



INRCOG

COG *Connection*

Strengthening
Local Governments
Through
Cooperation

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

April - June 2017

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**Iowa Northland Regional
Council of Governments**
229 E. Park Ave.
Waterloo, Iowa 50703
(319) 235-0311
(319) 235-2891 fax
inrcog@inrcog.org
www.inrcog.org



GRANTS AWARDED

The following grants were written by INRCOG and awarded January-March 2017. If you would like more information, please contact [Kevin Blanshan](#).

<u>Grant</u>	<u>Jurisdiction</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Project</u>
CAT	City of Clarksville	\$26,000	Splash Pad
CDBG	City of Greene	\$399,990	Housing Rehabilitation
CDBG	City of Shell Rock	\$399,990	Housing Rehabilitation
CDBG	City of Clarksville	\$779,980	Housing Rehabilitation
HMGP	City of Winthrop	\$20,025	Weather Warning Sirens
HMGP	City of Lamont	\$24,162	Weather Warning Sirens
CDBG	City of Allison	\$500,000	Upgrades to Sanitary Sewer System

INRCOG Updates Strategic Plan

With the assistance of the University of Northern Iowa's Institute for Decision Making, INRCOG has completed a major update of the agency's Strategic Plan. This effort focused on six primary goals that will guide delivery of service to our members for the next several years. The six goals are as follows:

- Goal 1: Maintain funding and services to support ongoing operations and staffing
- Goal 2: Foster an organizational culture in which team members feel valued, enabled and empowered to pursue the INRCOG Mission
- Goal 3: Enhance INRCOG's visibility and brand among member local governments, partners and potential clients
- Goal 4: Maintain and enhance relationships with the elected officials and staffs of member local governments to meet the current and future needs of the local governments
- Goal 5: Offer quality services which solve the current and anticipated future challenges of member local governments, their communities and other potential clients
- Goal 6: Increase internal and external collaboration to broaden INRCOG's scope of services, competitiveness and overall organizational capacity

In addition, objectives, action items, implementation responsibilities, timelines, and methods of measuring performance were also developed. INRCOG staff is to be commended for their commitment to this effort, in particular, Brian Schoon, Director of Development, who led this initiative. We look forward to implementing this document and enhancing the services we provide to our members. A final version of the Strategic Plan can be found in its entirety on our web site at www.inrcog.org.

TRANSPORTATION

Safe Routes To School Update

Safe Routes to School is in full swing for the spring season. The Iowa Safe Routes to School Conference was held in Des Moines in January and provided new ideas and resources to be used in developing future programming. Currently, 15 Bike Rodeos are scheduled for April - June throughout the INRCOG region. Bike Rodeos are hands-on educational opportunities for K-5 students to learn and practice safe cycling skills before venturing onto the city streets and sidewalks. Students will learn proper hand signaling, how to read and obey all traffic signs, how to maintain control of their bicycle through a designed course. Helmet and bicycle safety checks and fittings will also be conducted. The development of Walking School Buses is still in progress in two communities. A Walking School Bus is a designed route to pick up students and safely walk them to school with an adult volunteer. Two schools participated in National Walk to School Day last fall and one school is in the beginning stages of planning a six week Walking School Bus while another school is looking to pilot a Walk to School Day in May. INRCOG is assisting in the planning and development of these Bike Rodeos and Walking School Bus events. For more information regarding Safe Routes to School, contact [Jacki Schares](#).

INRCOG Welcomes New Staff Members

Linda Sires joined INRCOG as a Transit Operations



Assistant in February. Linda received her Bachelor's Degree in Education at the

University of Northern Iowa and prior to joining INRCOG, she was a driver for the Regional Transit Commission for over three years.

Rose Phillips also joined INRCOG as a Housing



Planner in February. Rose was a Research Analyst for the Florida Housing Coalition in

Tallahassee, Florida, prior to joining INRCOG and has a Master's Degree in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Iowa.

Join us in welcoming Linda and Rose!

Find us on

2017 Executive Board

Frank Magsamen Chair
Black Hawk County Supervisor
Duane Hildebrandt..... Vice-Chair
Bremer County Supervisor
Mark Schildroth..... Secretary
Grundy County Supervisor
Gary Gissel..... Treasurer
Buchanan County Supervisor

At-Large Members

Jim Brown
Mayor of Cedar Falls
Steve Geerts
Chickasaw County Supervisor
Quentin Hart
Mayor of Waterloo
Charles Infelt
Mayor of Waverly
Larry Young
Mayor of Shell Rock

DEVELOPMENT

City of Allison Awarded CDBG Funds

The City of Allison was recently awarded \$500,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for upgrades to the city's sanitary sewer system. The project, Phase I of a larger undertaking, focuses on measures to reduce infiltration and inflow into the city's existing wastewater collection system.

The CDBG program is federally funded through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) is responsible for administering the CDBG funds in the non-metropolitan areas of the state. The CDBG program can be used to fund eligible activities including public facilities such as water and sewer facilities and community buildings; housing rehabilitation; and economic development and job training. All projects must meet one of the National Objectives as defined by HUD, which include: benefit to low-moderate-income persons, aid in the prevention or elimination of slums or blight, or having an urgent need.

IEDA accepts applications for the Water and Sewer Fund on a quarterly basis with applications due January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1. Applications for rehabilitated housing, new community facilities and downtowns enhancement projects are due annually in January. Cities and counties are eligible for grants ranging from \$300,000 to \$800,000 depending on population. For more information regarding the CDBG program, contact [Brian Schoon](#) or [Jacob Tjaden](#).

City of Clarksville Awarded CAT Grant

The City of Clarksville was recently awarded a \$26,000 Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) grant by the Enhance Iowa Board for the construction of a splashpad. The splashpad will be an aquatic addition to the increasing outdoor recreation experience in the community. The splash pad is a 50' x 35' play area with eight water features including a ground geyser, aqua dome, jet stream, leaf, spray cannon, watergarden turtle, bollard activator, bucket trio, play safe drain and a water distribution system. Construction is scheduled to begin May 2017 and be fully functional by June 2017 in time for Clarksville Pioneer Days. INRCOG assisted the City of Clarksville with the preparation of this grant application. For more information regarding the project, contact [Jacki Schares](#).



Illustration of Clarksville's proposed splash pad (courtesy of Outdoor Recreation)

Cities Awarded Funds for Warning Sirens

Both the cities of Lamont and Winthrop were recently awarded Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funding for replacement of existing weather warning sirens. The HMGP Program is funded through the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division, with the local governments each contributing matching funds. Each community will begin the procurement process soon. If you have any questions about either project or the HMGP program, please contract [Brian Schoon](#).

Regional Economic Development Plan Seeks Public Input

INRCOG has published a draft of the Iowa Northland Regional Economic Development Commission (INREDC) 2017 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The purpose of the CEDS is to identify economic development goals, objectives, and actions to strengthen and diversify our region's economy, which includes the counties of Black Hawk, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Chickasaw, and Grundy.

The CEDS is a prerequisite for the INREDC's Economic Development District designation under the Economic Development Administration (EDA). The CEDS document is also required for the region to qualify for economic development assistance under EDA public works and economic adjustment grants as well as most planning programs. A 30-day public comment review period is being observed prior to adoption by the INREDC Board and submittal of the report to EDA.

The draft 2017 CEDS is available at www.inrcog.org/pdf/2017_DRAFT_CEDS.pdf. Comments should be submitted no later than 8:00 am CST Thursday, April 20, 2017. Comments may be submitted by email to jtjaden@inrcog.org, via fax at (319) 235-2891, or by mail to Jacob Tjaden, INRCOG, 229 E. Park Ave. Waterloo, IA 50703.

DEVELOPMENT

Flood Recovery Update

Communities in the INRCOG region who experienced damage from the September 2016 flood event have made significant strides to address their needs. Most notably, the cities of Clarksville, Greene, and Shell Rock have been awarded housing rehabilitation funding from the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA). Funding for forty units have been awarded to each city and is intended to assist homeowners, who experienced flood damage, with home repairs. All of these projects have been approved for release of funds and administrative plans have either been completed or are being completed. Currently, applications for homeowner assistance are being accepted in Clarksville; in Greene and Shell Rock, applications will be accepted upon completion of their administrative plans.

In addition, Black Hawk and Butler Counties as well as the cities of Cedar Falls, Clarksville, Greene, and Shell Rock, are in various stages of developing home acquisition (buyout) applications for submittal to the Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division (HSEMD). INRCOG staff is working with these communities to develop specific elements of each application, including identifying possible sources of matching funds. INRCOG has signed an agreement with the Iowa Economic Development Authority to perform verification processes for households identified as possible buyout projects. If awarded acquisition funding, INRCOG will approach each jurisdiction about administering their programs.

If you have any questions regarding the flood recovery process, please feel free to contact [Cindy Knox](#), [Rose Phillips](#), or [Brian Schoon](#).

INRCOG Begins Housing Needs Assessments

The cities of Hudson and Waterloo have signed contracts with INRCOG to update their existing Housing Needs Assessments. The update process will involve utilization of local community representatives and experts to provide input and guidance for their respective plans. INRCOG will facilitate the meetings, assess the current housing stock, and draft the overall plan for each community. Both communities are seeking to earn a distressed workforce housing designation, which may then allow incentives, including tax credits, to be received. For more information about housing needs assessments, please contact [Rose Phillips](#), [Jacob Tjaden](#), or [Brian Schoon](#).

Housing Rehabilitation Application Submitted for City of Gilbertville

The City of Gilbertville submitted an application to the Iowa Economic Development Authority in January for funding to rehabilitate six homes. The City requested \$215,994 in Community Development Block Grant funding and will provide an additional local match of \$18,000 for a total program budget of \$233,994. A target area for this program has been determined; participants must live in their home located in the targeted area and own or be purchasing their home which cannot be located in the 100 year floodplain to qualify for this funding. Participating homes will be inspected and must be brought up to the Housing Quality Standards as determined by the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development. Typical repairs include roof replacement, new furnaces, plumbing repairs, and electrical upgrades. Gilbertville received similar funding in 2012. Program award announcements are expected to be made in May.

Iowa Waste Exchange - Spring Cleaning

Spring is in the air and many people use this time of year to clean out their house, basement, or garage. The result is usually boxes of items that need to be disposed. Some of these items, including drain cleaners, chemical fertilizers, herbicides, car batteries, old gasoline, old television sets, and old computers should not be put in the garbage and if you are a Black Hawk County resident, there is an opportunity to get rid of these types of items in a responsible manner. On Saturday, April 8th, household hazardous materials (no oil or paint) and old electronics will be accepted at the Waterloo Waste Water Treatment Plant located at 3505 Easton Ave. in Waterloo between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

Accepted electronics include anything with a cord or battery excluding dehumidifiers, air conditioners, microwaves, or large appliances. A total of two CRT style televisions and monitors (the old bulky style) per vehicle can be brought in for free; there will be a \$5 charge for each additional CRT. All other electronic and household hazardous materials will be accepted at no charge. For further information or if you would like to volunteer to assist at this event, contact [Ben Kvigne](#).

Calendar

April

13 Thursday
10:00 a.m.
MPO Technical and Board

14 Friday
Office Closed for Holiday

20 Thursday
10:30 a.m.
INREDC Board
12:00 Noon
INRCOG Executive Committee
1:00 p.m.
Regional Transportation Authority

May

11 Thursday
10:00 a.m.
MPO Technical and Board

18 Thursday
10:30 a.m.
INREDC Board
12:00 Noon
INRCOG Executive Committee
1:00 p.m.
Regional Transportation Authority

29 Monday
Office Closed for Holiday

31 12:00 Noon
City Clerks/County Auditors Assn.

June

8 Thursday
10:00 a.m.
MPO Technical and Board

15 Thursday
10:30 a.m.
RTC Advisory Committee
11:30 a.m.
INRCOG Executive Committee
12:00 Noon
INRCOG Board
1:00 p.m.
Regional Transportation Authority
3:00 p.m.
Iowa Northland Regional
Housing Council

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Grant

CDBG – Water/Sewer (due quarterly)
State Recreational Trails
Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) (due quarterly)
Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP)
Revitalize Iowa's Sound Economy (RISE) – Immediate Opportunity

Deadline

July 1, 2017
July 1, 2017
July 15, 2017
August 15, 2017
As Needed

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) (Sewer/Water/Housing)

The federal CDBG program is authorized under the Housing and Community Development Act and its main goal is to “develop viable communities by providing decent housing and suitable living environments and expanding economic opportunities, principally for persons of low and moderate incomes or to address blighted areas.” In Iowa, the CDBG program can be used to fund eligible activities including public assets such as water and sewer infrastructure and community facilities, housing rehabilitation programs, economic development efforts, and downtown revitalization. We encourage cities that have a project that may be eligible for CDBG funding to contact INRCOG as soon as possible for assistance with the pre-application requirements and the application process. Contact [Brian Schoon](#) or [Jacob Tjaden](#) for additional details.

State Recreational Trails

The Iowa Department of Transportation is soliciting applications for the State Recreational Trails Program. The program is restricted to acquisition, construction or improvement of recreational trails that are open for public use or trails that will be dedicated to public use upon completion. Applications are due July 1, 2017, and will cover 75 percent of eligible costs, if successful. Contact [Kyle Durant](#) or [Codie Leseman](#) with questions regarding this funding program.

Community Attraction & Tourism Program (CAT)

The Community Attraction & Tourism (CAT) Program is an opportunity for cities, counties and non-profit organizations to ask for financial assistance for vertical infrastructure projects including museums, recreation centers, aquatic centers, sports arenas and other attractions. Applications are submitted to the Iowa Economic Development Authority and the Vision Iowa Board on a quarterly basis. Applicants are reminded that the Vision Iowa Board will require city, county and private funding for each project. Contact [Kyle Durant](#) for information.

Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP)

Applications for REAP's City Park and Open Spaces program and the County Conservation program will be due to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources by August 15, 2017. Since its inception in 1989, the REAP program has provided millions of dollars towards the preservation of open space and the development of outdoor recreation projects throughout the state. This portion of the REAP program has become a popular funding source for open space acquisition/preservation, park expansion and recreational trail development. The amount of REAP grant money available to a city in the City Park and Open Spaces category in any one year depends on its population. There is no maximum on the amount of funds a County Conservation Board can apply for, however to be eligible counties must dedicate at least \$.22 per \$1,000 of the assessed value of taxable property in the county for county conservation purposes. Contact [Kyle Durant](#), [Codie Leseman](#), or [Jacob Tjaden](#) for more information.

Revitalize Iowa's Sound Economy (RISE) – Immediate Opportunity

Revitalize Iowa's Sound Economy Immediate Opportunity (IO) funds through the Iowa DOT require an immediate funding commitment to secure developers or firms in the location of business facilities that will result in permanent job creation or retention. IO projects may be located on primary roads, secondary roads, city streets, state park roads, or county conservation parkways. All incorporated cities and counties are eligible to apply for RISE IO funds. Applications are submitted on a year-round basis. For more information, contact [Kevin Blanshan](#) or [Kyle Durant](#).

INRCOG Staff

Kevin BlanshanExecutive Director
Brian SchoonDirector of Development
Ed HolmDirector of Transit
Sheri AlldredgeDirector of Administrative Services
Kyle DurantTransportation Planner
Cindy KnoxHousing Planner
Ben KvigneEnvironmental Planner
Codie LesemanTransportation Planner
Ryan McKinleyCommunity Planner
Rose PhillipsHousing Planner
Brenda PontoAccountant
Jacki ScharesSafe Routes to School Coordinator
Dan SchlichtmannData Services Coordinator
Linda SiresTransit Operations Assistant
Jacob TjadenCommunity Planner
Hayley WeigleinAdministrative Assistant



INRCOG