small Town in the Midwest by *USA Today's* 10 Best Readers' Choice Awards. Additionally, Main Street America this year announced that the Main Street Program in Madison won the prestigious Great American Main Street Award, which recognizes communities for their excellence in comprehensive preservation-based commercial district revitalization.

A five-person Indiana Chamber panel selected Madison after a thorough review of all cities under consideration. Those nominations came from the communities themselves or through individuals recognizing an area's progress and commitment to its businesses and citizens.

City officials will receive the honor at the [Indiana Chamber's 35th Annual Awards program](#), presented by Anthem Blue Cross & Blue Shield, November 13 at the Indiana Convention Center. A table of 10 in the Madison Community of the Year section is \$1,995 and individual tickets are \$195. All can be purchased online at www.indianachamber.com/ad or by calling (800) 824-6885.

The ceremony will feature four other statewide honors: the Ogletree Deakins Business Leader of the Year, Birch Bayh-Richard Lugar Government Leader of the Year, Yamaha Dynamic Leader of the Year and Young Professional of the Year.

The presenting sponsor is Anthem Blue Cross & Blue Shield. The speaker sponsor is Zimmer Biomet. The opening reception sponsor is PNC. Corporate sponsors are AT&T Indiana, Eli Lilly and Company, French Lick Resort, Indiana University, IPM Institute, NIPSCO, Pacers Sports & Entertainment, Polaris Marine and Tilson.

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Additional sponsorships for the Indiana Chamber's 35th Annual Awards program are available by contacting Jesse Brothers at jbrothers@indianachamber.com. Media interested in covering the awards event should contact Matt Ottinger at (317) 264-7541 or mottinger@indianachamber.com.

The most recent Indiana Chamber Community of the Year recipients are Boone County, 2023; Columbus, 2022; Greater Lafayette, 2021; Fort Wayne, 2020; Plymouth, 2019 and Jasper, 2018.

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The Indiana Chamber partners with 25,000 members and investors to achieve the mission of “cultivating a world-class environment which provides economic opportunity and prosperity.