

# THE WINDMILL



## Assistance to Firefighters Grants

As of the beginning of December, the Assistance to Firefighter Grants (AFG) are not yet open, but should be very shortly. Recent webinars outlined the program and changes for the 2019 funding. As in the past, all communities in our region will be eligible for 95% grants, meaning that only 5% of the project must be funded locally. The webinar was very informational and any fire department that needs a vehicle, equipment, PPE, training, or wellness and fitness activity should attend a future session. Visit <https://www.fema.gov/welcome-assistance-firefighters-grant-program> for more information.

SICOG is eager to help your department with a grant application. However, it is very important that departments (or their city or township jurisdictions) be current with <https://www.sam.gov/SAM/> and have a current DUNS number. Make sure yours is current right away. It is crucial that any project meet key high-priority factors. After participating in the webinar, SICOG is able to speak with some specificity whether your project has a real chance at being funded. Please call or email your SICOG office by December 13th if you want to apply for the AFG funding.

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## A View From the First Tee

Many activities occur between Thanksgiving and the New Year and a lot of them are not just “personal-busy-time-of-the-season” activities. SICOG does not “shut-down” during this busy time. In fact, the up-coming month is usually our busiest time. Speaking of busy times, see the next paragraph.

We will soon see the end of the FY 2020 quarterly Community Development Block Grant season (submission date Dec. 31, 2019). SICOG will be submitting water and sewer applications and a community facility application; whew and you thought Santa was a busy guy!

The Southern Iowa COG Housing Trust Fund has been awarded **\$215,659** to be used for various initiatives to improve the area’s housing stock. Local organizations and developers are asked to submit applications to the trust fund. The trust fund board awards grants, loans, and forgivable loans for various kinds of projects that benefit the region.

Update on Christmas trees; each year I update you so this year will be no different. Pam will be decorating our home with scads of festive trees. My magnificent wife spends countless hours putting up multiple trees to festoon our domicile. I also have not disappointed the countless masses, for I have put up outside decorations. Why you ask? Because it is a simple way to put a smile on someone’s face.

One final piece to be included in the family news: our oldest daughter, Ashley, is getting married! It was a warm Friday evening (October 18<sup>th</sup>) when they decided to go for a bike ride on the High Trestle Trail. They rode for a short distance to the bridge and then got off their bikes to walk along the bridge. Heath Hill (future son-in-law) said, "Hey girlfriend," and as she turned around he was down on one knee! Ashley was pretty excited and I’m pretty sure she said, "Thank you!" Watch for updates, as the wedding will be in May 2020.



*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*



*In closing, I want to extend my sincere wishes for a Joyous Holiday Season and a Happy New Year to each of you!*

## State Housing Trust Fund Grant to Spur Affordable Housing

The Iowa Finance Authority Board of Directors considers a total of over \$7 million in grants to Local Housing Trust Funds to support local affordable housing initiatives that will assist more than 2,500 Iowa families. The funding is provided from the State Housing Trust Fund's Local Housing Trust Fund program. The Local Housing Trust Fund being considered will leverage an additional \$3 million plus in local contributions.

**The Southern Iowa COG Housing Trust Fund was recently awarded \$215,659 to be used for various initiative to improve the area's housing stock.** Local organizations and developers are asked to submit applications to the trust fund. The trust fund board awards grants, loans, and forgivable loans for various kinds of projects that benefit the region. Funding priorities include owner and rental projects for seniors and persons with disabilities and support projects undertaken by Habitat for Humanity and MATURA. Other initiatives will be considered with compelling applications.

The Local Housing Trust Fund helps ensure decent, safe and affordable housing for Iowans. Board Chairperson Dan Christensen said, "The Southern Iowa COG Housing Trust Fund is grateful to the Iowa Finance Authority for the award of these funds. SICOG HTF will work diligently to insure that we provide assistance to the greatest number of people." For further information about the program please contact Mr. Timothy Ostroski at 641.782.8491.

## HOME Program Offers Housing Program and Project Funds

An underused program in south central Iowa is the HOME Program, which provides grants to local governments and non-profits to address affordable housing needs. There are three grant programs:

- Homebuyer Subrecipient
- Rental without Tax Credits
- Tenant-based Rental Assistance

These grants are awarded to the community, developer, or non-profit to build homes, help people purchase homes, build rental properties, and assist with rental payments for low-income families. Some of these grants have been awarded to develop and rehabilitate and then make available for purchase in smaller towns in southwest and west central Iowa. SICOG would like to help a community or two pursue one of these grants. Contact us soon to discuss this opportunity. The application is due February 4th, but there are steps involved that make it necessary to start right away.

## Community Catalyst Grant Update

The Community Catalyst Grant is something that most of our Cities, especially but not limited to those over 500 people, should be seeking every year. The pre-application for this grant is due January 31, and now is the time to get started. To qualify, the City partners with a private building owner to renovate an underused building that could, with improvements, have a productive future. The City must invest some funds (cash and/or in-kind) into the project, and in turn the building owner and the grant of \$100,000 will transform a building that is a drain on the City into a building that is productive tax-wise and in terms of housing and/or businesses investment. Contact SICOG today to work on a project in your community. We would like to submit a few more catalyst projects than we are currently working on.



## Events Calendar

### January 6, 2020

SICOG Executive Board Meeting, 1:00 p.m.  
Housing Trust Fund Meeting immediately following

### January 12, 2020

RPA / 14 ATURA Policy Board Meeting, 1:00 p.m., Union County

### February 20-21, 2020

2020 ICOG Staff Training, Hotel Grinnell, Grinnell, IA

## Thoughts on County Response to Wind Generators

As the technology has improved and as it seems to be getting windier in this part of Iowa, large wind turbines are an obvious feature of our region, one that will continue to expand to the south and east over the next twenty years. Certainly, this topic is very timely, but how should a County Board of Supervisors and even the Cities in the county address the issue?

First, the County should realize this will be an issue soon, even if it is not now. The County should then engage partners and collaborate on the issue to discuss the matter and find out who the effected parties may be. Following this initial engagement, the third step should be to come up with a clear and consistent policy for turbines. This is where a comprehensive plan, if your county has one, should help. The policy should consider all relevant variables, from the obvious ones, such as property tax revenue, to the more abstract ones, such as impact on quality of life. This policy should consider the impact the projects will have on secondary roads, farmland, rural residents, watersheds, recreational areas, viewsheds, and municipalities. Within two miles of a city boundary, for example, the municipality should have a role in the decision-making. The fourth step, then, is the implementation of land use regulations that either encourage or limit the development of turbines. The point is that the County Board of Supervisors has a responsibility to set wind turbine policy, either pro, con, or neutral, so that the health, safety, and general welfare of the public is protected.

The land use policy may include any one or multiple of the following (or others):

- Traditional zoning regulations, such as height limits, setbacks, and permitting processes, either as part of zoning or a stand-alone ordinance.
- A moratorium in the total number allowed per geographic area (section, township, county) or rate of development (number per time period).
- Separation distances from certain land uses or one another.
- Specific road surfacing and maintenance requirements.
- Regulation of associated development, such as power lines, substations, and service roads.
- Decommissioning requirements.

Finally, the County and partners should avoid a knee-jerk reaction but rather think through policy options and get the necessary input before the first or the next turbine is built. This way the public is most likely to back the policy and the County avoids as much unnecessary infrastructure costs as possible.

## 2019 SICOG Partnerships

### PLATINUM (\$2,500)

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

### 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
- Corning Municipal Utilities
- First National Bank of Osceola
- Gilbert True Value of Leon & 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
- City State Bank of Mount Ayr
- Clarke County Hospital
- Clarke Electric Cooperative of Osceola
- Community Development Corporation of Greenfield
- Farmers & Merchants State Bank of Orient, St. Charles, & Winterset
- FNB Bank of Fontanelle & Greenfield
- Great Western Bank of Creston
- Lenox Development Corporation
- North Stone Apartments of Winterset
- 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!

## Transportation Related Grant Opportunities

Source/Program	Funding Uses	Deadline
<b>Revitalize Iowa's Sound Economy (RISE) - Local Development</b>	Road projects, which support local economic development related to industrial, manufacturing, warehousing, distribution, and professional office development. Eligible: local governments (private or non-governmental firms may partner with an eligible entity)	February 1, 2020
<b>Statewide Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)</b>	Construction, planning & design of on-road and off-road trails of statewide or multi-regional impact. Eligible: local governments, natural resource agencies, & schools (non-profits may partner with an eligible entity)	February 15, 2020

For more information or any questions regarding these programs, contact Transportation Planner, Stu Burzette by email [burzette@sicog.com](mailto:burzette@sicog.com) or by phone 641.782.8491.

### Iowa DOT Sign Replacement Program



The Iowa Department of Transportation's Sign Replacement Program is a grant that provides reimbursement to cities and counties for the cost of replacing signs and signposts. The purpose of the program is to improve safety by assisting cities and counties in replacing existing signs that are damaged, worn out, obsolete or sub-standard. Cities may apply for up to \$5,000 annually in reimbursement and counties up to \$10,000 annually in reimbursement for the cost of purchasing specific regulatory, warning and school signs. Each city or county is responsible for installation of the signs. A completed application and a resolution from the city or county must be submitted and approved by the Iowa Department of Transportation prior to ordering of the signs. Reimbursement for the approved signs will be made by the Iowa DOT upon notification that the signs have been installed along with a copy of the invoice and a cancelled sign-order payment check. Application information and guidance is available on the Iowa DOT website at: [iowadot.gov/traffic/traffic-and-safety-programs/sign-replacement-program](http://iowadot.gov/traffic/traffic-and-safety-programs/sign-replacement-program) For additional information, contact the Iowa DOT Sign Replacement Program Coordinator Ron McDaniel at [ron.mcdaniel@iowadot.us](mailto:ron.mcdaniel@iowadot.us) or 515.239.1537. If you have further questions, you may also contact Stu Burzette at [burzette@sicog.com](mailto:burzette@sicog.com) or call 641.782.8491.

### Derelict Building Funding Available

Funding is available for cities and counties with populations of 5,000 or less to address derelict buildings within their jurisdictions. The purpose of the program is to reuse or recycle building materials and prevent them from ending up in the landfill. To be eligible, projects must be commercial or public buildings that are owned by the city or county or that the government is in the process of taking ownership of, and the building must not reside on the National Register of Historic Places. Also, the building is required to have been vacant for six months or longer. Cities and counties may use the funding to improve the attractiveness of their jurisdictions by renovating or deconstructing derelict buildings that meet the program's criteria. Funding may also be available for assistance with the following activities related to the property: asbestos inspection, asbestos removal, structural engineering analysis, and phase I and II environmental assessments. In order to have a successful application, cities and counties should have a plan for reusing the site or building and identified reuse opportunities of the building materials of the derelict structure.

The next application deadline is February 20, 2020 and application materials can be found on the DNR website 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) The Southern Iowa Council of Governments has assisted many communities prepare successful applications. If your city or county is interested in the DNR Derelict Building Program and has questions or is interested in assistance preparing an application, please contact Jeremy Rounds at [rounds@sicog.com](mailto:rounds@sicog.com) or 641.782.8491.

## Approaching Grant Opportunities

The following are deadlines for popular grants our members and associated organizations should consider. **The SICOG due date is a date when the applicant should have all relevant information to SICOG to finish the application on time.** 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 a project, please contact the SICOG office.**

Source/Program	Funding Uses	SICOG Due Date
<b>Alternative Energy Revolving Loan Program</b>	0%-interest loans for solar, wind, waste management, resource recovery, refuse-derived fuel, agricultural crops and residue, and wood-burning. A small hydro facility is a hydroelectric facility at a dam. (Eligible: businesses, individuals, water/wastewater utilities, rural water districts and sanitary districts)	December 20
<b>FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grants</b>	Purchase fire equipment, personal protection equipment, training, station modifications, wellness programs, and vehicles. (Eligible: Fire departments and non-affiliated fire and EMS agencies)	Projected December 20 (see article)
<b>HOME Program</b>	Funding for various affordable housing projects, including homeownership, rental without tax credits, and tenant-based rental assistance (Eligible: local governments and some non-profits)	December 31 (see article)
<b>Iowa Community Catalyst Building Remediation Program (catalyst grant)</b>	Grants of \$100,000 for full building restoration of commercial or similar buildings, located in but not limited to downtown areas (Eligible: local governments)	December 31 (see article)
<b>Derelict Building Program</b>	Deconstruction or renovation of abandoned or other derelict buildings, and removal of environmental hazards, such as asbestos (eligible: Cities under 5,000 population)	January 10 (see article)
<b>CDBG Water and Sewer Program</b>	Water and wastewater capital improvements: plants, mains, lagoons, pumps, towers, etc. (Eligible: local governments)	February 1(next quarterly round)
<b>Land and Water Conservation Fund</b>	Outdoor recreational facilities, campgrounds, playgrounds, open spaces, and wildlife areas (Eligible: local governments)	February 1
<b>Alliant Energy Foundation Grants</b>	Community projects focused on environment, education, family needs and programs, and outdoor recreation (Eligible: local governments and nonprofits served by Alliant Energy)	February 1
<b>Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT)</b>	Tourism, recreation, and entertainment capital projects, such as museums, libraries, swimming pools, trails, large recreational areas, amphitheatres, etc. (Eligible: local governments, nonprofits, some provide entities)	February 15
<b>Iowa West Foundation</b>	Community development, economic development, education, and human needs projects (Eligible: local governments, nonprofits in Adams and Taylor Counties)	February 15
<b>Solid Waste Alternatives Program</b>	Programs to encourage landfill alternatives – recycling, diversion, new technologies, new manufacturing processes, etc. (Eligible: local governments and solid waste agencies)	March 1
<b>FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (nearly \$4,000,000 Iowa allocation)</b>	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 (Eligible: local governments and some nonprofits)	March 1
<b>Alliant Energy Hometown Safety Grants</b>	Grants up to \$2,000 to purchase emergency equipment, such as Jaws of Life, AEDs, thermal imaging cameras, etc. (Eligible: Local governments and fires response agencies)	April 1, August 1, December 1
<b>Highway Safety Improvement</b>	Provides grants for low-cost, systematic safety improvements in the \$10,000/mile range, focusing on lane departure crashes. (Eligible: local governments)	Ongoing
<b>Small Town Sign Replacement Program</b>	The program will provide up to \$5,000 for signs and signposts per applying community on a first-come, first-served basis. (Eligible: local governments)	Ongoing (see article)
<b>Traffic Engineering Assistance Program (TEAP)</b>	Provides 100 hours of engineering assistance for operations and traffic safety issues. (Eligible: local governments)	Ongoing

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.

## From the Planner's Desk...

In October, two of our planners had the opportunity to attend the Iowa Chapter of the American Planning Association's annual conference with the featured theme of **"Multiplicity: Planning for Communities in a State of Change."** In last month's newsletter, Stu shared some of his favorite topics covered. Below are short summaries of some of Jeremy's points of interest.

### **Case Study: The Anderson 400 – A Risk Free Development Environment**

- This discussion was a deep dive into a 400-acre parcel of land along the bluffs of the Mississippi River northeast of Davenport. The property owner wanted to develop the site but wanted to make it environmentally friendly. Through extensive collaboration, the landowners were able to gain Iowa Certified Site status as a green development site. This opened up funding opportunities for businesses and mixed-use development suitable for the landscape. Covenants and a green business park ordinance were created and a neighboring town annexed the land and provided utilities in an economically sustainable way. Through a specific IEDA three-step process, the private property owner, City, County, and developer have been able to make low-impact development happen. Such a project like this may make sense in our rolling hills of southern Iowa.

### **Reframing Revitalization in Des Moines**

- This session included two presenters talking about the demographic and neighborhood conditions that related in the City of Des Moines selecting and prioritizing neighborhood activities and redevelopment efforts in 52 identified neighborhoods. The session was mostly useful in its discussion of the analysis process used to make the decisions of the types and locations of the investments. The short-term strategy as part of the City's plan was to impact in some way or another 25% of the properties in each neighborhood, either directly through revitalization or indirectly through such things as community events and area infrastructure. The City created a non-profit that guides investment. So far this effort is more transformative than previous shotgun approaches that touched more neighborhoods but did not make long-term transformations.

### **Bringing Back the Neighborhood Block by Block**

- Two presenters, one working in the flood-damaged areas of Cedar Rapids and the other from inner-city Detroit, talked about their efforts to engage the public and neighborhood residents to mobilize block-by-block revitalization of those areas. The stories of how they gained support from a broad range of constituencies was discussed. In both cases, local government was a bystander to these grassroots efforts, but, when government bodies saw the potential, they worked with the groups doing the work in a way that has resulted in entire blocks getting back on their feet.

### **Collaborative Regional Recreation Planning**

- The speakers were a planning team that helped Washington County in southeast Iowa to develop a countywide recreation and trail plan. This session was interesting because the team assembled a broad collaboration of partners from all interests in the county and the cities of the county and completed robust design consultations to determine the types, locations, and scales of recreational development. Because of the effort, the jurisdictions in the county have been able to obtain significant grant funding for specific identified projects throughout the county. Grant agencies, such as an IEDA and IDNR jumped on the chance to give a grant for projects that connect the towns of the county, such as trails, community recreational facilities, and more.

**If you would like more details on any of these topics, please contact Jeremy Rounds or Stu Burzette at 641.782.8491 or [rounds@sicog.com](mailto:rounds@sicog.com) [burzette@sicog.com](mailto:burzette@sicog.com)**

The logo for 'multiplicity' features the word in a lowercase, sans-serif font. The letter 'i' is replaced by a vertical bar with three colored dots (red, yellow, blue) above it. To the right of the text is a blue square containing a white geometric pattern of overlapping lines forming a diamond shape.

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## Southern Iowa Council of Governments Executive Board

Dan Christensen	Decatur County	Chairperson
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Ron Riley	Union County	Treasurer
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Beth Waddle	Private Sector Representative	
Tom Lesan	Member - At - Large	



*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.*

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## SOUTHERN IOWA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

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