

The Windmill

Southern Iowa Council of Governments

May 2018

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USDA Offering Funds to Address the Opioid Crisis

Two long-time USDA grant programs have been awarded additional funding to address America's opioid crisis in rural areas. The Community Facilities (CF) program, which is used to fund items such as police cars, libraries, and fire equipment, will receive \$5 million in set-aside funds for projects that will address the opioid crisis. Vehicles, equipment, and buildings can be purchased with these funds as long as it is shown there is a very direct connection with the purchase and strategies to address opioids.

The Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) program will receive \$20 million in set-aside funds. This program will fund some construction but is best suited for technical assistance, instructional programs, and equipment. Again, this funding must tie in some way to strategies of addressing the opioid problem.

SICOG staff recently partook in a USDA webinar about this set-aside funding. We believe the funding can have a real impact for projects that can make that connection. This does not mean that an applicant must address the opioid crisis in order to receive a CF or DLT. Rather, if an applicant has a project that addresses the issue, there is this additional pool of money that can help with these unique projects.

Applications for these set-asides are due June 4th. USDA continues to take CF and DLT applications not related to opioids continuously, as funds allow.

For more information contact Jeremy Rounds at 641.782.8491 or view the following USDA websites:

www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2018/04/04/usda-prioritizes-investments-address-opioid-crisis-rural-america
www.usda.gov/topics/opioids



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A View From The First Tee



As you have read in major newspapers and most likely heard on the media outlets, I will soon experience another birthday. For those who are counting, it will be my 58th birthday. My sainted wife will be enjoying "Mother's Day" and her 42nd birthday.

On occasion, I have commented on an excursion that I have gone on. I am going to just give a short comment and picture on a recent trip to Machu Picchu, Peru. It truly was a memorable trip. An interesting fact about South America: 7,000 kilometers long, 700 kilometers wide and seven countries. Ninety percent of the people in the region are supported by tourism. The interaction between the Spanish and the indigenous people is fascinating. A bonus fact for you readers is that one of the foods enjoyed by all is guinea pig. Yes, we did dine one evening with the main course being guinea pig.



SICOG has completed a couple of documents that you may be interested in reviewing, the [2017 Annual Report](#) and the [2018 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy \(CEDS\)](#). The annual report outlines all of our activities and accomplishments for calendar year 2017. The CEDS is SICOG's annual update of the economic condition of the region. Both documents can be found under "Recent Publications" on our website: <http://www.sicog.com>

I am sure that you will be interested to know that SICOG is currently working with 8 communities in preparing various CDBG applications. If you are thinking about a project and you want SICOG to assist, please give us a call.

This paragraph is worth reading!! I heard from someone that a recent survey was conducted by five separate state departments related to the performance and effectiveness of the state's council of governments. This person told me that an amazing news story would soon be released citing the phenomenal SICOG as ranking the highest in both the performance and effectiveness categories. WOW, great Staff!

Elsewhere in this newsletter, is a page identifying our current partners. I would again like to express my sincere gratitude to the individual organizations and financial institutions that have joined the "Partnership Program 2018".

Finally, I would like to recognize a person who absolutely makes SICOG great. Drum roll...Mr. Jeremy Rounds!!! Jeremy will be celebrating his 20th anniversary with SICOG on June 1, 2018. Jeremy began working in 1998 right out of college and has developed into one of the premier planners in the state of Iowa. Take a minute and send him an email if you would like 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



SICOG Executive Board Meeting of March 6, 2018

Chairperson Karen Zabel called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 6, 2018 at the SICOG office in Creston. The following members were in attendance: Christensen, Davidson, Lesan, McCann, McCarty, Minnick, Price, Trickey, Twombly, Waddle and Zabel. Staff present: Ostroski and Brimm.

Twombly made a motion to approve the agenda. Price seconded the motion. All ayes. Motion carried. McCann made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 6, 2018 meeting. Waddle seconded the motion. All ayes. Motion carried.

Christensen made a motion to approve the financial reports for the month of February, as presented. Minnick seconded the motion. All ayes. Motion carried.

Other items discussed included: CEDS, Partnership Program, Annual Project Board Meetings, Annual Meeting, Personnel Matters, Grant Report, Opportunity Zones, Contract Income, Form 990 Extension, State Legislature and Federal Legislature.

Twombly made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:33 p.m. Waddle seconded the motion, all ayes. Motion carried.

Minutes Submitted by Brimm

Public Hearing & Meeting Notice

RPA 14 / ATURA Transportation Planning Affiliation

The Policy Board of the **RPA 14 / ATURA Transportation Planning Affiliation** (Adair, Taylor, Union, Ringgold, and Adams Counties) will meet at **1:30 p.m.** on **Tuesday, May 8, 2018** at The Office, 122 North Main Street, Lenox, Iowa.

Action items on the agenda include:

- **1:30 p.m. Public Hearing** regarding Final 2019 RPA 14/ATURA Transportation Planning Work Program (TPWP)
- Resolution Approving and Adopting Final 2019 Transportation Planning Work Program (TPWP)
- Second reading, approval, and adoption of amended RPA 14/ATURA By-Laws
- District 4 DOT office moving from Atlantic to Council Bluffs

The public is invited to attend and provide comments. Contact Becky Nardy at Southern Iowa Council of Governments at nardy@sicog.com or 641.782.8491 for additional information.

www.sicog.com/affiliates/atura

Calendar of Events

May 8

RPA 14/ATURA Policy Board Meeting, Taylor County, 1:30 p.m.

May 28

The SICOG office will be closed in honor of Memorial Day

June 1

Jeremy Rounds' 20th anniversary with SICOG!

June 5

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

SIDG Executive Board Meeting to follow



Thank You
*for serving our country &
protecting our freedoms!*

SICOG Communities Awarded Iowa Community Catalyst Grants

Lenox and Clearfield were each awarded \$100,000 to implement community catalyst projects. SICOG prepared both applications. In November, Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) rolled out this new program designed to spur redevelopment of underused buildings by providing funds to renovate them. While only \$1 million was advertised, we predicted interest would be high, and we were correct. Approximately 60 applications were submitted, including five submitted by SICOG. IEDA secured funding to award \$1.8 million to fund 18 projects. Lenox and Clearfield will use the funds for the development of two story downtown buildings owned by local residents. Each project will involve one or more housing units and commercial space on the main floor. The grants are leveraging city dollars, property owner dollars, and funds from other entities.



SICOG anticipates the Iowa Legislature will fund and IEDA will offer more grants for this program. Please continue to read [The Windmill](#) for the latest on this and other projects.

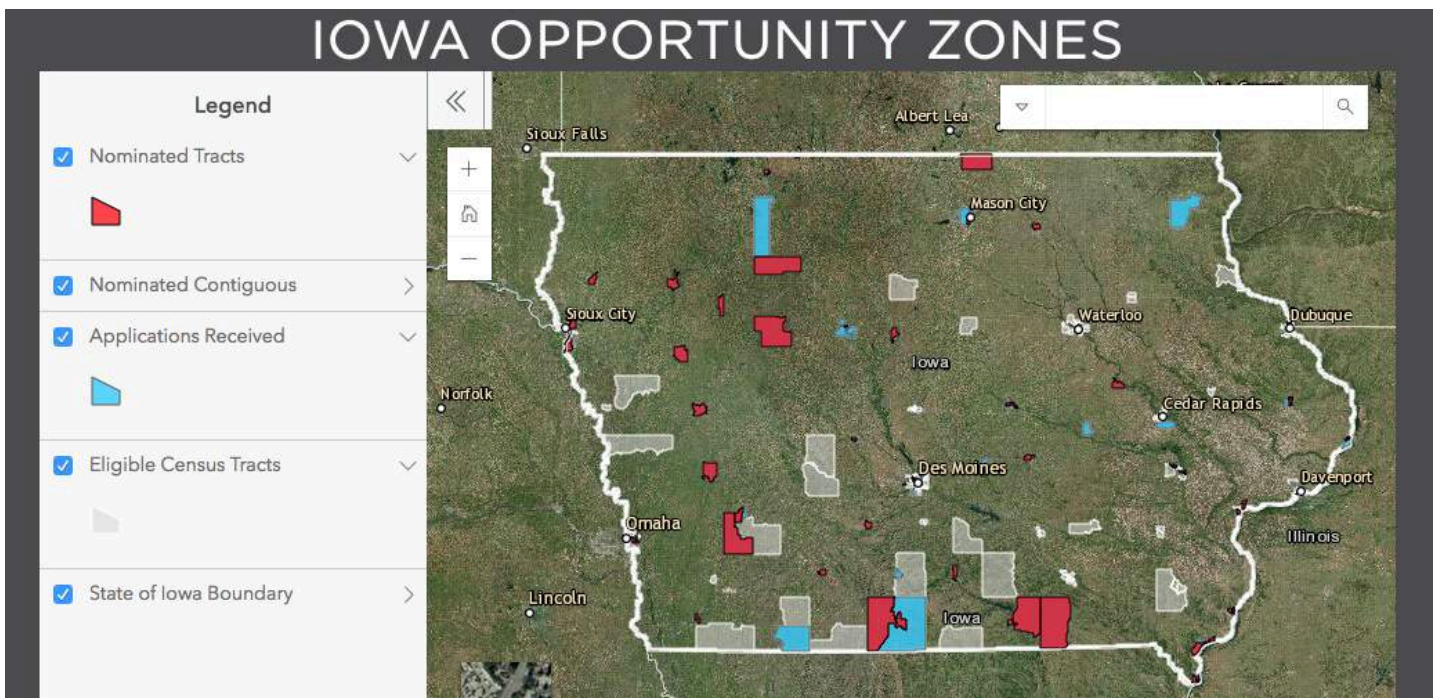
Nominations for Iowa Opportunity Zones within the SICOG Region

In March, [The Windmill](#) included an article about a new economic tax incentive called Opportunity Zones. The incentive is designed to encourage long-term, private investments in low-income census tracts by providing a federal tax incentive for taxpayers who reinvest unrealized capital gains into Opportunity Funds, which are then invested into opportunity zones. These zones will provide another tool for investors and entrepreneurs to leverage capital within specific areas of Iowa.

Cities, counties and communities with eligible Low-Income Community Census Tracts in Iowa were invited to apply in late February. A seven-member committee reviewed and scored the 108 tract applications received by the IEDA based on the communities' past successes, unemployment rate, economic hardship and their vision for leveraging the program to make meaningful improvements.

Several weeks ago, Governor Reynolds, along with the Iowa Economic Development Authority, announced the 62 Iowa census tract nominations for Opportunity Zones. **In the SICOG region, nominations include: Creston, the Leon and Lamoni areas of Decatur County, and Winterset.** The finalists will now be forwarded to the U.S. Treasury for review and final certification. Once designated, tracts remain in place for 10 years.

A full list of the 62 Iowa tracts that have been nominated and any future updates to the Opportunity Zones program may be found at: <https://iowaeconomicdevelopment.com/opportunityzones>



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!

Clarke County Adopts Comprehensive Plan



Recently, upon recommendation of the Clarke County Planning and Zoning Commission, the Clarke County Board of Supervisors adopted the Clarke County Comprehensive Plan. SICOG prepared this plan over the past two years, with the assistance of the commission and the zoning administrator as well as public input. The plan focuses heavily on transportation, agriculture, recreation, and housing. In addition, it provides goals, objectives, policy ideas, and action steps to improve these areas as well as address land use issues, such as zoning, subdivision regulation, flood mitigation, preservation of farmland, water quality, and future development issues impacting the rural area. SICOG is pleased to have the opportunity and challenge to help Clarke County with this document as well as the zoning and other land use regulations that were updated in 2017.

CDBG Housing Rehabilitation Update

Administration of housing rehabilitation programs is 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.



Lamoni: Construction has been completed on all 6 homes and the grant is being closed out. Lamoni is applying for a 2018 CDBG Housing Rehabilitation grant.

Bedford: Construction work is nearing completion on the 5th (final) home in Bedford. Bedford is applying for a 2018 CDBG Housing Rehabilitation grant.

Mount Ayr: Construction work has been completed on two homes and is underway on the other 4 homes.

Earlham: Construction has been completed on two homes and work is underway on the other 3 homes.

Creston: Applications from homeowners living in the target area are being processed. 6 homes will be rehabilitated in this program.

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
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	May 31
Wildlife Habitat Promotion with Local Entities Program	75% cost-share funding for wildlife projects, including land acquisition, forestry work, fencing, etc.	County conservation boards	May 31
Branching Out Program	Tree planning projects	Cities served by Alliant Energy	June 1
USDA Community Facilities and Distance Learning grants opioid funding	Equipment, vehicles, buildings, educational programs, and technology to help address the opioid crisis	Local governments, non-profits	June 4
COPS Community Policing Development Program	Funds innovative law enforcement and policing methods in topic areas that include online training, human trafficking, officer safety and wellness, labor trafficking, hate crimes, child and youth engagement, and more.	Local governments and law enforcement agencies	June 7
Wellmark Foundation MATCH Program	Promising projects that help individuals, families and communities achieve better health by creating safe and healthy environments that encourage physical activity and access to and consumption of nutritious foods	Local governments, non-profits	June 8
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

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 #9: Ignore Your Seniors!***

We cannot forget that the senior population is the fastest growing population in most rural Iowa communities. They bring a great wealth of experience to the table in every topic we deal with in community planning. They are also sometimes not viewed as a factor when it comes to planning the future. This is an unfortunate thought. People live longer, have more active lifestyles and seniors have two things most others do not have, but are sorely needed when it comes to community development – time and money.

Successful communities often capture that senior resource and have an excellent senior volunteer base for many functions and organizations. A key to real success is to build cross-generational relationships that engage the wisdom and time of the seniors with the passion and ideas of young people. The key may be how to involve people of all ages to work together on a project or in an organization.

Providing amenities that are interesting to seniors will attract them and their money to your community. We must realize that seniors are consumers who desire to get the most out of life and can provide an immense wealth of new ideas about how to meet their needs. Abundant housing, wellness, and health options are always beneficial, as well as plenty of open space. In fact, proper housing can transform a community and can attract seniors from all over.

The problem is often that local government does not get directly involved in senior housing and services, instead leaving that to groups like the Area Agency on Aging. This is a mistake. Rather, if the community can invest funds in housing and other amenities, this should be done. Promoting senior opportunities is vital and will not go unnoticed.

High Lakes Leadership Initiative

Under the guidance of Wayne Pantini, Executive Director of the Union County Development Association, and Mindy Stalker, Marketing Coordinator, the High Lakes Leadership Initiative participants recently visited the SICOG office. Executive Director, Tim Ostroski, welcomed the young leaders and discussed the Southern Iowa Development Group, the Housing Trust Fund and the projects SICOG has been involved



with over the years. The High Lakes Leadership program exposes individuals to a variety of personal, community and work leadership skills while showcasing the opportunities that are available in Union County and the surrounding area. It builds constructive relationships with local leaders and enables them to identify and act on ideas that contribute to the community and regional economy.

The Windmill

Southern Iowa Council of Governments

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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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