



# Annual Report

**PARTNERS FOR PROGRESS**  
Developing Strong Local Government  
Through Regional Cooperation



City of Independence downtown building façade rehabilitation

## FY 2022 INCOME

### INRCOG

**\$2.8M**

Federal	<b>\$1,457,028</b>	(51%)
State	<b>\$574,712</b>	(20%)
Local	<b>\$495,732</b>	(17%)
RTC	<b>\$357,900</b>	(12%)

### REGIONAL TRANSIT COMMISSION

**\$2.4M**

Federal	<b>\$1,288,446</b>	(53%)
State	<b>\$403,215</b>	(17%)
Local	<b>\$715,148</b>	(30%)

## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The old saying, “the older you get, the faster time goes” is ringing true. Another year has flown by, marked by all the highlights in this annual report. Like prior years, change was a part of INRCOG during fiscal year 2022. Our prior Executive Director, Kevin Blanshan, decided to hang-up his planning career by announcing his retirement late in the year. Kevin confidently led the agency for over nine years, after heading our transportation department for over 17 years prior. His dedication to local government and commitment to our region will be missed.

With that said, INRCOG is left with an extremely talented, experienced, and capable staff that remains dedicated to improving our region. Our mission of strengthening local government through cooperation is ingrained in everyone involved with making INRCOG a success. Together, the pairing of our member governments, their leaders, our state and federal partner agencies, and INRCOG staff has never been more important as we work together in so many efforts to positively affect our quality of life.

If you have any questions about how we may assist you, please do not hesitate to contact us...we’re just a call, email, text, or even letter away (by the way, yes, people still communicate by mail!).

# PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Following **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)** and **CDBG-CARES Act** awards, the City of Independence enlisted the help of INRCOG to administer the grants that will help rehabilitate a total of 15 downtown building façades.

INRCOG contracted with the cities of Lamont, Greene, LaPorte City, and Reinbeck who each submitted successful **CDBG-Housing Rehabilitation** applications. Staff will assist the communities with home exterior repairs and lead paint stabilization for income-qualified homeowners in those cities.

The City of Waterloo approved a **Housing Needs Assessment (HNA)** prepared by INRCOG. The HNA assess the strengths and challenges of the community's housing market, compares supply and demand, and recommends approaches to meeting the City's housing needs. INRCOG also began work on HNA's for the cities of Fredericksburg and Cedar Falls.

The Black Hawk County Metropolitan Planning Organization adopted a **Pedestrian Master Plan** which serves as a guide for the development of pedestrian-related investments in the Waterloo-Cedar Falls metro area.

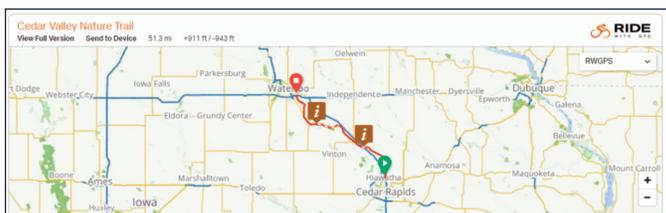
INRCOG assisted members with developing and maintaining planning tools to ensure the public health, safety, comfort, order, and general welfare of their residents. Specifically, staff completed the following projects: Bremer County - **Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance Update** and **Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update**; Elk Run Heights - **Emergency Operations Plan**; LaPorte City - **Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance Update**; Grundy Center - **Zoning Ordinance Update**; and Hudson - **Comprehensive Plan Update**.

Our **Iowa Waste Exchange** representative for Area 3 (consisting of the INRCOG region and 22 additional counties) assisted 1,087 customers/agencies with 48 material listings and made 64 matches. In total, 2,118 tons of materials were matched resulting in a total cost savings of \$134,423.14 through avoided landfill fees, avoided purchases, reduced transportation costs, and freed storage space. In addition, waste sorts were performed at two school cafeterias, one community college, and one organization in an effort to further the mission of the IWE program.

Assisted with **regional planning efforts** led by INRCOG, the City of Cedar Falls was awarded a \$1.5M grant, funded by the American Rescue Plan, through the Economic Development Administration for the construction of trails and a viewing area along the Cedar River and improvements to an existing dam to support local tourism and the outdoor recreation sector.

INRCOG concluded work on a **placemaking project** with a focus on the Cedar River linking the downtown areas of Cedar Falls and Waterloo. In partnership with Grow Cedar Valley and Deere & Company, the project concentrates on outdoor recreation tourism opportunities and attracting/retaining workforce in the region.

The **Cedar Valley Interactive Trails Map** was officially launched and showcases the trails in the Cedar Valley. The map helps users explore the full extent of our trail systems including trail types, as well as



locations of restrooms, bike maintenance stations, campgrounds, and parking.

INRCOG began meeting with area solid waste commissions, county Boards of Supervisors, City Clerks, and Public Works staff to update the **Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan**. The Plan update, in collaboration with the Black Hawk County Solid Waste Management Commission and Black Hawk County Landfill, will include a review of past initiatives and development of an action plan to meet waste reduction goals.

**Safe Routes to School** participation grew after a period of isolation from the COVID -19 pandemic. Schools were reintroduced to in-person bike rodeos and safety presentations and community events included biking field trips with county conservationists and bike rodeos hosted by church groups, libraries, and town festivals. Bike helmets were given to 396 students without and over 2,000 youth improved their safety knowledge and biking skills with the help of 422 role models at 43 events.

INRCOG supported the cities of Dunkerton, Gilbertville, and Janesville with **procurement of a warning siren** for each community.

A **SNAP-Ed Physical Activity Access** project continued for Black Hawk County for a third year and focused on environmental changes that encourage physical activity.

INRCOG continued to assist the City of Cedar Falls with administration of their **CDBG and HOME Programs** including implementation of supplemental pandemic funding, a sidewalk infill program, and rental rehabilitation.

The **Cedar Valley Coalition** presented virtually to staff from the offices of Senators Grassley and Ernst and Congresswoman Hinson on reauthorization of the Silos and Smokestack National Heritage Area, K-12 and higher education, EDA, CDBG, housing, water/sewer, and transportation.

INRCOG continued to assist the City of Waterloo with the third year of its **5-2-1-0 Healthy Choices Count!** campaign funded by the Iowa Department of Public Health to supports healthy choices through healthy eating and active living strategies.

The City of Waterloo was awarded Economic Development Administration funding under a post-pandemic American Rescue Plan Act program for the installation of a fiber backbone within strategic business and industrial areas of the city to facilitate a community-wide fiber optics communication system. INRCOG provided **technical assistance** to the grant and will be administering it post-award.

# GRANT AWARDS

## BY THE NUMBERS

- 27** Grant Applications written by INRCOG
- 13** Grant Applications Awarded
- 48%** Success Rate

The City of Independence was awarded **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)** funding totaling \$499,968 by the Iowa Economic Development Authority to rehabilitate eight downtown building façades. The City was also awarded \$350,000 from the **CDBG Cares Act** program to rehab an additional seven buildings façades. The awards are being matched with funding from the City and business owners.

**CDBG Housing Sustainability and Homebuyer Assistance** funds were awarded to four communities in the INRCOG region. The City of Lamont received \$126,997; the City of Green received \$248,994, the City of LaPorte City was awarded \$248,994, and the City of Reinbeck received \$253,994. These successful applications, written by INRCOG, will assist income-qualified homeowners in these communities with exterior repairs and lead paint stabilization.

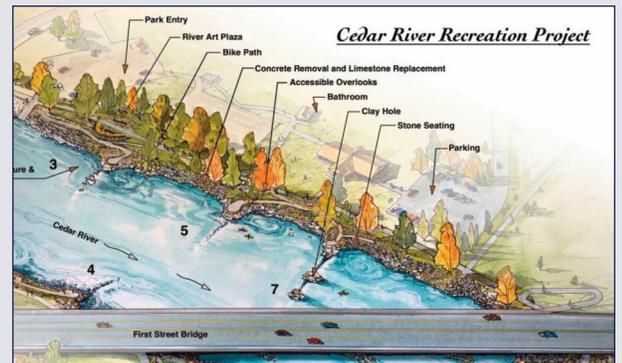
The Natural Resource Commission awarded **Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP)** funds to the cities of Shell Rock and Dunkerton. Shell Rock received \$64,608 to acquire land along the Shell Rock River to develop waterfront greenspace. Dunkerton will utilize its \$50,000 award to dredge a portion of Crane Creek, construct a rail spur to the creek and planting trees along the creek.

The Safe Routes to School partnership received \$238,013 through **Iowa's Transportation Alternatives Program (ITAP)** funds to support continued Safe Routes to School activities in the INRCOG region and throughout the state.

The Iowa Northland Regional Housing Council's Housing Trust Fund was awarded \$357,626 and the Waterloo Housing Trust Fund received \$200,109 from the **State Housing Trust Fund** for calendar years 2022-2023. These funds, administered by INRCOG, are used to provide decent, safe, and affordable housing.

The City of Allision received a \$300,000 **CDBG** award from the Iowa Economic Development Authority for Wastewater Treatment Improvements to comply with Iowa DNR requirements and state standards and to maintain water quality for the well being of the residents of the community.

INRCOG assisted the City of Gilbertville with a successful **Hazard Mitigation Grant Program** application totaling \$3,500 for the procurement of a warning siren for the community.



## FY'22 SERVICE STATISTICS

Direct Service	Sub-Provider Service
<b>27,103</b> Rides	<b>11,223</b> Rides
<b>442,324</b> Miles	<b>12,300</b> Miles
<b>12,727</b> Hours	<b>2,490</b> Hours



## REGIONAL TRANSIT COMMISSION

The Iowa Northland Regional Transit Commission/OnBoard Public Transit continued to provide safe services to our riders. Thanks to a group of dedicated drivers, we were able to respond to requests for rides that rose to near pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels.

Five new buses were acquired to replace model year 2009 vehicles that were beyond their useful life. Funding for these buses came from the Iowa DOT's Bus and Bus Facilities Formula Grants intended to be used to replace buses and related equipment.

# INRCOG | PARTNERS FOR PROGRESS

The Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments is an association of local governments that is committed to identifying, securing, and coordinating local, regional, and federal government projects and programs for the enhancement of our region and member communities.

## Services Offered:

- Community Development
- Community Planning
- Data Services
- Emergency Preparedness
- Environment
- Housing
- Recreation
- Safe Routes to School
- Transportation
- OnBoard Public Transit

## INRCOG STAFF

BRIAN SCHOON, Executive Director  
NICK FRATZKE, Director of Transportation  
SHERI ALLDREDGE, Director of Administrative Services  
ISAIAH CORBIN, Community Planner  
ALDINA DAUTOVIĆ, Transportation Planner  
KYLE DURANT, Transportation Planner  
LASHAUNRA FLETCHER, Transit Operations Assistant  
CINDY KNOX, Housing Planner  
ROSE PHILLIPS, Housing Planner  
BRENDA PONTO, Accountant  
DAN SCHLICHTMANN, Data Services Coordinator  
LINDA SIRES, Transit Operations Manager  
TAMMY TURNER, Environmental Resource Specialist  
BRENDA VAVROCH, Safe Routes to School Coordinator  
HAYLEY WEIGLEIN, Administrative Assistant

## ONBOARD PUBLIC TRANSIT DRIVERS

JOHN CREW  
ALAN DEBEER  
KEN DEPUEW  
KARLA FRAZIER  
STEVE GOEBEL  
RANDY HULLERMANN  
MARTY LOONAN  
SAM NISSEN  
JASON PROFFITT  
MIKE SATTERLEE  
TODD SCOTT  
AMY STEARNS  
ROGER WILSON

## INRCOG EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

DUANE HILDEBRANDT, Chair; Bremer County Supervisor  
LINDA LAYLIN, Vice-Chair, Black Hawk County Supervisor  
MARK SCHILDROTH, Secretary; Grundy County Supervisor  
GARY GISSEL, Treasurer; Buchanan County Supervisor

## AT-LARGE MEMBERS

ROB GREEN, Mayor of Cedar Falls  
QUENTIN HART, Mayor of Waterloo  
MATTHEW KUHN, Chickasaw County Supervisor  
LISA SMOCK, Mayor of Elk Run Heights  
LARRY YOUNG, Mayor of Shell Rock

## BOARD & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Black Hawk Co. Metropolitan Area Transportation Policy Board  
ROB GREEN, Mayor of Cedar Falls  
Iowa Northland Regional Economic Development Commission  
LINDA LAYLIN, Black Hawk County Board of Supervisors  
Iowa Northland Regional Housing Council  
KEN KAMMEYER, Bremer County Board of Supervisors  
Iowa Northland Regional Transit Commission  
DUANE HILDEBRANDT, Bremer County Board of Supervisors  
Iowa Northland Regional Transportation Authority  
GREG BARNETT, Butler County Board of Supervisors



**INRCOG**  
Iowa Northland Regional  
Council of Governments

*Serving the counties of Black Hawk, Bremer,  
Buchanan, Butler, Chickasaw, and Grundy.*

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