

THE WINDMILL

SICOG Region Receives CDBG Grants for Housing and Downtown Projects



Four local communities were awarded Community Development Block Grants (CDBGs) in the 2018 funding round. These federal funds were awarded through the Iowa Economic Development Authority in July. All awards were from applications prepared by SICOG staff.

The **City of Creston** was awarded \$500,000 to implement a downtown façade improvement project. Creston’s project involves 13 blighted buildings in the business district. The needs and problems each building faces vary greatly, but their improvements will make Uptown Creston more attractive and vibrant and should improve property values and extend the life of the buildings. Façade work will occur on the street-facing facades and may include tuck point work, masonry repair, storefront replacement, new upper floor windows, cornice repairs, painting, and more.

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A View From the First Tee

I am amazed at the number of calls and letters this office has received regarding the missing "DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS" from last month's newsletter. Let me assure you that it was an inadvertent error. I had prepared a very informative missive concerning the relationship between Federal spending and the increase in social capital related to the gross national product and personal spending. If you would like a copy of this article, please call.



RAGBRAI has concluded. Once again, "TEAM SICOG" members and support crew had a great time during this year's great bike ride. Dana was our favorite site for pie, Lynnville was memorable for its chicken and noodles, and Riverside was our favorite community. Moscow was special because, well, it is Moscow. RAGBRAI XLVII - July 21-27, 2019!

In a very unusual situation, I was at the Lenox golf course and noticed a tremendous chainsaw tree-art outside of their clubhouse. Not that I am not at golf courses very often, but this was "really neat".

One fleeting thought concerning activities here at SICOG; our "First Time Home Buyers Program" is ever continuing. The program continues to "revolve". To this date, we have made 691 total loans and have loaned approximately \$ 2,434,078.00. Total funds leveraged with financial institutions equals \$31,393,733.00.

Speaking of available money, SICOG's Industrial Revolving Loan Program also has funds available. We have money to assist businesses expand and/or locate. If you are aware of a project, please contact your SICOG board member or myself.

On August 1, 2018, we celebrated Joel Lamb's second-year anniversary with SICOG. Joel has been a great addition to the staff and a "quick" study. Primarily, Joel has been working on the following projects: comprehensive plans, zoning ordinances, historic preservation and the 106 process, fire grants, CDBG housing along with water and sewer grants. I appreciate all that Joel has done and his effort to get to know the job, the people, the communities and the region.

As always, if there is anything I can do, please let me know. Our phone number is 641.782.8491. Remember, we are working for you.



Timothy Ostroski



As many of you are aware, we continue our "Partnership Program". This is a program to expand our services and work efforts to our member area. Elsewhere in this newsletter, is a page identifying our current partners. I cannot express how grateful I am to the individual organizations, businesses, and financial institutions that have joined the "Partnership Program 2018".



ATURA/RPA 14

SICOG serves as transportation planning staff to the five-county ATURA Transportation Planning Affiliation region (Adams, Taylor, Union Ringgold and Adair Counties).

FY 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

On July 10, the RPA 14/ATURA Policy Board approved the 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). This program of transportation projects begins with the start of the new federal fiscal year on October 1, 2018. Projects with a total cost of over \$13 million are sponsored by entities located within this region over this four-year period. These projects include bridge replacements, bridges replaced with culverts, culvert replacements, pavement rehabilitation, pavement planning, and transportation planning.

The Primary Road Fund (PRF) element is developed and proposed by the Iowa Department of Transportation and includes \$3,243,000 in total project costs for bridge replacements, bridge deck overlay, pavement planning, and right of way work. A total of fourteen bridge replacement projects, at a total cost of \$10,996,000, are programmed using both Iowa DOT and regional funds.

A copy of the RPA 14/ATURA Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) may be viewed on the SICOG website at www.sicog.com/affiliates/atura/documents. If you have any questions, please contact Becky Nardy or Marcus Amman at the SICOG office 641.782.8491 or nardy@sicog.com or amman@sicog.com.

Iowa's Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

Iowa's Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) is a new iteration of the former Transportation Enhancements (later Transportation Alternatives) Program that has been in existence since 1991. The most recent transportation authorization act, Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, was enacted in 2015. Implementation of this act placed further restrictions on the selection of projects for funding under the federal TAP program structure, which has led Iowa to implement a modified version of the federal program. Eligible project activities for Iowa's TAP funding continue to include a variety of smaller-scale transportation projects such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities, recreational trails, safe routes to school projects, and community improvements such as historic preservation, vegetation management, and some environmental mitigation related to storm water and habitat connectivity.

Iowa's TAP program can be accessed in two ways. Statewide and multi-regional projects should apply directly to the Iowa DOT by October 1 annually for consideration in the Statewide TAP program. Access to funding for smaller, local projects located in the RPA 14/ATURA region (Adair, Taylor, Union, Ringgold and Adams Counties) should apply to SICOG using the DOT application form. Local project applications are due at the SICOG office by August 15 or February 15 each year.

Detailed information about Iowa's TAP program may be found in the program guidance: https://iowadot.gov/systems_planning/grant-programs/transportation-alternatives or on the RPA 14/ATURA website: www.sicog.com/affiliates/atura/funds



RPA 14/ATURA
Transportation Planning Affiliation

Those with questions about a project or who are interested in applying are encouraged to contact Becky Nardy or Marcus Amman at the SICOG office 641.782.8491 or nardy@sicog.com or amman@sicog.com prior to submitting an application.

In the Spotlight

Community of Leon

What unique characteristics are you proud of in Leon?

- Leon Rodeo, Little River Lake, Fall Craft Show, Water Treatment Facilities, Sewage Treatment Plant, GRM Fiber Optics, Central Decatur School, and Decatur County Hospital

What is Leon’s claim to fame?

- 56th annual rodeo named “Rodeo of the Year” 35 times

Tell us about a successful project/partnership in Leon.

- The community came together and had a successful representation during RAGBRAI

What projects are you working on now in Leon?

- Currently working to update our comprehensive plan and zoning

What do you want people to know about Leon that they might not already know?

- State of the art hospital and school

Do you have a website or social media links for Leon?

- www.leonchamber.org/city/
- City of Leon Facebook page



CDBG - Continued from page 1

Three communities received \$252,200 each for the rehabilitation of six owner-occupied homes in those cities. Those awarded were **Bedford, Lamoni, and Murray**. For Bedford and Lamoni, these awards will essentially continue existing successful projects for the third time in the past six years. Interest remains very high as people see their neighbors being assisted by upwards of \$25,000 in federal funds, which improve things like roofs, furnaces and water heaters, siding, electrical, windows and doors, and more. A new feature of this program is the mitigation of radon, which is a notable health hazard in Iowa. Final homeowner applications will be solicited this fall and work will begin on homes next spring.

The CDBG water and sewer funding round for 2018 is still open with quarterly due dates. Please contact SICOG with your larger water and sewer capital projects and we can discuss whether the CDBG will fit your needs.

The 2019 funding round will open this fall. If you have a need for housing rehabilitation, downtown façade improvements, an upgrade to your childcare or low-income community facility, or a storm water project, please contact our office at any time.

CDBG Housing Rehabilitation Updates

Construction work on all five homes in **Bedford** and all six homes in **Mount Ayr** has now been completed. Construction work on four of the five homes in **Earlham** has also been completed and the final Earlham home is expected to be finished later this month. These programs administered by SICOG staff will soon be closed out. Work on these projects has gone smoothly and they have been completed in a timely manner.

Six owner-occupied homes for the **Creston** Housing Rehabilitation program are currently being evaluated for participation in the program. Eligible homes are expected to be identified and bids taken in the coming weeks. Contractors interested in bidding on these projects are asked to contact Joel Lamb at SICOG 641.782.8491 to assure that they have the necessary registrations, certifications and insurance needed to bid. Work on these projects includes many of the following: roofing, siding, window replacement, HVAC, insulation, plumbing, drywall, flooring, and general carpentry.

2018 SICOG PARTNERSHIPS**PLATINUM (\$2,500)**

- John Wayne Birthplace Society, Ltd. of Winterset
- City of Osceola
- Clarke County Development Corporation

DIAMOND (\$1,500)

- Creston City Water Works
- First National Bank of Afton & Creston
- Iowa State Savings Bank of Corning, Creston, Diagonal, & Lenox
- Lenox Municipal Utilities

GOLD (\$1,000)

- Garden & Associates, Ltd. of Creston & Oskaloosa

SILVER (\$500)

- American State Bank of Lamoni, Osceola & Winterset
- Clarke County State Bank of Murray & Osceola
- Community Development Corporation of Greenfield
- Corning Municipal Utilities
- Greater Regional Medical Center of Creston
- JEO Consulting Group, Inc. of Ankeny
- Michael Foods of Lenox
- PCSB Bank in Clarinda, Corning, Creston, Lenox, & Mount Ayr
- Snyder & Associates, Inc. of Ankeny & Atlantic
- Southwest Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative of Corning, Mount Ayr, & Stanton
- Tyler Insurance Services of Creston & Mount Ayr
- Union County Development Association
- Veenstra & Kimm, Inc. of West Des Moines

BRONZE (\$250)

- Adams Community Economic Development Corporation
- Akin Building Centers of Corning & Creston
- Bradley Angus Farms of Lenox
- City State Bank of Mount Ayr
- Clarke Electrical Cooperative of Osceola
- Farmers & Merchants State Bank of Orient, St. Charles, & Winterset
- FNB Bank of Fontanelle & Greenfield
- Gilbert True Value of Leon & Osceola
- Lenox Development Corporation
- Ringgold County Development Corporation
- Saylor Realty, LLC of Osceola
- Southwestern Community College
- State Bank of Brooks
- Union State Bank of Greenfield
- Union State Bank of Winterset

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Approaching Grant Opportunities

The following are deadlines for popular grants our members and associated organizations should consider. SICOG has the staff and experience to assist our communities submitting the best possible applications for these funds. There are many other sources, so if you have project, please contact us.

| Source/Program | Funding Uses | Due Date |
|--|---|---|
| Alliant Energy Foundation ^{1,2} | Small typically non-capital projects, such as signage, exhibits, landscaping, computers, program support; focus areas are helping families, education, and environment. | September 1 |
| IDOT RISE Local Development | Transportation infrastructure in support or to allow development of value-added employment opportunities, such as industrial parks, commercial areas, etc. | September 1 |
| Iowa Sponsored Projects Program ³ | Storm water, flood control, and water quality projects | September 4 |
| IDNR Dam Mitigation Grants and Water Trail Enhancement Grants ⁴ | Planning and implementation of plans for river water trail projects, including dam mitigation to improve safety and connectivity. | September 14 |
| CDBG Water and Sewer Program | Water and wastewater capital improvements: plants, mains, lagoons, pumps, towers, etc. | September 30 |
| Iowa Water Recreation Access Cost Share Program | Water access projects such as docks, boat ramps, etc. | September 30 |
| Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) ⁵ | Tourism, recreation, and entertainment capital projects | October 15 |
| Arts Build Communities Grant Program ⁶ | A financial (\$10,000) and technical assistance program that brings artists and State universities into communities to help with creative problem solving | November 1 |
| Iowa West Foundation ⁷ | Community development, economic development, education, and human needs projects | November 15 |
| IDNR Fish Habitat Program and Wildlife Habitat Promotion ⁸ | Programs and projects to improve fishing and wildlife habitat. | November 30 |
| Solid Waste Alternatives Program ⁵ | Programs to encourage landfill alternatives - recycling, diversion, new technologies, new manufacturing processes, etc. | January 2 |
| FEMA Assistance for Firefighters Grant ⁹ | Purchase fire equipment, personal protection equipment, training, station modifications, wellness programs, and vehicles | Date not announced, but should be around November |

1 - Non-profit

2 - Alliant Service Area

3 - Must have SRF loan in progress

4 - Dam owners

5 - Some for-profits

6 - K-12 Schools

7 - Must be located in Adams or

Taylor County

8 - Only County Conservation Boards

9 - Fire Departments and non-affiliated EMS agencies

As always, SICOG provides this un-exhaustive list of grants to generate ideas about possible projects and provide funding guidance. Grant funding sources are increasingly interested in creative solutions to problems and many are willing to support not just construction but also operations. If your community has a problem that outside funding might address, then please contact your SICOG office. We would be glad to help and can attend a local meeting at no cost to discuss the project or idea.



August 27

Creston Comprehensive Plan Kickoff, 6:30 PM, Creston Meal Site

September 4

SICOG Executive Board Meeting, 1:00 p.m.

SIDG Executive Board Meeting to follow

September 5-7

Housing Iowa Conference, Iowa Events Center, Des Moines

From the Planner's Desk



13 Ways to Kill Your Community:

Way 12: Become Complacent

The author states that complacency is easier to achieve than we realize. Certainly, it is very difficult to maintain unshakable focus all the time, especially when community development takes many years and a community has already existed for 150 years. The text states: "We can't always be vigilant, but when we relax so too long, we can lose focus enough that we forget how to regain it." The last part of this caught my attention. We've all been part of planning efforts that faded away and then the proposed projects coming from that effort, though still valid, go away as well and then new efforts begin with new people all over again without even building on the previous efforts.

Hockey great, Wayne Gretzky, is known to have said, "It is a lot of hard work to get to the top. It is even harder work to stay on top." What he was describing was complacency and its common root cause in sports, overconfidence. While I don't believe southern Iowa communities are suffering from overconfidence, perhaps the opposite is true. Maybe we just become lulled to sleep by our own feeling of inferiority, assuming we cannot really do anything about it because we have been disadvantaged in terms of personal income and community wealth for so long.

The author cautions against simply trying to sustain what we have, called the status quo. Rightly, he states that simply trying to maintain our communities means we lose ground every day. Rather than fight change to keep things as they are, communities should adapt to it and use change to grow. The key is to not let things slide, but constantly seek to ways to improve.

Going back to the sports scenario, why is it that dynasties are difficult to build? Well, the main reason is because the iron-willed focus to become the best is difficult to maintain over the long-term. Players lose their drive and hunger after two or three straight championships. Towns do not have the built-in coach a sports team has and maybe there are not many fans to spur them on. This does not mean there should be a lack of people within the community to provide the strong leadership necessary to stay on top. Remember, there are always other communities gunning to pass you by, so building on your competitive advantage is vital.

Finally, the author illustrates complacency in other areas, such as our marriages and jobs. When we don't care enough in our relationships, we quit buying flowers and showing affection and those relationships suffer. When we lose our focus in our jobs, our work suffers and we may soon be unemployed. His conclusion: "If you become complacent about the future of your community, then you are complicit in its end and you bear the responsibility."

**COMPLACENCY
WILL BE THE
ARCHITECTURE
OF YOUR
DOWNFALL**

Southern Iowa Council of Governments Executive Board

| | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Karl McCarty | Adams County | Chairperson |
| Dan Christensen | Decatur County | Vice-Chairperson |
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| Ron Riley | Union County | Treasurer |
| John Twombly | Adair County | |
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| William Trickey | Private Sector Representative | |
| Michelle Tullberg | Private Sector Representative | |
| Beth Waddle | Private Sector Representative | |
| Tom Lesan | Private Sector Representative | |



SICOG is a non-profit organization that provides and coordinates community and economic development services primarily through the delivery of planning services, technical program assistance, grant writing and administration to assist local governments and others in their efforts to improve the social and economic well-being of its eight county service area.

SOUTHERN IOWA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

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