



INRCOG

COG *Connection*

Strengthening
Local Governments
Through
Cooperation

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

April - June 2018

INSIDE . . .

*INREDC
Performance
Evaluated by EDA*

*Hazardous Material
and Electronics
Drop Off Event
Scheduled*

*Safe Routes to
School Spring
Events Planned*

**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 2018. If you would like more information, please contact [Kevin Blanshan](#).

<u>Grant</u>	<u>Jurisdiction</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Project</u>
Transportation Alternatives Program	INRCOG Region	\$196,574	Safe Routes to School

2018 INRCOG Officers Elected

In January, the following Officers and Executive Committee members were elected for calendar year 2018:

Duane Hildebrandt, Bremer County SupervisorChairman
Steve Geerts, Chickasaw County Supervisor.....Vice Chairman
Mark Schildroth, Grundy County SupervisorSecretary
Gary Gissel, Buchanan County SupervisorTreasurer

At-Large Members:

Jim Brown, Mayor of Cedar Falls
Frank Magsamen, Black Hawk County Supervisor
Quentin Hart, Mayor of Waterloo
Debra Larsen, Mayor of New Hampton
Larry Young, Mayor of Shell Rock

We thank the Executive Committee members continuing their service and welcome Mayor Larsen.

Blanshan Attends NADO Annual Policy Conference

Kevin Blanshan, INRCOG's Executive Director, attended the National Association of Development Organization's (NADO) annual Policy Conference held in Washington DC, in March. In addition to numerous plenary and breakout sessions, Blanshan participated in meetings with Iowa's Congressional delegation and their staff. Issues discussed were the administration's infrastructure proposal, support for EDA and CDBG and other programs that are critical to local and regional governments, as well as the upcoming 2020 Census. Questions relating to the conference or specific programs can be directed to [Kevin Blanshan](#).

FY 2019 Safety Program

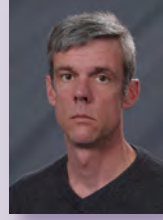
INRCOG, with the Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities, is currently developing our Fiscal Year 2019 Safety Program. This program, which offers employee training programs, mock audits and visits, and assistance with written programs that are closely associated with OSHA guidelines, is open to any of our members under a separate dues structure. If your community is interested in learning more about INRCOG's FY'19 Safety Program, please contact [Brian Schoon](#) before the end of April.

Grundy Center Upper Story Housing Pilot Program

The City of Grundy Center, in partnership with INRCOG, recently submitted an application to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Upper-Story Housing Pilot Program to convert the upper-story of a downtown commercial property to low- to moderate-income (LMI) housing. CDBG funds, administered by the Iowa Economic Development Authority, can be used for projects such as sewer and water infrastructure, community facilities, storm water improvements, housing rehabilitation programs, and downtown revitalization. Contact [Brian Schoon](#) or [Jacob Tjaden](#) for additional information.

INRCOG Welcomes New Staff Member


Patrick Ross has joined INRCOG as Transit Director and will be responsible for the



operation of the Regional Transit Commission. Patrick comes to the INRCOG region from

Wisconsin where he was most recently the Operations Manager at Duluth Redi-Mix. Prior to that, he was with First Transit in Rock Island, Illinois and Laidlaw/First Student in Maywood, Illinois.

Join us in welcoming Patrick!

Find us on 

Executive Board

Duane Hildebrandt..... Chair
Bremer County Supervisor
Steve Geerts..... Vice-Chair
Chickasaw County Supervisor
Mark Schildroth..... Secretary
Grundy County Supervisor
Gary Gissel..... Treasurer
Buchanan County Supervisor

At-Large Members

Jim Brown
Mayor of Cedar Falls
Quentin Hart
Mayor of Waterloo
Debra Larsen
Mayor of New Hampton
Frank Magsamen
Black Hawk County Supervisor
Larry Young
Mayor of Shell Rock

Housing Trust Fund Programs for INRHC and City of Waterloo

On behalf of the Iowa Northland Regional Housing Council (INRHC) and the Waterloo Housing Trust Fund Boards, INRCOG recently completed the closeout of multi-year Iowa Finance Authority (IFA) projects. The INRHC grant infused over \$366,000 into four agencies, allowed eight USDA housing complexes to update their complexes, and provided housing repair funds to qualified homeowners. The Waterloo Housing Trust Fund Board distributed over \$201,000 in IFA and local funds through seven service agencies in the City of Waterloo. Any questions regarding Housing Trust Funds can be directed to [Brian Schoon](#).

INRCOG Assisting with Cedar Falls CDBG Program

INRCOG has begun to assist the City of Cedar Falls with implementation of the City's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Entitlement Program. The City is awarded annual funding from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development for projects defined through a planning process. INRCOG was selected to assist the community with its single-family housing rehabilitation and repair projects and awards to agencies that provide housing-related services. In addition, INRCOG staff is also assisting with amendments to the City's Consolidated Plan and Action Plan which are connected to the CDBG award.

Housing Rehabilitation Applications

Housing is a hot topic in many of INRCOG's member communities. Whether giving core neighborhoods a facelift, attracting new workforce, or investing in homes that were removed from the 100-year floodplain as a result of recent FEMA map changes, cities are increasingly turning their attention to the Iowa Economic Development Authority's Housing Rehabilitation grant program funded by Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) dollars. For the 2018 Housing Rehabilitation grant cycle, INRCOG is working with the cities of Gilbertville, Nashua, Parkersburg, and Waverly to prepare applications to be submitted in early May.

If your city is interested in pursuing a CDBG Housing Rehabilitation grant application in 2019, INRCOG can do much of the legwork for you. To ensure project readiness, IEDA is requiring applications have the Tier I Environmental Review completed and a pool of pre-applicants fully qualified. As always, cities must prove that their housing rehabilitation target area is at least 51 percent low- and moderate-income which may require an income survey be conducted. Because of these requirements, a successful grant application can take up to six months to prepare. Contact [Brian Schoon](#), [Cindy Knox](#), or [Rose Phillips](#) to discuss a housing rehabilitation for your community.

INREDC Performance Evaluated by EDA

The Economic Development Authority (EDA) regional Denver Office recently conducted a peer evaluation of INRCOG's management, fiscal, operation, and performance as a federally designated Economic Development District (EDD) through the Iowa Northland Regional Economic Development Commission (INREDC). Overall, INRCOG received high marks, scoring "Excellent" or "Good" in all thirteen categories. The Peer Review findings were shared with the INREDC Board during their quarterly meeting in February.

To continue its support of economic development planning initiatives, INRCOG has again requested Planning Grant funds for Fiscal Year 2019 from EDA. As an EDD, the funds are used to support efforts to strengthen and diversify our regional economy through implementation of the regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy as well as to provide technical assistance to individual communities on economic and community development initiatives.

To discuss economic development opportunities in the region and for your community, contact [Brian Schoon](#) or [Jacob Tjaden](#).

LWCF Grant Application Submitted for Hickory Hills County Park

In March, INRCOG prepared and submitted a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant application on behalf of the Black Hawk County Conservation Board to upgrade the campground electrical infrastructure at the Hickory Hills Park. The 723-acre park, located in northeast Tama County, features tent and full-hookup campsites, the Paha Preserve, Casey's Lake, and many other recreational opportunities. LWCF is a federally funded grant program administered by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources that provides matching funds up to 50 percent for outdoor recreation area development. Cities and counties are eligible to apply. Contact [Kyle Durant](#) or [Jacob Tjaden](#) for information.

INRCOG To Assist with Hazard Mitigation Plan Updates

Chickasaw County is being assisted by INRCOG with updating their Hazard Mitigation Plan. To date, two public meetings involving representatives from almost every jurisdiction in the county have been held. In addition, Black Hawk County and Butler County have also contracted with INRCOG to complete their respective Hazard Mitigation Plans which are each set to expire in the next few years.

Please contact [Brian Schoon](#) for information about Hazard Mitigation Planning.

Airport Ordinances Completed

As a result of several years of planning work, communities surrounding two airports have developed and adopted updated overlay zoning regulations. Local elected and appointed officials developed height-driven regulations that prevent safety hazards from occurring near selected airports. The City of Independence and Buchanan County have established regulations protecting the Independence Municipal Airport and the cities of Waterloo and Cedar Falls and Black Hawk County have developed similar regulations for the Waterloo Regional Airport.

If your community has any questions regarding airport overlay zoning regulations, please contact [Brian Schoon](#).

Warning Siren Projects Completed

The cities of Lamont and Winthrop recently completed warning siren projects funded through Federal Emergency Management Agency and Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division grants. The communities replaced existing sirens with more advanced, dependable models that can be remotely controlled. If your community has questions regarding the current funding programs for these types of projects, please contact [Brian Schoon](#).

Spring Hazardous Material and Electronics Drop Off Event

Black Hawk County residents have the opportunity to responsibly dispose of household hazardous materials and electronics that cannot be put in the garbage at a drop-off event on Saturday, April 14th at the Waterloo Waste Water Treatment Plant at 3505 Easton Avenue. The event will run from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Hazardous materials such as drain cleaner, chemical fertilizer, herbicide, car batteries, old gasoline, will be accepted free of charge. Electronics accepted free of charge include anything with a cord or battery excluding dehumidifiers, air conditioners, microwaves, or large appliances. Note that 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 \$5.00 charge for each additional CRT.

For further information or to volunteer for this event, contact [Ben Kvigne](#).

Safe Routes to School Spring Events

As we get closer to warm weather, we are gearing up for a number of Bike Rodeos and Walking School Buses. In the region, sixteen Bike Rodeos are scheduled during April and May, and four Walking School Buses will resume or start new this spring. These events increase the opportunity for students to add physical activity to their day and to learn safe pedestrian and biking habits.

For the first time this year, schools in Grundy Center, Janesville, and Waverly-Shell Rock, along with Bosco Catholic Schools and Kingsley Elementary in Waterloo, will be participating in a statewide contest called "Let's Walk and Roll" from April 9 through April 20. Students will be given a punch card and every day a student walks or bikes to school, they will receive a punch on their card. Students completing the contest will be eligible for prizes including Fitbits for walkers, bells for bicycles, and helmets.

Statewide Transportation Alternatives Program funds totalling \$196,574 were recently approved by the Iowa DOT to continue INRCOG's partnership with the Iowa Bicycle Coalition and Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission to implement Safe Routes to School initiatives in Iowa through Fiscal Year 2020.

For more information about Safe Routes to School, contact [Jacki Schares](#).



Calendar

April

12 Thursday
10:00 a.m.
MPO Technical Committee

19 Thursday
12:00 Noon
INRCOG Executive Committee

1:00 p.m.
Regional Transportation Authority

May

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

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

28 Monday
Office Closed for Holiday

30 12:00 Noon
City Clerks/County Auditors Assn.

June

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

21 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

<u>Grant</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
State Recreational Trails	July 1, 2018
CDBG – Water/Sewer	July 1, 2018
Solid Waste Alternatives Program (SWAP)	July 1, 2018
Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT)	July 15, 2018
Resource Enhancement and Protection Program (REAP)	August 15, 2018
CDBG – CareerLink	Ongoing
CDBG – Economic Development Set Aside	Ongoing
Revitalize Iowa’s Sound Economy (RISE) – Immediate Opportunity	Ongoing

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 with regional or statewide significance that are open for public use or trails that will be dedicated to public use upon completion. Applications are due July 1, 2018, and will cover 75 percent of eligible costs, if successful. Contact [Kyle Durant](#) or [Codie Leseman](#) with questions regarding this funding program.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

The federal CDBG program is authorized under the Housing and Community Development Act and all projects must meet one of HUD’s National Objectives which include: benefit to low-moderate-income persons, aid in the prevention or elimination of slums or blight, or having an urgent need. 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, economic development, 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.

Water and Sewer Fund - Funds awarded through this annual competitive program assist cities and counties with projects such as sanitary sewer system improvements, water system improvements, water and wastewater treatment facility projects, storm sewer projects related to sanitary sewer system improvements and rural water connections. The goal of this program is to provide economic opportunities for people, especially those of low- and moderate income. Funding is based on community population. Applications are accepted on a quarterly basis; the next due date is July 1, 2018.

Career Link (Employment Transportation) - The Career Link Employment Transportation program can be used to address employment barriers by providing funding for employment related transportation services. Eligible activities include transportation services for individuals to job activities and adult students to educational training/instructional opportunities. Applications are accepted on an on-going basis.

Economic Development Set-Aside - This program provides financial assistance (direct or forgivable loans) to businesses and industries requiring such assistance in order to create new job opportunities. Assistance is provided to encourage new business start-ups, expansion of existing businesses and/or the relocation of out-of-state businesses into Iowa with priority is given to projects that will create manufacturing jobs, add value to Iowa resources and/or increase exports out of state. Preference will be given to those businesses which will create or retain the greatest number of jobs with the least amount of program dollars. Applications for this program are accepted and reviewed on a continuous basis.

Solid Waste Alternatives Program (SWAP)

The SWAP program provides financial assistance in the form of forgivable loans, zero interest loans, and 3 percent interest loans. A 25 percent minimum cash match is required for each budget line item requesting funding assistance. Projects are selected through a competitive process. Emphasis for selected projects is placed on tonnage avoided or reduced, sustainability and ability to replicate. Any unit of local government, public or private group or individual is eligible to apply by July 1, 2018 for program funds. Contact [Ben Kvigne](#) for information about this program.

Community Attraction & Tourism Program (CAT)

The 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.

Revitalize Iowa’s Sound Economy (RISE) – Immediate Opportunity (IO)

Revitalize Iowa’s Sound Economy Immediate Opportunity 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](#).

Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP)

Applications for REAP’s City Park and Opens Spaces and the County Conservation program are due to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources by August 15, 2018. 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 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.

IOWA NORTHLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

229 E. Park Ave. • Waterloo, IA • Phone 319-235-0311 • Fax 319-235-2891 • www.inrcog.org

INRCOG Staff

Kevin BlanshanExecutive Director
Brian SchoonDirector of Development
Patrick RossDirector of Transit
Sheri AlldredgeDirector of Administrative Services
Kyle DurantTransportation Planner
Cindy KnoxHousing Planner
Ben KvigneEnvironmental Planner
Codie LelemanTransportation 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