

The Windmill

Southern Iowa Council of Governments

June 2018

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SICOG Seeks to Help a City Apply for Downtown Revitalization Funds

The Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) has, for the past ten years, funded Downtown Revitalization (DTR) grants from the Community Development Block Grant. In recent years, the IEDA has allocated funding to grant 5 to 7 awards. However, there have been fewer applications (3 to 5) than available funds. For this reason, SICOG desires to work with one city or more to apply for these funds for the next funding round. We feel at this point in the program's history, it makes sense to submit an application every year. To date, SICOG has successfully applied for the following cities that have received a grant: Corning, Osceola, Adair, and Winterset. Creston applied this year and their application is currently in review.

The program makes a full renovation of the street-facing facades of blighted downtown buildings (commercial or non-commercial) with a grant of up to \$500,000 for cities of 1,000 population or greater or a grant of up to \$300,000 for smaller cities. Blighted buildings are essentially deteriorated buildings and that term does not mean the building is beyond repair. The applicant City and property owners are expected to fund a share of the project. The best feature of this program may be all of the resources involved to bring each individual building back to its best potential. The City and property owners have significant roles in the design process and the vision for the downtown district. Unfortunately, the program will not fund work beyond the first 24 inches from the streetscape (such as roof, furnace, sidewalls, etc.).

The application due date has not been established but is likely to be April 2019. That may seem like a long time, but it is best if the City starts now. The application process has many time-sensitive steps that are best to begin this summer and fall. SICOG would like to be working with a City on this application by mid-August. The first step is to identify your project district and possible levels of local funds. Second, the City, with SICOG assistance, procures an architect to work on the design concepts for the application. A slum and blight survey is prepared, which outlines the extent of need for façade repairs and delineates the eligible elements for improvement through the grant. Early fall, SICOG, the City, and the architect host a community meeting to educate the public about the program and generate a list of interested building owners. Over the winter, SICOG and the architect meet with interested owners to refine design concepts and cost estimates for the final application.

The typical grant is a project with 12 to 14 buildings at a total cost of \$900,000, inclusive of design fees and the like. The grant would fund \$500,000 and the City and owners would fund the remaining part of the project. Typically, the match ratios for the construction costs are approximately 50% grant, 25% City, and 25% owner. **If your City wishes to explore this opportunity or if you wish for someone to visit with your city council about the program, please contact Jeremy Rounds at SICOG with any questions.**



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A View From The First Tee



The director is enjoying a brief vacation (the first one in eight years) so, to the disappointment of thousands of readers, there will be no “views” this month.



However, before I left, I thought I should share some family updates. I can't believe that I agreed to get a new DOG! My wife is working on a half marathon and our youngest daughter and son-in-law are getting a new horse for our youngest granddaughter.

On a more serious note, it is with sadness that I inform our readers of the passing of Richard “Dick” Kuhl, from Greenfield, Iowa. Dick was on the Board of Directors of SICOG during his two terms as Adair County Supervisor. He served as SICOG’s Chairman during the FY 1986.

Is your city thinking of submitting a CDBG? It is never too early to get started! The IEDA has moved applications to a quarterly submission for all water and sewer projects. All other project applications will remain on an annual submission basis.

Applications SICOG recently assisted with include:

- | | |
|------------|-------------------------|
| Creston | Downtown Revitalization |
| Bedford | Housing 2018 |
| Fontanelle | Housing 2018 |
| Lamoni | Housing 2018 |
| Murray | Housing 2018 |



Additionally, your SICOG has been busy assisting area businesses. Congratulations to Zipp’s Pizzeria on their continued success! SICOG assisted Zipp’s with a loan to help with their expansion. SICOG is delighted to assist with this project. Please remember that if you are near Adair, Iowa, stop by and order the “BEST Pizza in Iowa”.

We will be celebrating Mr. Jeremy Rounds’ 20th anniversary with SICOG on June 1st through June 6th. Jeremy began his career in 1998, immediately following college. He has developed into one of the premier planners in the state of Iowa! Please take a moment and pass along an email to congratulate him.

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



Congratulations, Jeremy!

SICOG Executive Board Meeting of April 3, 2018

Chairperson Karl McCarty called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 1, 2018 at the SICOG office in Creston. The following members were in attendance: Christensen, Lesan, McCann, McCarty, Minnick, Riley, Trickey, Tullberg, Waddle and Zabel. Staff present: Ostroski and Brimm.

Waddle made a motion to approve the agenda. Lesan seconded the motion. All ayes. Motion carried. Tullberg made a motion to approve the minutes from the meeting of March 6, 2018. McCann seconded the motion. All ayes. Motion carried.

Zabel made a motion to approve the financial reports for the months of March and April, as presented. Christensen seconded the motion. All ayes, motion carried.

Trickey made a motion to provide moving funds for Amman. Home Base Iowa will provide the first \$2,000 and SICOG would reimburse the extra expenses – up to an additional \$2,000. Lesan seconded the motion. McCann, Waddle and Christensen voted no and all others votes yes. Motion carried.

Other items discussed included: CEDS, D & O Insurance, Legal Representation, EDA-RLF Semi-annual Reports, Building Renovations, Partnership Program, Committee Appointments, Grant Report, Contract Income, Opportunity Zones, Iowa Prison Industries House Building Program, State Legislature and Federal Legislature.

McCann made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:53 p.m. Waddle seconded the motion, all ayes. Motion carried. Minutes Submitted by Brimm

\$10.9 Million in Transportation Projects Planned for ATURA Region

SICOG serves as transportation planning staff to the five-county RPA 14/ATURA Transportation Planning Affiliation region (Adair, Taylor, Union Ringgold and Adams Counties).

A copy of the FY2019-2022 Draft Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which proposes more than 10.9 million dollars in roadway, bridge, planning and transit projects over the next four fiscal years, is available at the SICOG office or on the RPA 14/ATURA website: www.sicog.com/affiliates/atura Comments or questions from the public are invited and should be directed to Becky Nardy, SICOG, 641-782-8491, 101 East Montgomery Street, Creston, IA 50801 or nardy@sicog.com.

The RPA 14/ATURA Policy Board will hold a public hearing and vote on its FY2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) on July 10. The public is invited to attend and make comments at that time also:

**RPA 14/ATURA Policy Board Meeting
Tuesday, July 10, 2018 @ 1:30 a.m.
Pizza Ranch, 520 Livingston St.
Creston, Iowa**

Calendar of Events

June 19

**Iowa League of Cities 2018 Small City Workshops
Afton, 5:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. (see article on page 4 for more information)**

July 3

**SICOG Executive Board Meeting, 1:00 p.m.
SIDG Executive Board Meeting to follow
Southern Iowa COG Housing Trust Fund Meeting, 2:00 p.m.**

July 10

RPA 14/ATURA Policy Board Meeting, Pizza Ranch, Creston, 1:30 p.m.

July 15 – July 30

Online registration for the Iowa Arts Summit on August 3, Ankeny



Rounds' 20th Anniversary with SICOG

On behalf of the SICOG Executive Board, Vice-Chairperson Dan Christensen congratulated Jeremy Rounds on his twentieth anniversary with SICOG! Thank you for all of the assistance you have provided over the years to the communities and organizations in our region!



We appreciate your dedication, Jeremy!



Iowa League of Cities Small City Workshops

SICOG member city of Afton (Union County) will host one of the Iowa League of Cities 2018 Small City Workshops.

Information presented at the Small City Workshops is designed for the needs of Iowa's small cities, although anyone is welcome to attend. Each year, the workshops focus on important municipal government issues with the aim of providing guidance for small city officials. All workshops are 5:30-8 p.m. Registration is \$45, which includes dinner. Online registration is available as well as a pay by check option.

This year's topic will focus on planning and completing community development projects, including prioritizing infrastructure needs and how to properly budget for projects. It's challenging to properly assess a city's current infrastructure and understand what needs to be replaced – what is the condition of our streets? When do we need to upgrade our utility system? How can we afford these necessary projects?

Attendees will learn how to strategically plan for infrastructure projects, including developing capital improvement plans that fit a small city. The workshops will also feature successful examples of communities that have made smart investments to make needed improvements. Afton is one of 6 locations in Iowa and the **Afton session is set for Tuesday, June 19th** at the community center on the west side of the square. For more information, registration, and additional workshops sites, visit: www.iowaleague.org/Pages/SmallCity2018.aspx

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

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!

Deadlines Approach for SRF Sponsored Projects

Communities and wastewater facilities interested in applying for funding through the State Revolving Fund (SRF) Sponsored Project Program must contact the Iowa Department of Natural Resources by June 30. This call is mandatory, and it will include discussions of potential projects, involving technical advisers early and the application requirements. Interested entities should also note the September 4 deadline to submit a project application. If you want more information or wonder if you qualify, please contact our SICOG office before June 30.

The Sponsored Project program was established by the SRF to help fund local water quality initiatives, including locally directed, watershed-based projects to address water quality problems. The program enables wastewater facilities to finance and pay for projects, within or outside the corporate limits, that cover best management practices for non-point source pollution control. SICOG can assist you with applications for this program.

CDBG Housing Rehabilitation

Administration of housing rehabilitation programs is currently underway by SICOG staff members for owner-occupied housing rehabilitation programs in **Bedford, Mount Ayr, Earlham and Creston**. Funded with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds from the Iowa Economic Development Authority, these grants are used to rehabilitate homes for income eligible homeowners. This program is designed to improve the housing stock in the participating cities by making the homes safe, efficient, and livable. The program also works as an incentive for other homeowners in the neighborhood to maintain or improve their properties. Typical work includes such things as new roofs, new windows, siding, electrical and HVAC.

Project Updates

Construction has been completed on all six homes and the grant has recently been closed out in **Lamoni**. Construction work is nearing completion on the 5th (final) home in **Bedford**. Construction work has been completed on four homes and is underway on the other two homes in **Mount Ayr**. Construction has been completed on three homes and work is underway on the other two homes in **Earlham**. Applications from **Creston** homeowners living in the target area are being processed. 6 homes will be rehabilitated in **Creston**.

SICOG staff assisted the Cities of **Bedford, Fontanelle, Lamoni, and Murray** in applying for 2018 CDBG Housing Rehabilitation grants last month.

If your city is interested in applying for a CDBG Grant for an owner-occupied housing rehabilitation grant, now is the time to begin this application process. Contact your SICOG office for assistance.

Summer Grant Opportunities

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

Source/Program	Funding Uses	Eligible Applicants	Due Date
USDA Rural Community Development Initiatives	An intermediary provides a program of financial and technical assistance to recipients to develop their capacity and ability to undertake projects related to housing, community facilities, or community and economic development that will support the community. Creative projects sought.	Governments at all levels, public housing authorities, some for-profits and non-profits, institutions of education,	June 25
Solid Waste Alternatives Program	Programs to encourage landfill alternatives – recycling, diversion, new technologies, new manufacturing processes, etc.	Local governments, non-profits, for-profits	June 30
CDBG Water and Sewer Program	Water and wastewater capital improvements: plants, mains, lagoons, pumps, towers, etc.	Local governments (governments can apply on behalf of sub-recipients, such as rural water associations and utility districts)	June 30
State Recreational Trail Grant (IDOT)	Corridor recreational trail development projects	Local governments; non-profits may sponsor	July 1
Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT)	Tourism, recreation, and entertainment capital projects	Local governments, non-profits and some for profits	July 15
REAP Open Spaces Program	State funding for recreation, conservation, and outdoor resources projects	Cities and county conservation boards	August 15
Alliant Energy Foundation	Small typically non-capital projects, such as signage, exhibits, landscaping, computers, program support; focus areas are helping families, education, and environment.	Local governments, civic organizations, and nonprofits in Alliant's service area	September 1
IDOT RISE Local Competition	Transportation infrastructure in support or to allow development of value-added employment opportunities, such as industrial parks, commercial areas, etc.	City and County governments	September 1
Iowa Sponsored Projects Program	Storm water, flood control, and water quality projects	Local government with a clean water SRF loan in progress	September 4

As always, SICOG provides this un-exhaustive list of grants to generate ideas about possible projects and provide funding guidance. Please contact SICOG with your project ideas. 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 project 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.**

From the Planner's Desk

This section of the Windmill is designed to provide cities and counties with ideas and policies to address potential issues or concerns from the viewpoint of planners. Some of the ideas or strategies will not be applicable to every entity, but the goal is to provide an alternative viewpoint for stakeholders and staff. Please feel free to contact the SICOG office about any of the planning strategies mentioned or to raise other planning topics.

13 Ways to Kill Your Community *continued...*

Way #10: Reject Everything New!

The author begins by talking about the human nature to seek security, which is done through consistency. Our desire to remain secure causes us to accept slow community decline rather than to try new things that *may* fail but *may* greatly improve things. Today, there is no shortage of resources, examples, and advice to help a community grow. Many communities have tried ideas that turned out to be successful, so we are not going into anything blind. There are many ideas that can work for a city of any situation, demographically, economically, or geographically. What is needed is patience and willingness to try these ideas.



New ideas and concepts can be scary, but almost everything has been tried before. Sometimes the ideas have failed, but maybe next time they are tried they will be successful. All great inventions have come from the desire to take a risk and try something new because what was being done was not working. "It is always worth a shot to try something new when you have confirmed that everything you have tried before has not worked."

We are all familiar with the famous quote about doing things over and over again the same way and expecting a different result. That greatly applies to community development. One of my personal pet peeves is when I attend a council or board meeting and a council or board member suggests we do not do something simply because it sets a precedent.

Certainly, we don't want to set a bad precedent, but being reactionary simply because we don't want to set *any* precedent is the same as saying, "We don't want to try that because we have not tried it before."

Conversely, we shouldn't try every new idea just because it's new. We should "count the cost", so to speak, before we undertake new ideas. We should view new ideas with a sense of optimism but also understand the risks that come with the unknowns, such as costs, impacts on existing businesses, and potential unanticipated consequences.

Rather than give new ideas a fair chance to succeed, the alternative is "your community can slowly go insane and die doing exactly what it has always done time and time again."



The Windmill

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Southern Iowa Council of Governments (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 grant administration to assist local governments and others in their efforts to improve the social and economic well-being of its eight-county service area.

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