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## **NEWS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Muskegon Named America's Strongest Town!**

**Muskegon, MI** – Muskegon, Michigan is the winner of the 2018 national Strong Towns Contest! This contest is hosted by the Strong Towns organization, a non-profit community development group, who recognizes America's most sustainable and resilient communities. Muskegon entered the month long contest competing in a bracket-based competition where finalists included Annapolis, Maryland; Greenville, South Carolina; and Kent, Ohio.

Muskegon was recognized for its ability to implement change that makes the community stronger. The judges acknowledged Muskegon for its "wildly successful farmers market, commitment to rebuilding the downtown and its good use of waterfront," according to the Strong Towns announcement.

"It truly was March Madness for Muskegon because we had to jump through hoops each week to make it to the contest finals," says Cindy Larsen, President of the Muskegon Lakeshore Chamber of Commerce. The contest included writing essays about the town, sending photographs, a podcast and a live webcast with the City Manager, Frank Peterson and Chamber President, Cindy Larsen. Members of the strong town organization across the country along with local community residents casted their votes for their favorite community. In the championship round, Muskegon, Michigan won against Kent, Ohio by 4 percent!

"Muskegon has come so far in recent years. It is great for the residents to receive this recognition. Strong Towns isn't about one project or one person, it's about everyone chipping in to move a community forward," says Larsen. "Anyone who visits will see that Muskegon truly is a strong town and has set the framework to be successful for the next generation."

For more information about the community or the award, visit [www.muskegon.org](http://www.muskegon.org) or [www.strongtowns.org](http://www.strongtowns.org).

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#### **About the Chamber**

The Muskegon Lakeshore Chamber of Commerce is the premier business membership organization on the lakeshore representing over 1,200 businesses and organizations. The Muskegon Chamber represents businesses of every size and type all over West Michigan. The Chamber is celebrating 125 years in operation working to sustain an environment for business success through community leadership, promotion, inclusive business advocacy and valued member services. The Muskegon Chamber is an award winning Chamber, being named Chamber of the Year for the State of Michigan in 2006, 2010, 2012, and 2015 by the Michigan Association of Chamber Professionals.