



Urban Times

# ARCHIVES

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This document contains these stories from  
past issues of Urban Times  
(or its predecessor, The Lockerbie Letter):

FROM AUGUST 2006:

Page 2: Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman brings praise  
to Riley Area Development Corp. at  
its annual meeting

**From AUGUST 2006:**



Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman leads a comprehensive effort to improve affordable housing opportunities on a statewide level, much as Riley Area does in this vicinity.

## Lieutenant governor has high praise for local housing efforts

**A**S LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR FOR THE State of Indiana, Becky Skillman spends a good deal of her time working to create more affordable housing for Hoosier families.

The dais of the annual meeting of Riley Area Development Corp., therefore, was a comfortable spot for Skillman.

“Riley is a model for economic development across the state,” Skillman said of the organization which since 1994 has provided 133 units of mixed-income housing for the northeast corner of Downtown Indianapolis.

“Your work with Riley Area ranks right up there with the very best of our efforts,” Skillman said of a statewide effort that has been accelerated during the tenure of Gov. Mitch Daniels.

Skillman had special praise for Riley’s newest project, the renovation of the Rink-Savoy building at Vermont and Illinois streets, which will create 60 affordable rental housing units.

“This work represents an amazing level of common sense,” she said. “Housing is needed and buildings are vacant.” Such an equation should be easy to see, she continued, “but it’s not that simple for most people. You saw it.”

Skillman said the creation of more affordable housing units across Indiana is a part of a holistic effort to serve not only neighbors, but neighborhoods.

“Housing helps families become more stable, put down roots and climb the economic ladder,” she said. “It spurs communities.”

The plan, Skillman said, is to build strong partnerships involving the federal government, business and local organizations such as Riley Area to better leverage resources.

Skillman wrapped up her talk by linking housing and economic development to one critical element of every community – culture. She used the term in a much broader sense than arts and theater.



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**Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman**

“It’s in farming communities where citizens band together to harvest crops for an injured neighbor,” she said. “I’ve seen it in small towns where the citizens round up every cake-baker to raise money for the high school after prom party.

“I’ve seen it in the city where citizens pull every artist together to put on an art festival and every non-artist to sell snow cones,” Skillman added.

“But the thread runs clearly throughout and among our people. One thing that no government agency can effectively produce is culture.

“We can fund the building of theaters, cultural centers or monuments, but we cannot create culture,” she said. “Only our citizens can do that. And to members of the Riley Area Development Corporation, I thank you for discovering, for promoting the human element — the cultural elements of your citizens.

“Your efforts here will be long-lived,” Skillman said, “because you have placed a priority on developing a richly diverse urban community laced tightly together.”

**- Bill Brooks**