

# The Windmill

Southern Iowa Council of Governments

March 2018

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## 2018 Derelict Building Grant

Does your community have an old, vacant building that has become an eyesore, or presents concerns for public safety? The Derelict Building Grant Program is an annual funding opportunity provided by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for communities with a population of 5,000 or less. It can be used for deconstructing or renovating abandoned commercial structures, inspecting for asbestos and other environmental hazards, and also removing asbestos and other hazards. Please know that the main goal of the grant is limiting the amount of construction and demolition materials that go to a landfill, so applicants must come up with a debris management strategy with this application. Note that the City in which the building is located must have or gain an ownership interest in the property to be involved in the project. Some matching funds are required, but some of these can come from other sources.



Information on the program can be found at: [www.iowadnr.gov/Environmental-Protection/Land-Quality/Waste-Planning-Recycling/Derelict-Building-Program](http://www.iowadnr.gov/Environmental-Protection/Land-Quality/Waste-Planning-Recycling/Derelict-Building-Program)

If you have questions about the program or would like assistance in preparing an application, **contact Jeremy Rounds at your SICOG office by March 15<sup>th</sup>.**



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# A View From The First Tee



I will take this opportunity to wish you a happy St. Patrick's Day. Additionally, NO MORE SNOW until next year! Our Annual Board Meeting is approaching (see reminder below). Please mark it on your calendar and plan to attend. We will be meeting on March 28, 2018 at 1:00 p.m. Hope to see you there!!

I had quite a few calls and emails about OPPORTUNITY ZONES. I am pleased to say that SICOG was way out in front on this issue. There is an article (in this issue) that was sent to SICOG's partner economic development corporations on February 15th. It is my belief that sending this "notice" to our partners provided them a full week advance notice over the rest of the state.

As we approach SICOG's Annual Meeting, I would like to thank the members of the SICOG County Boards, SICOG Project Board and the SICOG Executive Board for all of their hard work, dedication, and commitment to this area over the past year. In next month's newsletter, I will report on the election of officers for the new year. I look forward to working with all individuals to create new and needed programs for the benefit of the area.



In the very near future, we will be publishing our "2017 Annual Report". Please look for the publication notice and check our web site around April 1, 2018. SICOG staff is continually working with our member cities and counties on a multitude of projects that will be highlighted in our report.

Speaking of time passing, February 1<sup>st</sup> was my 34<sup>th</sup> anniversary as executive director of SICOG. Seems like just yesterday (not really) that I walked in to our offices at 228 North Pine Street and was tasked to run an agency that serves the fine folks in Southern Iowa. I could not even image the things to come, the people I would meet, the places I would go and the accomplishments achieved.

Finally, I have received several comments indicating that I am neglecting to give a SHOUT OUT to my family members. It seems that my loyal readers miss these updates. Granddaughter #1 is getting a new horse, granddaughter #2 is getting a new pony, daughter #1 had a dental procedure and is not feeling well and daughter #2 bought a new truck or should I say, "she bought her husband a truck". Oh yeah, Pammy, well I just can't say enough good things about her.

As always, if there is anything we can do for you, please do not hesitate to call us at 641.782.8491. REMEMBER, we are working for you.



Timothy Ostroski



## Upcoming SICOG Annual Meeting

The Board of Directors will be holding SICOG's 44th Annual Meeting on Wednesday, March 28 at 1:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at the SICOG office in Creston. City and County officials and project board members are welcome to attend. The Southern Iowa COG Housing Trust Fund Meeting will immediately follow the SICOG Annual Meeting.

## SICOG Executive Board Meeting of February 6, 2018

Vice-chairman Karl McCarty called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 6, 2018 at the SICOG office in Creston. The following members were in attendance: Christensen, Davidson, Lesan, McCann, McCarty, Minnick, Riley, Tullberg, and Waddle. Staff present: Ostroski and Brimm.

McCann made a motion to approve the agenda. Lesan seconded the motion. All ayes. Motion carried. Christensen made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 2, 2018 meeting. McCann seconded the motion. All ayes. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Riley to approve the financial reports for the month of January, as presented. Christensen seconded the motion. All ayes, motion carried.

Waddle made a motion to authorize the vice-chairman to sign and submit the application for EDA Planning Grant funds in the amount of \$70,000 and SICOG will provide the \$70,000 in matching funds. Tullberg seconded the motion. All ayes, motion carried.

Other items discussed included: Investment Policy, CEDS, Partnership Program, EDA-RLF Plan & Guideline Changes, Annual Project Board Meetings, Annual Dues, Staffing, Grant Report, Health Insurance, D & O Insurance, State Legislature and Federal Legislature.

McCann moved to adjourn the meeting at 1:25 p.m. Waddle seconded the motion, all ayes. Motion carried.  
Minutes Submitted by Brimm



## What's Going on in Iowa: I-80 Planning Study



I-80 is the most heavily traveled road in the state and needs investments in the \*billions\* of dollars to keep it going. The Iowa Department of Transportation is conducting a study of Interstate 80 and **would like your input**. Each report will be accessible online as it becomes available: [www.iowadot.gov/interstatestudy](http://www.iowadot.gov/interstatestudy)

The third and final online meeting is now available to view on the website. To view the meeting, navigate to [iowadot.gov/interstatestudy/public-meetings](http://iowadot.gov/interstatestudy/public-meetings) or select the "PUBLIC MEETINGS" tab on the home page, and then select "Meeting 3". The meeting was recorded allowing persons to view it any time and will be available on the website throughout the duration of the planning study. Four new technical reports have been included on the website, these include:

**- Existing conditions - Resiliency and vulnerability - Viability of modal options - Tolling considerations**

The Iowa DOT is asking interested parties to take a few minutes to view the online public meeting and review the information on the website. The website also offers a way for those interested to receive future emails or text messages regarding the study. Use the "STAY CONNECTED" link on the I-80 Planning Study website to subscribe.

### Calendar of Events

**March 13**  
RPA 14/ATURA Policy Board Meeting, Olive Branch, Greenfield, 1:30 p.m.

**March 27**  
EntreBASH, Audubon County Fairgrounds Agri-Hall, 5:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.

**March 28**  
SICOG's 44th Annual Meeting at the SICOG office, 1:00 p.m.  
Southern Iowa COG Housing Trust Fund Meeting, 2:00 p.m.

**May 1**  
SICOG Executive Board Meeting, 1:00 p.m.  
SIDG Executive Board Meeting to follow



## What are Opportunity Zones?

House Resolution 1, signed into law on December 22, 2017, created a new tool for community development, designed to provide tax incentives to help unlock investor capital to fund businesses in underserved communities.

The law allows investors to defer (up to 9 years) paying tax on gains if those gains are invested in Qualified Opportunity Funds that in turn invest in economically distressed communities designated by the governor. To qualify, the gain must be invested in the Qualified Opportunity Fund during a 180-day period that begins on the date of the sale or exchange that generated the gain. The deferral is temporary, the gain must be recognized on the earlier of Dec. 31, 2026, or the date the investment in the Opportunity Fund is sold or exchanged. The amount of gain includible is the lesser of the amount of gain originally deferred, or the excess of the fair market value of the investment over the taxpayer's basis in the investment.

In addition to the up to 9-year deferral of gain, long-term investment is incentivized by allowing for a modest step-up in basis for investments that are held beyond five and seven years. For investment held at least five years, the taxpayer's basis is increased by 10 percent of the original gain. For investments held for at least seven years, the taxpayer's basis is increased by 5 percent of the original gain. Furthermore, as an additional incentive to make long-term, patient capital investments, taxpayer's holding Opportunity Fund investments for a period of at least 10 years are exempt from any additional gains beyond that which was previously deferred.

Opportunity Funds can be organized in various ways to raise capital from a wide array of investors. Opportunity Funds must be certified by U.S. Department of the Treasury and are required to hold at least 90 percent of their assets in qualified opportunity zone businesses and/or business property. If an Opportunity Fund fails to meet the 90 percent requirement, then the fund must pay a penalty for each month it fails to meet the investment requirement. The penalty equals the amount of the short fall, times the underpayment rate under Section 6621(a)(2), which is currently 6 percent.

The same definition of a "low-income community" that is used by the new markets tax credit (NMTC) is the basis for defining an Opportunity Zone. The law generally allows for 25 percent of a state's low-income community population census tracts to be designated as qualified Opportunity Zones. Governors are responsible for identifying the areas in their states to be designated as Opportunity Zones.

Under the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, Governors or chief executive officers of States, D.C., and U.S. possessions will nominate areas within their jurisdictions to be Opportunity Zones. Investments in these areas will benefit from tax incentives. In order to designate Opportunity Zones, Governors and chief executive officers must make nominations by March 21st or request a single 30-day extension.

Additional information and resources regarding this program are available at <https://iowaeconomicdevelopment.com/opportunityzones>. If you have any questions regarding this program, please contact [opportunityzones@iowaeda.com](mailto:opportunityzones@iowaeda.com)



# 2018 SICOG PARTNERSHIPS

## PLATINUM (\$2,500)

- 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
- 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  
Continued Support!**

## Draft Transportation Planning Work Program (TPWP)

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

The FY2019 Draft Transportation Planning Work Program (TPWP) outlines the proposed RPA 14/ATURA budget and the work SICOG will accomplish as the administrator of the regional transportation planning affiliation during FY2019. This document is available for review and comment on the ATURA website:

[www.sicog.com/affiliates/atura](http://www.sicog.com/affiliates/atura) under the heading "Documents Available for Public Review and Comment" located near the bottom of the page.

Please contact Becky Nardy at your SICOG office (641) 782-8491 or [nardy@sicog.com](mailto:nardy@sicog.com) for hard copies of the Draft TPWP, should you desire additional information, or wish to make comments.

## Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

SICOG staff members have been busy over the last few months preparing the Draft 2018 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) that is designed to bring together public and private sectors in the creation of an economic roadmap to guide and support our regional economy. The draft document is available for review and comments through March 27. Copies of the draft document are available at your SICOG office or may be downloaded from the SICOG website "Featured Publications" section: [www.sicog.com](http://www.sicog.com)



Comments and questions may be directed to: Becky Nardy at SICOG 641-782-8491 or [nardy@sicog.com](mailto:nardy@sicog.com)

## Advance Iowa Webinars

In an effort to provide succession planning information and resources to business owners, Advance Iowa is hosting a monthly webinar series throughout 2018 to help small and medium businesses start the succession planning process. Their next session will be on Wednesday, March 28th from Noon-1pm and will cover Workers Incentive Compensation Tools. Topics to be discussed include:

- Equity compensation arrangements
- Bonus plans
- Phantom stock
- Non-qualified deferred compensation plans
- Stock appreciation rights - pseudo equity
- Non-voting stock

You can check out the full [2018 Webinar Schedule](#) on the Advance Iowa Website, where you can register for the [March 28th](#) Session as well as several others.

## Spring 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
FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (\$1,400,000 Iowa allocation)	Hazard mitigation plans and projects, including tornado safe rooms, building and utility retrofits, minor flood control projects, elevations and relocations of buildings in flood hazard areas and storm water management projects.	Local governments, certain non-profit organizations	As long as funds remain
Keep Iowa Beautiful Build With Bags program	Grants that award up to \$2,000 toward the purchase and installation of recycled material benches, containers, and the like for parks and school playgrounds	Any governmental entity, organization (i.e. service clubs, non-profit organizations) within Iowa	March 30
Solid Waste Alternatives Program	Programs to encourage landfill alternatives – recycling, diversion, new technologies, new manufacturing processes, etc.	Local governments, non-profits, for-profits	March 31
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)	March 31
Union County SCICF grants	Projects with permanent impact on Union County residents, including community betterment, arts, beautification, and human needs projects	Local governments, non-profits in Union County and/or serving Union County	April 1
Derelict Building Program	Perform environmental studies, deconstruct buildings, and rehabilitate buildings that are dilapidated; building or property must have an end use.	Local governments (government is applicant and must have some level of ownership interest at application due date)	April 4
Community Development Financial Assistance Fund	Financial and technical assistance awards for Community Development Financial Institutions to invest in rural communities	Certified, certifiable, and emerging CDFIs	April 4
Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT)	Tourism, recreation, and entertainment capital projects	Local governments, non-profits and some for profits	April 15
CDBG Community Facilities and Services	This annual competitive program offers grants to assist communities with a variety of projects including day care facilities, senior centers, vocational workshops and other community services such as storm water projects	Cities and counties, often on behalf of sub-recipient non-profit organizations, such as a childcare center board	April 20
CDBG Downtown Revitalization Program	Provides grants to communities for a variety of projects and activities contributing to comprehensive revitalization in historic city centers	Cities and counties	April 27
USDA Rural Business Development Grant	Targeted technical assistance, training and other activities leading to the development or expansion of small and emerging private businesses	Local governments, non-profits, higher education, rural cooperatives, related organizations	April 30
Ringgold County SCICF grants	Projects with permanent impact on Ringgold County residents, including community betterment, arts, beautification, and human needs projects	Local governments, non-profits in Ringgold County and/or serving Ringgold County	May 1
Iowa Cultural Heritage Project Grant	Grants up to \$10,000 to support a community project that creates jobs for Iowans and provides access to a cultural heritage experience	Local governments and non-profits	May 1
Iowa Cultural Affairs Capacity Building Grant	Up to \$2,500 to build organizational capacity of cultural organizations to operate and provide programs for the community	Nonprofit arts and culture organizations with budgets under \$150,000	May 1
Iowa Great Places New Designations	Applications for new designations and for projects in those newly designated communities. These grants can be substantial.	Local governments and non-profits	May 1
Iowa Arts Project Grant	Grants up to \$10,000 to support the creation and presentation of new artwork, development of an arts experience or formation of an arts education program.	Local governments and non-profits	May 1
CDBG Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation Program	Owner-Occupied rehabilitation for single-family homes being used as the principal residence.	Cities and counties	May 4
Wellmark Foundation MATCH Program	Promising projects that help individuals, families & communities achieve better health by creating safe & healthy environments that encourage physical activity & consumption of nutritious foods.	Local governments, non-profits	June 8
Federal Home Loan Bank of Des Moines Affordable Housing Program	Housing grants for homeownership, down payment assistance, rental housing, development projects, and rehabilitation/renovation	Local governments, non-profits, private housing developers	June 30

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	Sept. 1
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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 #7: Don't Cooperate!**

Iowa's new Smart Planning law calls upon local governments to practice "intergovernmental collaboration." This central planning concept is based on the idea that the orderly growth of a community can only occur when various entities talk and cooperate toward the same goals. For example, if a city plans for an area to be future housing but then a school decides to build its new building in the same area, conflict can result.

The authors state: **"The choice to not cooperate, however, is merely a passive method to ensure the failure of your community." Two things can happen: 1) the project or effort may fail due to the lack of action or 2) the project or effort will proceed without you and make you look petty for not participating.**

As smaller rural communities, we face a limited pool of volunteers. The temptation to become reclusive and let others do all the volunteering must be rejected. An even bigger problem is falling to the temptation of refusing to work with someone with whom you have a "vendetta." The inability to forgive and move on or to look past personality conflicts paralyzes small towns. What is really needed is large parts of the population that are willing to work with other interest groups on a common issue or problem and even collaborate with neighboring towns or counties on common problems.

Rather, some towns have groups that actively compete with others, expending energy on the battle instead of the mutual goal. The authors give an example of a small town of 2,000 people where four different groups independently were working toward a community hall. The community was behind the idea because they saw a need. However, each group decided it wanted its own hall or that its hall would be THE town's hall. The project utterly failed for the lack of collaboration and that they actually competed against each other for the same site, same grants, and same donors. Finally, ten years later, two of the remaining groups decided to work together and the project was finished.

Another example given, was a major industry moving to an area in which the firm asked two area towns about working to provide the necessary housing, services, and schools for the population growth that would occur. Instead of working together, they competed with one another to make sure the other did not gain an advantage (such as building more houses). They fought over the share of the industry's revenue. The industry decided to move elsewhere when the community leaders started arguing in a joint meeting with the industry leaders.

Finally, the authors describe the "volunteer vampire." This is the person who sucks all the life out of the volunteer efforts by just making the efforts seem too difficult, unbeneficial, or unlikely to succeed. A closely related vampire tactic is to ridicule or undermine ideas and accomplishments of other volunteers, especially if those ideas and accomplishments outshine those of the vampire.

Therefore, if we want to kill our communities, we need to sit back and not cooperate, actively compete with other groups trying to reach the same goal, or even sabotage and undermine the efforts of those who are successful.

# *The Windmill*

## *Southern Iowa Council of Governments*

### SICOG EXECUTIVE BOARD



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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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